

# **BONN - AGENDA FIGHT**

**June 2011**

*At this year's climate negotiations there have been discussions over the agenda and little else. This is because they have been skewed against developing countries' and the agreed rules. Fighting for fair and balanced agendas is important for the future of the UN climate system.*

## **Battle over agenda is a fight over outcomes**

- In Bonn after a week of fighting over the agenda some countries, along with the media and some NGOs, are shouting 'obstruction' and 'get on with it'. But what's on the agenda determines what can be in the outcome. This is why countries are protesting when previously agreed agenda items have vanished, while other unwelcome items appeared at the last minute.
- The same happened at the last round of preparatory talks in Bangkok. At that time the US chair insisted on narrowing the negotiations to address the outcomes of the Cancun climate talks last year, excluding a number of issues that are a part of the mandate for UN climate talks agreed at the Bali Conference in 2007.
- In Bonn, one proposed agenda removed matters related to Least Developed Countries (LDCs), while increased expectations of developing country reporting had been prioritised without agreement. Gambia, talking on behalf of LDCs and supported by African countries, dubbed the changes as undemocratic.

## **The Cancun outcome is not the only input for the agenda**

- The proposed agenda in Bonn was heavily weighted toward issues dealt with in Cancun (2010) but did not include the comprehensive list of topics that were agreed to in Bali (2007) as the basis of climate talks.
- Putting technical items on the agenda about measuring and reporting emissions means that the tools for 'pledge and review' are already being discussed, even before countries agree to adopt it, as well as taking up time that could be spent on developing new science based and fair binding pollution targets.
- The US has repeated in Bonn that it would only negotiate on what was discussed in Cancun, going against countries who want a broad agenda reflecting the issues agreed in Bali and the spirit of the negotiations as a whole. In fact the Cancun decision states clearly that "not all aspects of the work of the AWG-LCA (one part of UN climate talks) are concluded."

## **If biased agendas continue to be proposed, Durban will be a disaster**

- First in Bangkok and now in Bonn, the chairs – mostly from the "umbrella group" of rich industrialized countries – have altered agendas and proposed processes that cause unnecessary fights about procedure, with developing countries getting the blame.
- In both cases, however, changes favoured the idea advanced by industrialized countries that climate negotiations basically ended with the "Cancun Agreements" and we only need to fill in the details. Further, the delay plays into their broader strategy of limiting Durban to "tying up the loose ends" of Cancun.
- Developing countries are right to remind all countries of their commitment to implement the Climate Convention by resolving all outstanding issues on the Bali agenda and not just those from Cancun, as doing so is necessary to achieve an effective climate deal in Durban and, with it, a safe and stable climate.

## **What was added to the agenda?**

- Matters relating to paragraphs 46 and 66 of the Cancun decision. These paragraphs refer to 'Monitoring, Reporting and Verification' (MRV) and 'International Consultation and Analysis' (ICA). Combined, MRV and ICA represent the 'review' part of the 'pledge and review'. There was no final agreement on these yet technical work is proposed to move them forward.

## **What was missing?**

- A process to enable LDCs to formulate and implement national adaptation plans, building upon their experience and identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs and developing and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs.

*To be on UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's subsidiary bodies' agendas, items must be referred to them by agreement of all countries at annual conferences such as Copenhagen and Cancun.*