

# FAST FACTS

United Nations  
Development Programme



## UNDP and Climate Change

### UNDP and the Bali Conference Bali, Indonesia, 3 -14 December 2007

The United Nations climate change conference in Bali, Indonesia, is a unique opportunity to put the world's poorest and most vulnerable people at the center of the fight against climate change.

They have a story to tell that until now has gone largely unheard and neglected in the corridors of power and as a result, the hope of the most vulnerable – those who walk with the lightest carbon footprint – is in danger of being stamped out. That is, unless words are followed by action – both at national and international levels.

Effective action is feasible, affordable and essential, as illustrated by the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) recently released 2007/2008 Human Development Report, *Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world*.

What is required is a change of attitude to one that ensures the needs of the most vulnerable are at the heart of the bold decisions required in Bali and the ensuing rounds of negotiations, without compromising efforts to get basic energy services to the 1.6 billion people around the world left in the dark, cooking over smoky stone fires.

The United Nations is best placed to drive this change of attitude. With the authoritative science, the technical know-how, the practical support on the ground and experience in mobilizing multilateral support for the fight against climate change and poverty, we will ensure that the benefits of action are effective in combating climate change while also reaching those who need them most.

### UNDP's climate change work

Building on over 15 years of achievements and experience, and working with a wide array of partners, UNDP capitalizes on its global presence to help developing countries strive towards vibrant economies fueled by low carbon energy technologies, appropriate energy policies and sustainable transport systems. We help developing countries to access the finance they need to fight climate change and pursue sustainable land use and planning activities, including improved management of natural carbon sinks and lands suitable for sequestering carbon.

UNDP is committed to enabling countries to deal with the impacts of climate change that are already happening, and to adapt their societies to advance human development in spite of them.



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#### Matters of Fact

- Nine planet Earths would be required to absorb all the world's carbon if every poor person had the same energy-rich lifestyle as an American or a Canadian.
- On average, 1 person out of 19 in a developing country will be hit by a climate disaster, compared to 1 out of 1,500 in an OECD country.
- The 19 million people living in New York have a deeper carbon footprint than the 766 million people living in the 50 least developed countries.
- Climate change creates lifetime traps: In Niger, a child born during a drought is 72 percent more likely to be stunted than a child born during a normal season.

#### UNDP's climate change work falls into four main areas:

- 1. We help the poor to adapt:** We help developing countries to adapt to climate change and work to make poor people less vulnerable on all fronts. This includes striving to ensure they have access to basic energy services.
- 2. We make sure developing countries have the knowledge and skills they need:** We work to ensure that developing countries have meaningful participation in international negotiations on climate change, enhancing their knowledge base and their capacity to make choices in line with their interests that enable them to protect their citizens from climate change.
- 3. We push to make carbon finance work for the poor:** We encourage the right market conditions for sustainable development and climate change mitigation, mobilizing finance to improve mitigation and adaptation efforts, while ensuring that the benefits generated by carbon markets are directed to the poorest people who need them most.
- 4. We energize and climate-proof the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):** We assist developing countries to build environment, energy and climate risk management considerations right into the foundations of all efforts to reach the MDGs and go beyond.

## Examples of UNDP's work

### ***UNDP is working with partners to turn the barren soil of Lake Baringo's shores in Kenya into a money-making, environmentally-friendly enterprise for local villagers:***

Changing weather patterns are driving poor people into even greater destitution and the villagers living around Lake Baringo in Kenya are no exception. Due to temperature rises and less rain, livestock have grazed the lake shores to a red dust, fish have died off as water got hotter, and the local fishing industry has collapsed. Scientists think that if nothing changes, in about twenty years the lake itself will turn to swamp, then desert.

But working with local NGOs, UNDP is involved in turning that around, restoring life to the barren soil by helping change the way villagers farm and graze their animals. Instead of communal grazing on the lake shore, the villagers now manage fenced-off plots. Hardier species of grass are being planted - grass that can then be harvested as thatching or sold to neighbouring villagers to fatten animals bound for market. There are other spin-off benefits: healthy grass will bring trees, insects and flowers, enabling villagers to set up a honey industry. The project partners are also now investigating how much carbon is sequestered when bare soil is replaced by this grass, to capture the potential of Baringo farmers to contribute to global mitigation efforts.

***UNDP supported the development of a new, drought-resistant rice for Africa:*** With support from UNDP and the Japanese Government, the African Rice Centre discovered a way to cross tough, weed-like African rice with higher-yielding Asian rice, which is most common in Africa today. Asian rice needs very specific conditions to thrive – plenty of water and careful weed control being most important. This new species, called “New Rice for Africa” or NERICA, combines the yield and quality of Asian rice with the toughness of African rice, smothering competing weeds and resisting the attack of insects; vitally, it is also drought resistant. As a result of an accelerated breeding programme, NERICAs are already available throughout Africa and are becoming the preferred varieties for many farmers. NERICA, and many other drought-resistant crops that are under development, will be invaluable tools to fight the effects of climate change.

***UNDP is helping to harness the benefits of carbon markets for the poor:*** Emission reduction credits traded on carbon markets carry enormous potential for mobilizing essential resources that developing countries could use to finance the fight against climate change. However, early signs indicate that the market will not provide the broad-based benefits it should. So, UNDP has joined forces with the banking and insurance giant Fortis on what's called the MDG Carbon Facility, an innovative means of harnessing the vast resources of the carbon market to bring long-term sustainable development to a more diverse share of countries.

Under the terms of the partnership, UNDP will help developing countries conceive projects intended to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, and will ensure that these projects meet the Kyoto Protocol's agreed standards and deliver real, sustainable benefits to the environment and broader human development. Fortis will then purchase and sell-on the emissions reduction credits generated by these projects. The proceeds from Fortis' purchases will provide developing countries and communities with a new flow of resources to finance much needed investment and to promote development.



### **2007/2008 Human Development Report: *Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world***

Building on the science of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Synthesis Report and the economics of the Stern Review, UNDP's renowned Human Development Report (HDR) focuses on the poor and the politics needed to protect them from climate change.

*Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world* provides a blueprint for Bali, a checklist for the back pocket of every policy-maker to ensure that the needs of the poor and most vulnerable are central to any decisions taken on a new, post-Kyoto climate change regime.

Developed nations have a historic responsibility to cut emissions, climate-proof their growth and invest heavily in adaptation in developing countries to prevent catastrophic reversals in health, education and poverty reduction for the world's poor, says the Report – and a narrow ten-year window of opportunity remains to act.

If that window is missed, temperature rises of above two degrees Centigrade could see an extra 600 million people in sub-Saharan Africa go hungry, over 200 million more poor people flooded out of their homes and an additional 400 million exposed to diseases like malaria and dengue fever.

The Report lays out a checklist for action:

- **Cut** emissions by at least 80 percent by 2050 for developed countries and 20 percent by 2050 for developing countries;
- **Create** a Climate Change Mitigation Facility to finance low carbon pathways for developing countries;
- **Put** a proper price on carbon with a mixture of carbon tax and cap-and-trade schemes, building on and going beyond the Kyoto Protocol;
- **Harness** carbon markets for the poor;
- **Strengthen** energy efficiency regulatory standards;
- **Support** the development of low carbon energy provision;
- **Invest** urgently in breakthrough technologies like carbon capture and storage;
- **Allocate** US\$86 billion annually to adaptation in poor countries;
- **Build** adaptation into all poverty reduction plans;
- **Insist** that carbon sequestration on forests and land are essential elements of a future global agreement.

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