CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES (COP 15)

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SUMMARY REPORT

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1. **Conference background**

The stated aim of the Cop 15 in Copenhagen was to achieve a global agreement that would avert dangerous climate change – setting legally binding greenhouse gas reduction for industrialized countries and establishing financial and technological measures to help majority world achieve more sustainable development. The Conference was therefore to mark the end of a two-year consultation period as set out in the Bali Action Plan (COP 13); a process for negotiating a global climate strategy to succeed the Kyoto Protocol. In 1997, state parties agreed to the Kyoto Protocol, as a mitigation strategy. The protocol binds developed countries by setting emission reduction targets for developed countries to reduce their Green House Gas (GHG) emissions by 5% below 1990 levels, by the 2012.

The Conference was also expected to consider a general agreement that in the new regime, developing countries will also be bound to reduce emissions that result from deforestation, degradation and other land use change practices in their territories. It is in this premise that formed part of the (COP 13) that industrialized countries should take a lead in tackling climate change at home while transferring money and technology to developing countries along cleaner development paths.

Both the African negotiators' meeting and the Ministerial Conference on the Environment played an important role in coordinating stances of African countries ahead of the crucial Copenhagen talks. The process was further supported by the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities. In all occasions held in Kigali, Nairobi and Addis Ababa, Kenya was appropriately represented

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2. Main contentious issues during the negotiations

The main contentious issues in Copenhagen were whether or not to abandon the Kyoto Protocol, which binds almost 40 industrialized nations to cut greenhouse gas emissions. At the heart of the dispute, developing nations wanted to extend the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and work out a separate new deal. But most developed nations wanted to merge Kyoto into a single new accord obliging all nations to fight global warming.

The rationale by the developed nations was largely because the United States never ratified Kyoto and therefore be included into a more inclusive deal together with other emerging economies with high emission levels such as China, India and South Africa. They feared signing up for a binding new Kyoto while USA slips away with a less strict regime. Other issues were

- Scaling up carbon finance, where rich nations pay for emissions cuts in developing countries through trade in carbon offsets
- Streamlining an existing scheme under Kyoto's clean development mechanism, (CDM) which deployed $6.5 billion last year in developing nations. Due to conditionality and other barriers, including complex procedures, African countries have been unable to benefit from existing adaptation funds. To make things worse, Africa has hardly benefited from the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) with only a paltry proportion of investments. Certain areas within the Mechanism need revision to consider Africa's needs particularly those in the forestry sector.
- Whether to allow emissions cuts from new sectors to qualify for carbon offsets, including nuclear power, carbon capture and storage agriculture and conserving forests

3. Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries: Conference agreements

The Conference of the Parties acknowledged the contribution of the emissions from deforestation to global anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and forest degradation that leads to emissions and which needed to be addressed. The conference also recognized that efforts and actions to reduce deforestation and to maintain and conserve forest carbon stocks in developing countries are already being undertaken despite the complexity of the problems, which includes different national circumstances, and the multiple drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. The conference further recognized the potential role of actions to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries in helping to meet the ultimate objective of the Convention. The parties noted that sustainable reduction in emissions from deforestation and forest degradation requires stable and predictable availability of resources. All parties agreed that reducing those emissions can promote co-benefits and may complement the aims and objectives of other relevant international conventions and agreements.

While addressing all these issues, the needs and aspirations of local and indigenous communities should be addressed. Furthermore, each party should endeavour to strengthen and support ongoing efforts on a voluntary basis. This further requires that parties, in a position to do so, should support capacity building, provide technical assistance, facilitate the transfer of technology to improve, inter alia, data collection, estimation of emissions, monitoring and reporting, and address their institutional needs. All parties should therefore explore a range of actions, identify options and undertake efforts, including demonstration activities, to address the drivers of deforestation relevant to their national circumstances, thus enhancing forest carbon stocks through sustainable management of forests.

4. The Copenhagen Accord: *Decisions by the Heads of State, Heads of Government, Ministers, and other heads of delegations present at the United Nations Climate Change Conference 2009 in Copenhagen*

1. Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. Parties emphasized a strong political will to urgently combat climate change in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. To achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention to stabilize greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, parties while, recognizing the scientific view that the increase in global temperature should be below 2 degrees Celsius, on the basis of equity and in the context of sustainable development, enhance long-term cooperative action to combat climate change.

2. Deep cuts in global emissions are required according to science, and as documented by the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report with a view to reduce global emissions so as to hold the increase in global temperature below 2 degrees Celsius, and take action to meet this objective consistent with science and on the basis of equity.

3. Social and economic development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of developing countries and that a low-emission development strategy is indispensable to sustainable development.

4. Adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change and the potential impacts of response measures is a challenge faced by all countries. Enhanced action and international cooperation on adaptation is urgently required to ensure the implementation of the Convention by enabling and supporting the implementation of adaptation actions aimed at reducing vulnerability and building resilience in developing countries, especially in those that are particularly vulnerable, especially least developed countries, small island developing States and Africa. Developed countries shall provide

adequate, predictable and sustainable financial resources, technology and capacity-building to support the implementation of adaptation action in developing countries.

5. Least developed countries and Small Island developing States may undertake actions voluntarily and on the basis of support. Mitigation actions subsequently taken and envisaged by Non-Annex I Parties, including national inventory reports shall be communicated through national communications every two years on the basis of guidelines to be adopted by the Conference of the Parties.

6. Mitigation actions taken by Non-Annex I Parties will be subject to their domestic measurement, reporting and verification the result of which will be reported through their national communications every two years. Non-Annex I Parties will communicate information on the implementation of their actions through National Communications, with provisions for international consultations and analysis under clearly defined guidelines that will ensure that national sovereignty is respected.

7. Nationally appropriate mitigation actions seeking international support will be recorded in a registry along with relevant technology, finance and capacity building support. These supported nationally appropriate mitigation actions will be subject to international measurement, reporting and verification in accordance with guidelines adopted by the Conference of the Parties.

8. Recognition of the crucial role of reducing emission from deforestation and forest degradation and the need to enhance removals of greenhouse gas emission by forests and agree on the need to provide positive incentives to such actions through the immediate establishment of a mechanism including REDD-plus, to enable the mobilization of financial resources from developed countries.

9. Agreed on a decision to pursue various approaches, including

opportunities to use markets, to enhance the cost-effectiveness of, and to promote mitigation actions. Developing countries, especially those with low emitting economies should be provided incentives to continue to develop on a low emission pathway.

10. Scaled up, new and additional, predictable and adequate funding as well as improved access shall be provided to developing countries, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, to enable and support enhanced action on mitigation, including substantial finance to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD-plus), adaptation, technology development and transfer and capacity-building, for enhanced implementation of the Convention. The collective commitment by developed countries is to provide new and additional resources, including forestry and investments through international institutions, approaching USD 30 billion for the period 2010 - 2012 with balanced allocation between adaptation and mitigation. Funding for adaptation will be prioritized for the most vulnerable developing countries, such as the least developed countries, Small Island developing States and Africa. In the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation, developed countries commit to a goal of mobilizing jointly USD 100 billion a year by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries. This funding will come from a wide variety of sources, public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative sources of finance. New multilateral funding for adaptation will be delivered through effective and efficient fund arrangements, with a governance structure providing for equal representation of developed and developing countries. A significant portion of such funding should flow through the Copenhagen Green Climate Fund.

11. A High Level Panel will be established under the guidance of and accountable to the Conference of the Parties to study the contribution of the potential sources of revenue, including alternative sources of finance.

12. The Copenhagen Green Climate Fund shall be established as an

operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention to support projects, programme, policies and other activities in developing countries related to mitigation including REDD-plus, adaptation, capacity-building, technology development and transfer.

13. In order to enhance action on development and transfer of technology, a Technology Mechanism will be established to accelerate technology development and transfer in support of action on adaptation and mitigation that will be guided by a country-driven approach and be based on national circumstances and priorities.

14. An assessment of the implementation of the Accord to be completed by 2015, including in light of the Convention will be undertaken. This would include consideration of strengthening the long-term goal referencing various matters presented by the science, including in relation to temperature rises of 1.5 degrees

5. Forest deforestation and degradation in relation to climate change: the main issues

To repay their climate debt, rich countries are required to implement immediate and rapid emissions reductions, just and effective financial flows, initiate measures to address deforestation combined with policies and initiatives to protect forests and appropriate technology transfer. Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) was designed to stop deforestation in its tracks and prevent more carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere, which at 1000 tonnes/ hectare is crucial to tackling climate change. In addition, the scheme allows forest conservation to compete in economic terms with drivers of forest deforestation. Current economic drivers favour destructive logging practices and conversion of forest to other uses, such as agricultural land and settlement.

The financial transfers under REDD+ will not just be used to curb deforestation and forest degradation but will also be used for sustainable forest management and enhancement of carbon forest stocks through tree planting and rehabilitation of degraded lands.

In many forested rural areas, the only real options for economic growth often require the destruction of natural forests – either when clearing for agricultural expansion, energy or through the sale of wood products. In effect, both local and international markets offer perverse incentives from the perspective of environmental sustainability, biodiversity conservation, and climate stability. Reversing the tide of deforestation can only be accomplished through initiatives that are global in scope.

By drawing on economics and conservation biology, it is possible to develop collaborative frameworks within which developing countries can dramatically improve the long-term global prognosis for biodiversity conservation, climate stability (via reduced carbon emissions), sustainable development, and poverty reduction.

6. Climate Change forestry related challenges for Kenya

Climate change is the major, overriding environmental issue posing the greatest challenge to the forestry sector in Kenya today. Shifting weather patterns, for example, threaten species adaptability and production through increased unpredictability of precipitation. In addition, climate change is already forcing most forestry species to adapt either through shifting habitats, changing life cycles, or the development of new physical traits. This may lead to alterations in the range, distribution and population density of a multitude of plants. Besides, spread of pests and diseases once limited to specific eco-zones are becoming a threat to survival to more susceptible trees and shrubs in the new areas. The frequency of heat waves is increasing. Temperatures are becoming more extreme, water is

evaporating faster, and the ground water level is receeding. Larger areas are being affected by droughts, and flooding is now more serious than ever before.

The devastating floods sweeping across kenya after a long drought experienced in many parts in 2009 is causing both widespread negative economic and environmental impacts. Both scientific and developmental activities in the forest sector must respond to these challenges. Scaling up tree planting activities in the most vulnerable areas and involving communities in understanding and participating in the basic adaptation and mitigation measures is more urgent than before. There will be need to consider that all forestry development paths are climate-proofed and pursue a low carbon trajectory. For example, by promoting and upscalling the use of energy saving stoves for cooking instead of firewood and promoting and adopting the use of wood waste such as saw dust as sources of energy. These acts will not only reduce the number of trees cut down but also reduce the carbon that is emitted from burning firewood. These activities should be underpinned to the existing voluntary carbon markets. A ministerial climate co-ordination committee will be an important vehicle in managing the implementation of these activities.

7. Kenya's participation in the climate change agenda – the forestry sector

During the Copenhagen Conference, Kenya adopted fully the African position that had been agreed on earlier by lead negotiators and adopted by their Heads of States. In pursuing these interests, the negotiators keenly followed up talks on REDD given that the country is among the 14 recipient countries from Africa participating in the World Bank funded Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) process**.** Like most other participant countries, Kenya has received a grant of US$ 200,000 to develop its Readiness Plan Proposal (RPP) which if approved (probably in June 2010). Upon its

approval, the proposal will pave way to a further grant of US$ 3.2 M to prepare the country move to the next stage – payments for carbon emissions. Kenya's REDD+ (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation, Sustainable Management of Forests and Carbon Enhancement activities) program is part of its national Climate Change Response Strategy.

Kenya is also in the process of establishing a National REDD+ Steering Committee. A multi-stakeholder Technical Working Group (TWG) has already been established with 3 sub-groups looking at policy issues, monitoring and reporting, verification, and Consultation/participation issues respectively.

The basic idea of REDD is that like Kenya; like all other recipient countries, will be bound under a new international regime and paid by developed countries to reduce Green House Gas emissions from arising from deforestation and degradation activities. Additionally, Kenya will also be paid to sustainably manage existing forests and to enhance carbon stocks through afforestation and reforestation programs (REDD+). The payments will be based on how much emission the country will actually be able to reduce below what would have happened in a business as usual scenario.

Besides, the formal activities under the REDD scheme, there are several ongoing and planned projects in the forestry sector. Most of these projects are driven by the voluntary Carbon market schemes and involves NGO and private International Institutions. In addition, increased interest by donor community in climate change is set to witness an upsurge of collaborative activities in the forestry sector. Both KEFRI and KFS have already initiated preliminary discussions in this direction.

On carbon markets, a lot is yet to be learned. The Green Belt Movement is implementing pilot projects with both the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and voluntary carbon credit schemes, the experience of which is

valuable. It's important that such markets serve the forests, conserve biodiversity and improve the livelihoods of communities.

8. A way forward for KEFRI and options for research

The present challenge within Kenya's forestry sector is to develop a pool of local experts who will provide professional services in developing forest related proposals and methodologies required and recognized by the International organizations. This has been lacking and has contributed to the high costs of transactions through consultants in initiating and registering projects for carbon markets. As the countries' sole forestry research Institution; KEFRI will seek to undertake the following:

- Intensify participation in climate change fora and initiate a climate change-working group in the Institute to spearhead activities and policy issues.
- Initiate activities to accurately estimate amounts of carbon in different forest types. This will provide information on the value of carbon bearing potential as well as the baselines required for the emerging carbon markets
- Develop concepts that will provide key technical information particularly in modelling forest status scenarios and carbon stocks in different forest types and species.
- Investigate responses of species to climate change particularly phenology trends, possible threats and loss of habitats.
- Initiate various conservation strategies as mitigation measures to combat species decline in the light of climate change
- Select trees and shrubs that tolerate higher temperatures and extreme weather events and promote the planting of the same in selected sites as demonstrations.

- Develop protocols and guidelines for rehabilitating degraded forest areas based on scientific principles. These will be forwarded to UNFCC's Technical working groups for consideration as part of the recognised methodologies.
- Active participation in both the National REDD Steering Committee and its Technical Working Groups


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