



International Development Law Organization
Organisation Internationale de Droit du Développement

UNFCCC COP18: Increased Support Needed for Climate Change Law and Policy Reform

DOHA, 29 November 2012 - As the 18th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meets in Doha to move the international climate change agenda forward, the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) urges increased recognition of the vital role national legal and policy frameworks play in enabling effective climate change response.

Despite limited progress on the international stage, 2012 has seen impressive climate change law and policy achievements by developing countries. These include Mexico's much lauded General Law on Climate Change, Kenya's Climate Change Action Plan, The Philippines Climate Act and Colombia's leading Disaster Risk Management System Act.

IDLO has played an instrumental role in several key accomplishments, providing technical assistance to develop the Mexican law, supporting the drafting of climate change policies and institutional reforms in Kenya, and developing flagship Legal Preparedness Assessment Reports for Mexico, Colombia, Vietnam, Zambia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Kenya in close partnership with government partners.

Although limited progress is envisaged under the UNFCCC, some developing countries are moving forward, preparing their governance structures, institutional frameworks and legal systems for the complex challenges that climate change presents. Innovative solutions are being put forward, such as Kenya's planned Carbon Trading Platform, Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula Accord and Climate Fund, Vietnam's Investment Incentives for Renewable Energy Projects and Rwanda's Community Forest Policy.

National legal frameworks can be the catalyst to ensure that climate change response is calibrated to assist those most vulnerable to its impacts. Safeguards can be put in place to ensure women, children and the rural poor are actively consulted in the development of response policies and play a central role in

building resilience. Best practices need to be identified, analyzed, and promoted, as for instance has been done through IDLO's Compendium of Innovative Legal Practices on Climate Change Policy.

Without effective national laws, consensus secured at the international level cannot be implemented. Legal preparedness for climate change must therefore be considered a vital component of building climate resilience and a key strategy to enable implementation of all climate change actions. COP18 presents an opportunity for Member States to recognize and actively support national efforts to achieve legal preparedness for climate change.

Broader than climate change alone, COP18 is a crucial stage in the global process to look beyond the Millennium Development Goals. As the Doha discussions suggest, it is essential that climate compatible development, environmental sustainability and support for adequate rule of law and governance frameworks are adequately considered and actively addressed as part of the post-2015 development agenda, with an aim to ensure the effective realization of sustainable development for all.

Background

The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) works to enable governments and empower people to reform laws and strengthen institutions to promote peace, justice, and sustainable development by providing legal expertise to governments, multilateral and civil society organizations.

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