

Workshop on Equity and Climate Change
New Delhi, April 12, 2012

Chair's Summary

A workshop on Equity and Climate Change was hosted by India in New Delhi on April 12, 2012. The workshop was inaugurated by Mrs. Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister for Environment and Forests of India and was attended by senior negotiators/representatives of Argentina, Brazil, China, Egypt, Gambia, Mauritius, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Swaziland and Thailand. Mr. Martin Khor, Director, South Centre and Ms. Meena Raman from Third World Network also attended.

2. In the context of the decision of AWG-LCA in Durban to organize a workshop on 'Equitable Access to Sustainable Development' in Bonn in May 2012 and the launch of a new process under Durban Platform, the workshop was aimed as a brainstorming opportunity to discuss the continued importance of equity and its appropriate articulation in the context of the global response to climate change and how to address this important issue as part of the forthcoming negotiations under the Durban Platform.

3. The workshop was divided into three sessions namely: 'Equity: Context, Interpretation and Approaches', 'Equitable Access to Sustainable Development – a Dimension of Equity' and 'Equity and Durban Platform'.

4. Recalling that the Convention under Article 3.1 enjoins parties to protect the climate system 'on the basis of Equity', participants in the workshop were unanimous and emphatic in their view that Equity is central to the Climate Change negotiations. Participants stressed that the Bonn workshop should enhance parties' understanding of Equity and its operationalization, and should not be an end in itself. They felt that discussions on timeframe for peaking and global goal should be guided by contextual considerations relating to implementation of actions and commitments of parties under the Convention and the needs of social and economic development and poverty eradication of developing countries. They also stressed that the outcome of the workshop should feed into the negotiations and also inform the deliberations under the Durban Platform, particularly the manner in which Equity, a key Convention principle, must be articulated in all elements of Durban Platform as also the arrangements to be devised under it. Participants also agreed that there should be more such workshops/consultations on the issue, including one during the upcoming session in Bangkok later this year.

5. Participants stressed that Durban Platform is unequivocally 'under the Convention', which implies that all the principles and provisions of the Convention would apply to the process and outcome of the Durban Platform in totality. It was strongly felt that Durban Platform should not seek to re-define or re-interpret the principles and provisions of the Convention. It was emphasized that consensus around Equity as a principle is critical for Durban Platform negotiations and a discussion on the various elements of Durban Platform must be preceded by an agreement on the principles on which it would be based upon. Many participants suggested that DP should have a workplan on Equity to address these issues.

6. Participants agreed on the need to discuss and coordinate further on the issue with other countries including at the upcoming Bonn session.
