



FOREST CARBON SEQUESTRATION AND AVOIDED EMISSIONS

Keynote Speaker Phil Clapp's Observations

Canadian Boreal Initiative/Ivey Foundation
Forests and Climate Change Forum
October 15th to 17th, 2007

Kananaskis, Alberta

IVEY foundation



Keynote Speaker Observations (as recorded by rapporteur)

Phil Clapp, President, National Environment Trust

Dinner Speaker, Monday October 15th, 2007

International Context for Forest Conservation and Climate Change Mitigation

Upcoming Bali meetings

Many current Kyoto signatories will be demanding that developing countries sign on for emissions reductions. Two to watch for movement are China and India.

China: May be open to discussing targets. Government is concerned about the potential impact of environmental disruption and degradation on its control of the country. However, China will want credit for actions it has taken to reduce emissions and is looking for technology investment (not technology transfer).

India: Much less interested in targets.

Going forward, the EU will be more divided than it has been previously. Eastern European members will be less enthusiastic about deep reductions. Germany, Italy and France will remain strong advocates. UK will be less committed.

Merkel (German Chancellor) has already suggested a 2 degree warming limit strategy. Would require developing countries to improve energy efficiency by 30% and utility efficiency by 20%.

U.S. will essentially sit out Bali round. But Bali is mostly an organizing meeting in any case. It may be necessary to wait until 2010 to really move forward on a new deal with the U.S. included in order to sync up with the U.S. election cycle. The new president will need to bring the Senate along on any new deal and that can't happen immediately after the election.

U.S. attempts to develop a parallel (largely voluntary) process has stalled. Little international buy-in and Australian election will likely further undermine this approach.

On avoided deforestation and offsets, the current leading proposal is the Papua New Guinea proposal. This essentially calls for establishing carbon baselines and providing credits for any improvements above that level. However, there is scepticism about this proposal given capacity to undertake baseline measurement and monitoring in 3rd world countries. The focus of the PPG proposal is really tropical forests.

The other threat related to this issue is the possible flooding of the market with cheap forest credits – this will create divisions between forest conservation advocates and those seeking rapid emission reductions from fossil fuel sources. It would be better to separate forest and fossil carbon credit trading. In fact, it might possibly be better to position forest credits as a parallel program available where you have good data and measurability, which is the case essentially only in developed countries.

If tropical proposals go forward without any mechanisms suitable for boreal, it will be hard to catch up.

The idea of providing offsets in return for maintaining intactness will also be contentious – doesn't jibe well with emission reduction goals.

It seems that there is an increasing need to get climate scientists to admit they were wrong about one thing -- that the situation is much worse than predicted.

This is really a humanitarian crisis – a human crisis of unimaginable proportions. World is on the brink of a flood of climate refugees.

Fortunately, the climate issue has now landed firmly on leaders' desks – it is now being dealt with at the Prime Ministerial and Presidential level. This also opens up the possibility of summits between climate meetings. The G8 meeting in Japan may focus on climate.

What is required in the next round will dwarf the scope of Kyoto – Kyoto is a climate protocol on training wheels. The next agreement must lead to at least emission stabilization by the early 2020s.



IVEY foundation

