

The logo for SECCCP, consisting of a stylized flower icon to the left of the text 'SECCCP'.

sustainable energy
& climate change
project

A project of Earthlife Africa Johannesburg



Beyond Kyoto...

- Impacts are showing: climate change is real and happening faster than anticipated
- International political situation remains difficult, especially after reelection of G. W. Bush
- Major developing countries not ready for new commitments
- EU ready to remain champion?
- 2005 is the year that the Kyoto Protocol enters into force (16th Feb!)
- 2005 is the year that negotiations on the future need to begin
- We shall see...





The Climate Action Network (CAN)

- History and mission
- Organisational structure
- CAN at the negotiations



The Climate Action Network (CAN)

- The Climate Action Network (CAN) is an international coalition of environmental non-governmental organisations (ENGOs) that work on climate change. At present, CAN has a membership of over 350 organisations and counting, from all parts of the globe
- In CAN, NGOs of very different backgrounds come together under the common vision of averting dangerous climate change impacts and enabling a sustainable future for all (not representing corporate interests)
- This does not work without disputes and controversies, but overall the global challenge and the many obstacles to overcoming it unite a highly diverse array of groups



CAN's organisational structure

- CAN is a loose network with a flat hierarchy but has recently started to formalise rules and procedures. It is not an “NGO brand name” for the public, but specialists
- CAN is organised in regional (and national) nodes that coordinate among their respective members to varying degrees. Few have dedicated paid staff for CAN work, in many cases the job of coordinator is taken on on a voluntary basis
- CAN's present regional nodes: Latin America, North/West/East/Southern Africa, South/South East Asia, Western/ Central and Eastern Europe
- Non-regional national nodes: Japan, Australia, US, Canada



How CAN works

- CAN brings together a variety of organisations that differ widely in size, organisational structure, funding sources, work focus, scope of activity, etc.
- Some of them are networks in themselves, enabling CAN to reach out to more organisations, the most important ones being Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). With their human, financial and logistical resources these very different networks play a particularly important role for the work of CAN
- However, only the wide coverage and the many voices (and logos) combined give CAN its unique presence

CAN positions

Championing the Kyoto Protocol despite deficiencies

Living with market mechanisms in an unequal world

Brining equity into the multilateral climate change regime

No sinks in the CDM

CAN discussion document on the Future Framework

Growing Southern representation



How CAN works

- The diversity of CAN groups presents both problems and benefits. A particular advantage is the division of labour among groups that all contribute in different ways and on various levels to the same goal
- The big networks have good access to politicians but can also organise large events and campaigns for public awareness, research institutes provide technical expertise, lobby offices monitor detailed legislative processes, others act as project developers
- As far as its membership is concerned, CAN faces a Northern bias, both in terms of numbers and capacity, but tries to balance with equal representation and consensus

Role of NGOs



CAN's history

- CAN was officially founded by NGO campaigners and scientists from North and South in the late 1980s. CAN Europe (then Climate Network Europe) was the first regional node to be established in 1989.
- Due to its informal nature, no independent funding was available for CAN International. Financial support, e.g. for Southern group participation at conferences, was often channelled through larger Northern groups and CAN offices.
- CAN members adopted an international charter in 2002 and elected a board of volunteers for operational decisions.



CAN's history

- In 2004, the CAN International Secretariat was founded in Bonn, Germany (seat of the UNFCCC secretariat) to take on logistics and fund-raising for CAN.
- Progress is slow but apparent and acceptance among the network high
- Long-term strategy: establishing a funding base that enables full-time staff in developing countries, to build Southern NGO capacity and strengthen their input into the international process



How CAN works

- CAN members and regional nodes work autonomously according to their own priorities. The network physically manifests itself mainly at the UN conferences, where hundreds of NGO representatives gather under the CAN umbrella (also at subsidiary body meetings).
- Inbetween sessions, the network exchanges information and coordinates action via email lists serves (a global list, plus several regional and thematic ones).
- According to requirements, CAN establishes working groups on particular issues
- 2001 CAN Equity summit

At the negotiations

- CAN's objective at the conferences is to ensure the most environmentally beneficial outcome
- To this end, CAN members monitor the development of the talks via formal observation and informal talks
- NGOs meet with representatives of their country's / region's delegation, communicate their positions
- They also act as messengers between delegations, opening channels between opposing Parties or potential allies



At the negotiations

- CAN members meet daily to exchange information and consider positions and strategy and agree public messages
- Ad-hoc working groups are established to achieve specific goals and ensure broad participation
- In daily press briefings, CAN members inform the journalists present at the negotiations of the latest NGO assessment



Photo courtesy of
IISD/ENB - Leila Mead

At the negotiations

- NGOs are allowed to participate in the international negotiations as observers
- CAN members arrive at the COPs in the hundreds and in various guises: as NGO activists in public events, as observers in suit and tie or dress, as independent researchers, as representatives of international organisations and as country delegates





At the negotiations

- CAN produces a daily conference newsletter, called ECO, which is distributed in paper copies, via an email list and on the web, reaching many thousands of readers. For some years, also a French version has been produced
- ECO informs about the current state of negotiations from an NGO perspective and voices NGO positions
- It is widely read among delegates and press (see pictures to the right)
- www.climatenetwork.org/eco/



Pictures courtesy of
IISD/ENB - Leila Mead



At the negotiations

- CAN publicly names and shames delegations that block the talks or try to water down its environmental effectiveness through the “Fossil of the Day” Awards
- Every day at 6 pm, conference participants gather to witness the ceremony, in which the “fossils” in question are presented with their awards in absentia, and their “crimes” read out aloud
- While it does not bother usual suspects much, the awards receive frequent media attention - and inform other delegations.



At the negotiations

- CAN groups organise special events inside/near the conference venue (Kyoto Club member cards, and Kyoto's 6th birthday and Russian dance)



Photo courtesy of
IISD/ENB - Leila Mead



LSE, Economic Diplomacy - January 2005

At the negotiations

- Other events outside the conference include demonstrations or public displays (Rubber boots, Ark)



How many hats?

Local, national and international affiliations (incl. CAN nodes, FOEI, CDMWatch, SinksWatch and social movements, climate justice)

What functions?

Lobbying national delegates and key decision-makers;

Lobbying NGO colleagues, business;

Advocacy (more general) including promoting the CAN multi-track approach to post-2012 regime; publicising impacts and areas at risk; highlighting national opportunities to the international community to build pressure at home; often through side events

Watchdog activities (incl. holding delegates accountable);

Taking advantage of the presence of comrades / building solidarity

The CAN ideal:

Follow one or a few issues as part of a working group;

Attend CAN strategy and working group meetings and consult on positions, particularly with members from your region;

Volunteer to report back on specific sessions;

Contribute to ECO articles (also daily editorial committee and 'graveyard shift' – one each from North and South);

Attend some Fossil of the Day presentations (possibly present);

Contribute to press work;

Gather intelligence, particularly re your governments positions;