Expectations, Opportunities and Challenges for CoP 20

18th November 2014, IIC – New Delhi, India

Organizers: Beyond Copenhagen, PAIRVI, CECOEDECON, BJVJ, SADED, INECC, and CANSA
Supported by: OXFAM India

The penultimate UNFCCC Climate Change Conference, CoP20, to be held in Lima is being seen as the final opportunity to draft an agreement to be signed in 2015 at Paris. The IPCC fifth Assessment Report expressed grave concern on lack of efforts and suggested that emissions must peak before 2020 to be able to keep the rise in temperature below. Though there has been an effort in recent months to increase the momentum towards Cop 20 through a number of efforts including UN Secretary General Ban ki-Moon's Climate Summit in New York, People's Climate March, joint declaration by the USA and China, the outlook towards COP 20 is weak. Specific expectations from COP 20 remain low; however, success in Lima will determine the success in Paris.

With these concerns, Beyond Copenhagen along with INECC, Laya, CANSA and Oxfam India organized a PreCOP Consultations to look at the menu of issues, expectations and possibilities at COP 20.

A welcome note from Ajita Tiwari, (INECC) set the tone for the day. She wondered whether in the climate of low expectations and ambitions Lima would deliver what it is expected to do? The emphasized that the breakthrough in the impasse between the developing and developed countries looks unlikely and whether this would enable a meaningful discussion on information on INDCs, elements of future agreement, having a road map towards the GCF etc, which are major expectations from Lima.

First session, titled "Towards Paris Agreement" was moderated by Nafisa D'Souza of INECC, focused on global outlook, legal form and character, adequacy and 2 Degree goal, and emissions Gap. Indrajeet from Third World Network elaborated upon the state of play in negotiations and specifically in the Green Climate Fund (GCF), IPCC fifth Assessment Report and the most recent ADP session. He elaborated that the GCF meetings continue to be a struggle

between developing and developed nations and the civil society, there is no agreement yet on the initial capitalization target that developing countries have long been demanding. Developed nations have also been trying to delink GCF from the UNFCCC process. The existence of Private Sector Facility is also contentious as its existence goes against the main premise of GCF. IPCC also has its share of politics despite being a scientific body for e.g. there have been attempts to remove references to technology transfer. ADP also has not been able to effectively negotiate on issues of differentiation, scope of the 2015 agreement, etc.

D Raghunandan from AIPSN emphasized on the scientific inadequacy of the 2 degree goal, and said that the goal has overwhelmed the clearer target of reduction in consumption and emission. He underlined that to remain the 2 degree rise in temperature 70% of fossil fuel need to be left in the ground and no country is ready to make commitments on this more sensible and direct target. He added that in Paris the final decision on the deal will depend on mitigation targets and commitment only as the negotiations are more political than science-based. Talking about the IPCC report, he said, that the fifth assessment report of the IPCC that has made predictions till 2100 and not 2050 unlike its predecessors, may seem to have given more breathing space but it rather presents a grimmer picture that if timely and enough action is not taken then the spillover GHG concentrations will make a recovery by 2100 impossible by not staying within the 2 degree Celsius limit. He lamented that the report has given us the carbon budget but there is yet no agreement on burden sharing between the nations and how to achieve it on the principle of 'fairness'.

Soumya Dutta from BJVJ speaking on closing the emission gap, stated that to achieve the 2 degree target the earlier target was to peak global emissions by 2015, but based on current trends of emissions and mitigation actions the emission gap (in BAU) is 17GT. He elaborated that in the current pledges best case scenario GAP and worst case scenario GAP is 6 GT and 11GT respectively. He added that all the worst polluters (except EU & Russia) are far off the mark and in this scenario big polluters will have to reduce @9% from (presumed peaking) 2020 onwards. He concluded by saying that power, industry and transport sectors have the best potential for reducing the gap (over 12GT) and these must be utilized optimally.

Nitin Sethi, Associate Editor, Business Standard, cautioned against the hype and euphoria around Sino-U.S. deal on climate change action, talks of which were underway for the past three years. He elaborated that the joint declaration by the US and China creates an unholy nexus where both aim to appropriate the maximum atmospheric space, as both countries will be around 12 t per capita emission by 2030. He also added that setting so low ambition by these will embolden

other polluters to submit only subpar efforts, and will take pressure away from India.

Sudhir Sharma from UNEP shared, through video conferencing, that one of the major outcome from Lima could be declaration text of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). The numbers on the table so far are not promising with China's not reflecting the level of peaking and others entirely absent. India is hoped to declare its numbers sometime next year. He also touched upon Ratchet-up-mechanism, to review and improve ambitions to track progress, which has been proposed during the negotiations.

Second session moderated by Sanjay Vashist of CAN-SA deliberated the operationalization of the institutional framework set up till date by the UNFCCC process. Manish Shrivastava from TERI explained how NAMAs could inform INDCs setting ambitious economy wide targets. Lavanya Rajamani from CPR elaborated on issues relating to legal form and character in the 2015 climate agreement. Likely elements of the agreement would be legally binding core agreement accompanied by COP decisions, supplementary instruments (such as national schedules, registries, etc), and political declarations (proposed by New Zealand). She further detailed these legal instruments and their implications. Siddharth Pathak, CAN-I, laid out civil society expectations from COP20 in Lima content of the agreement itself. Siddarth reminded the audience that Paris is not the end of negotiations, it will only give a framework and much work lies ahead. With regard to specific expectations, he underlined that Lima should ensure progress on three key decisions on Work Stream 2 and pre2020 ambitions, INDCs with targets along with clarifications on numbers, policies to be undertaken, components in detail whether by mitigation or adaptation and the finance aspect as well; and finally the grand text of the draft negotiation and its elements.

The third session drew "Perspective from the key actors" of the climate change negotiations where countries were represented by their Missions in Delhi. Countries represented included the Australia, Brazil, the EU, New Zealand and Poland. Representatives of the US, the Netherlands and Mexico chose to be observers. The session was moderated by Ajay Jha from PAIRVI and was underpinned by the big question whether politics can deliver what science demands.

Henriette Faergemann, First Counselor – Environment, Energy, Climate Change, Delegation of the European Union to India, expressed her expectations of positive outcomes from the new leadership in EU. She informed the audience of EU's latest climate commitments, and added that EU is leading the way for the world to follow suit by institutionalizing coherence in its energy and climate change policies. She expressed that the EU is also keen to see reduction commitments from all parties and strongly advocates for them to be open to review their commitments in the future in order to track progress towards reducing the

emissions gap. She stated that India is a major actor in the negotiations and must come up with its numbers soon. For Lima, she hoped that parties could agree on the elements of the agreement, the scope of INDCs, how to take forward the pre-2020 ambitions as they will also decide the post 2020 ambitions. She clearly stated EU's support for the developing nations' perspective of CBDR and its criticality in the final agreement and the equal importance of adaptations compared to mitigation.

Esther Guy-Meakin from New Zealand High Commission put forth her concern on the vulnerability of island nations like New Zealand and its neighbour Australia due to climate change impacts. In terms of Lima COP, her expectation was that it would be a critical milestone leading to conclusion of the agreement in Paris. She hoped that in order to have an effective and meaningful outcome the agreement achieved should be legal and all countries should be committed to making changes. In brief the, agreement should be effective, durable and inclusive. Ms. Meakin also shared that while a number of Ministerial Dialogues will be convened at COP 20, the most important would be the first High-level Ministerial Dialogue on Climate Finance as it is very important for some key principles to be established around the theme of climate finance.

Chloe Rocha Young from the Embassy of Brazil, iterated that the principle of CBDR should be the core of any commitment by the parties and anticipated that the agreement in 2015 would allow for increased ambition and global efforts. She also elaborated Brazil's proposal of concentric circles to create distinction between the developed and developing and poor countries. She emphasized that it should be ensured that there is no backsliding by parties on their commitments on mitigation, finance and technology, however, she also recognized a role for south- south cooperation

Lukasz Kondej, representing Embassy of Poland, brought forth the achievements of COP 19 at Warsaw last year and expectations before Lima COP. He said that Warsaw COP set the stage for further successful negotiations at Lima and Paris and Poland was working in this Troika to ensure meaningful, effective and durable agreement at Paris. He reckoned that Lima talks should deliver the first draft for 2015 climate deal in Paris.

The concluding session was to have expectations from the Indian negotiating team represented by Mr. Susheel Kumar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests. Nafisa (INECC) and Vanita Suneja (Oxfam India) laid down the list of expectations from civil society and from foreign mission with regard to the Lima COP. Mr. Kumar

highlighted India's concern with the progress in negotiations and said that India has very strongly favoured historical responsibility, equity based on per capita principle, and distinction between industrialized countries and developing countries. He added, that India along with BASIC and G-77 & China is prepared to prevent any efforts to cross these redlines by the developed countries. He held that among the various issues agitating the Indian negotiators, the most disconcerting has been the ambition level pre- 2020 where the commitment made by different countries under the Framework Agreement is not being honored. He expressed concern over the lack of action being taken by countries that are both responsible and resourceful. He also added that India government has done some work on its position in terms of Paris Agreement, which will be made public soon. He also invited CSOs to provide their views on issues of differentiation, equity, nature of obligations of the A1 & non A1 parties.

Vanita Suneja emphasized that Indian climate policy has very little interaction with the CSOs who have done immense work on environment and climate and have many things to say on policies and practices. Mr. Susheel Kumar assured of calling shortly, a formal meeting between Ministry of Environment and Forest (MOEF) and related NGOs and invited the collective view of various stakeholders working on the theme of climate change in India. He also assured that Indian delegation will be open to Indian CSOs in the COP and will welcome regular interaction with them. Ms. Kanika Grover from Ministry of Finance cleared India's position on climate finance and GCF's initial capitalization. Ajay K Jha delivered the vote of thanks and invited all CSOs going to COP to work in tandem.