

# IBIS Policy on Climate Change

Approved June 2012

## Introduction

Global warming and the resulting climate changes have been well documented to cause severe effects on the lives of people all over the world. The negative effects of climate change are strongest for the poorest people; threatening to set back some of the limited gains achieved by developing countries, and hinder the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals. In the late 1990ies, the number of children affected by disasters was estimated at 66.5 million a year, and climate change impacts are projected to increase this number to as many as 175 million per year in the 2010-2020 period.<sup>1</sup>

Climate change related humanitarian disaster is as much a result of people's vulnerability as of their exposure to hazard. In addition to the direct effects such as draughts, floods and hurricanes, climate change has the effect of adding to vulnerability and serve as a 'multiplier' of disaster and conflict. Fast pushing the poorest and most marginalized communities beyond their capacity to respond, it contributes to an uneven distribution of wealth and a deepening of poverty. This effect is known as climate injustice<sup>2</sup>.

Another effect for local communities of global climate change politics are internationally funded forest management programmes, which are implemented in developing countries without consideration for the needs and rights of local communities and indigenous peoples.

Politicians and development actors hence have good reason to be concerned by scientists' warnings about the worsening of climate change and related hazards in the next decade. The shared consequences and the heavy responsibility burden of the developed countries makes climate change a matter of global urgency. The developed countries, the EU and Denmark, must take responsibility, commit to the reduction of emissions and address the consequences of climate changes in the South.

Climate change has been among the priorities in the Annual Work plan of IBIS since it was first approved in 2009. IBIS is an active member of the Danish 92 Group coalition, which is a key player in relation to lobbying of the international climate change negotiations, working for an ambitious international climate agreement within the UNFCCC to avoid dangerous climate change, promote sustainable development, compensate the poor developing countries for the costs related to adaptation and mitigation, and ensure an equitable division of future emissions and financial commitments for adaptation and mitigation.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of this Policy on Climate Change is to establish IBIS' political position on climate change and global climate justice, related to IBIS' rights based approach. In addition, the policy will define some guiding principles and thematic issues to guide the work with climate change in new and existing programmes, as well as advocacy and information campaigns in Denmark.

On this background, IBIS has established the following political positions as guiding principles on climate change and global climate justice.

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, Back-To-School Initiative, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> The principles of climate justice are enshrined in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) agreed at the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992.

<sup>3</sup> Quote: Group 92 position paper: [http://www.92grp.dk/cms/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=36&Itemid=45](http://www.92grp.dk/cms/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=36&Itemid=45)

## **IBIS' Political Positions**

- The developed countries, the EU and Denmark, must take responsibility, commit to the reduction of emissions and address the consequences of climate changes in the South.
- Denmark must play a leading role in the development and implementation of strategies to cope with climate change, through adaptation and mitigation in Denmark, Africa and Latin America.
- Denmark must play a leading role in the development of renewable energy.
- A fair ambitious and legally binding international agreement must be reached, which protects the planet against human-induced climate change. The agreement has to follow the Polluter Pays principle, where the wealthy countries that have benefitted in terms of higher standards of living transfer resources to poor countries that suffer most from climate changes.
- A global agreement must include mechanisms for financing adaptation initiatives in developing countries. This funding must be new and additional, prioritise the most vulnerable countries and populations, and be managed democratically and transparently under the auspices of either the UNFCCC or another UN institution.
- The principle of *offsetting* must be abandoned, as it is a false solution to the climate crisis<sup>4</sup>.
- International mechanisms to reduce deforestation and degradation (particularly the REDD+ programmes) must respect, protect and promote human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples in accordance with the UN Declaration, the ILO Convention 169 and the fair trade principles for the extractive industry sector (e.g. the Diamond Development Initiative).<sup>5</sup>
- Support must be channelled to poor and marginalized groups and vulnerable communities, enabling them to adapt their livelihoods. Special attention must be given to women, youth and indigenous peoples.
- Information on climate change and on rights of people in this respect must be widely distributed and accessible.
- Action must be taken now.

### **IBIS will seek to influence climate change politics through:**

- Advocacy for policies and regulations which impel equal access to and use of resources i.e. gradual decrease of resource consumption by rich countries and sustainable use of resources internationally;
- Empowerment of people and their organisations to make their voices heard in national and international negotiations on climate change;
- Advocacy for policies on sustainable green economy both nationally and internationally, which progressively lessen the dependency on non-renewable sources of energy and point to new and innovative alternatives;
- Establishment of human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples as guiding principles for the implementation of REDD+ programmes, rejecting offsetting as means of financing forest conservation;
- Lobbying for coherent and transparent climate finance architecture in accordance with the polluters pay principle, in order to ensure that funds reach the most vulnerable countries and populations promoting public as well as new and innovative sources of financing.

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<sup>4</sup> Mechanism by which developed countries or private companies can buy carbon offsets to compensate for their continued pollution. See more on p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> See [www.ddiglobal.org](http://www.ddiglobal.org) and [ddi.d-ecoweb.uk](http://ddi.d-ecoweb.uk)

## Climate Change Key Aspects

The global nature of climate change cause national and international problems, politics and solutions to be closely intertwined. IBIS has defined three essential key aspects for working with climate change perspectives in Denmark, the EU, and other developed countries:

- 1) Reducing Emissions
- 2) Focus on Renewable Energy
- 3) Restoring Climate Justice - support to developing countries

### 1. Reducing Emissions

The Danish government has given high priority to emission reduction plans, both at national level and in international negotiations. At national level, government policies include a Climate Policy with binding greenhouse gas reduction targets for 2020, to meet international obligations. According to Government statements, Denmark is well on the way to meeting the EU target, although there are important challenges with nitrous oxide, methane and F-gases from the agricultural sector, waste management and industrial processes, which contribute heavily to the Danish greenhouse gas emissions<sup>6</sup>. Still, Denmark has one of the largest CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita.

Emission reduction at international level is mainly held within the framework and instruments of the Kyoto Protocol, which obliges the signing countries to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 5% from the 1990 level before the end of 2012. Denmark ratified the Kyoto Protocol in May 2002, but several countries with large carbon dioxide emissions, such as the US, abstained from signing, and Canada, Japan and Russia have disregarded their commitments and oppose a renewal of the protocol.

Since then, a series of international conferences have failed to progress on a legally binding agreement to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. In 2009, the climate conference COP15 in Copenhagen introduced the option for countries to pledge for reduction targets depending on their economic, technical and social capacity. These pledges are however far from the recommended emission reduction targets. The 2007 assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) advised that reductions of 25%-40% by 2020 would be necessary to limit average temperature rise to two degrees. The latest COP conference was held in Durban in 2011. Again, the US and other large nations such as Australia, Canada, Russia and Japan, failed to commit to reduce emissions without a commitment from China. This is a major hindrance for a global binding agreement, as China refuses to commit to the same levels as the developed countries, on the grounds that hundreds of million Chinese still need to be brought out of persistent poverty.

Another major hindrance for substantial progress in emission reduction is the *offsetting* mechanism, whereby developed countries or private companies can buy carbon offsets created by “emissions-saving projects” to compensate for their continued pollution. There are several concerns associated with this mechanism. First of all, it delays the highly necessary domestic structural adjustments in developed countries. Secondly, it is very difficult to ascertain whether these projects would have been developed anyway, in which case the offsetting actually contributes negatively to the carbon balance sheet. Thirdly, some of the projects are known to have resulted in land grabs and other rights violations to which especially indigenous peoples have been exposed. Denmark is currently

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<sup>6</sup> KPR (Danish Government Climate Policy) 2011 p. 3

leading the way as the Ministry of Climate has recently abolished the use of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). The CDM is the largest existing offsetting scheme and is placed under the auspices of the UN.

It is necessary for IBIS, together with likeminded organisations, to advocate for a fair ambitious and legally binding international agreement on emissions reduction, and for Denmark to play a leading role. The agreement must include a development aspect following the Polluter Pays principle. The transition towards a more green economy must be pursued both in the North and the South.

## **2. Focus on Renewable Energy**

Renewable energy is a fundamental element of sustainable and long term solutions for limiting climate change. A serious and ambitious investment in renewable and sustainable energy sources is essential for human and economic development towards a fair and clean global resource management, without uncontrolled exploitation and environmental degradation.

The development towards independence of fossil fuels has been a political priority in Denmark, especially in the last decade, where the wind industry has grown and expanded. In March 2012, the Danish government released the Strategy for Energy 2050, with the aim of reaching 100% fossil fuel independence in 2050 in the energy and transport sectors. A first milestone is that in 2020, 35% of the final energy consumption must come from renewable energy sources, especially wind, waves and biofuels.<sup>7</sup>

At EU level, the European Council in 2007 adopted the strategy paper Energy Policy for Europe, followed by the EU Climate and Energy package in 2008, which lists a series of measures with the objective of reducing the EU's contribution to global warming and guaranteeing energy supply. The EU also has the objective of increasing the proportion of renewable energies in its energy mix by 20% in 2020. The aims of the policies are supported by market-based tools, mainly taxes, subsidies and CO2 emissions trading.

While sustainability is the aim of the action plans within these agreements, other political key issues weight heavily on the scale, e.g. the security of energy supply and the competitiveness of markets.<sup>8</sup> This means that renewable energies remain on the fringe of the European energy mix, as they still cost more than traditional energy sources. There must be more focus and more investment in developing existing as well as new technologies, in particular those devoted to energy efficiency and renewable energies. The new technologies must be used by companies operating in developing countries and made affordable for national enterprises.

It also has to be recognised that not all renewable energy sources are equally desirable. Many studies suggest that biofuels such as palm oil, soybean and rapeseed leave even larger carbon footprints than fossil fuels. This is due to the often-ignored effects of Indirect Land Use Change (ILUC). When actors such as the EU enacts policies requiring significant amounts of biofuels to be used, the resulting sharp rise in global demand leads to deforestation in developing countries in order to facilitate increased production which in turn may result in forced displacement of indigenous and other vulnerable local communities and catastrophic consequences for biodiversity. The use of first generation biofuels should, as a consequence, be abandoned.

Denmark and the EU must play a leading role in the development, implementation and dissemination of renewable energy technologies, which are low-cost, reliable and sustainable. IBIS

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.ens.dk/en-US/policy/danish-climate-and-energy-policy/Sider/danish-climate-and-energy-policy.aspx>

<sup>8</sup> [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/energy/european\\_energy\\_policy/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/energy/european_energy_policy/index_en.htm)

will seek to support advocacy initiatives and campaigns that ensure political and practical focus on sustainable energy, as well as transfer of new technologies, both in Denmark, the EU and in developing countries.

### **3. Restoring Climate Justice - Support to developing countries**

Restoring equity towards more global climate justice includes various aspects, which must be reflected in policies.

Emissions cuts must be ensured at global level, led by developed countries, and following a policy and practice of economic development based on sustainable resource management. Denmark must take lead in promoting sustainable and green economy, e.g. through the promotion of low carbon technologies, renewable energy and economic growth strategies with emphasis on sustainability.

A fair global burden sharing arrangement must be developed, where the wealthy countries take responsibility for promoting green economy and equal sharing of resources. Wealthier countries must provide financial means for adaptation to and mitigation of the devastating and unjust effects of climate change to people in the poorest countries.

The unjust nature of climate change effects makes it necessary to channel additional financial support to adaptation and mitigation initiatives, to the worlds' poorest people, through increased, additional, predictable and sustainable funding.

Effort must be made to reduce the vulnerability of exposed populations through policies and strategies promoting a sustainable green economy and fair management of human and natural resources, among others by promoting policy proposals and concrete alternatives. The coping capacity of local communities must be improved in order to avoid or diminish the humanitarian effects of climate change. IBIS will seek to promote that the developed countries, hereunder the EU and Denmark, take on responsibility and commit to the reduction of emissions and address the consequences of climate changes in the South, with political and financial means.

### **Climate Change in the South**

Several of the countries where IBIS operates have economies that depend heavily on climate dynamics. In Central America, the Andes, the Amazon and Sub Saharan Africa, the large part of the population, who depend on agriculture, is ill equipped to deal with changing rainfall patterns, shorter growing seasons and rising air temperatures. Draughts, flooding and the limitation of water supplies are increasing threats in many of IBIS' partner countries, which have been ranked as highly vulnerable to climate change.<sup>9</sup> Indigenous peoples in IBIS' countries of cooperation are also severely affected by climate change, as their subsistence and cultures depend entirely on their ancestral territories situated in rainforests, in mountain areas, and around rivers.

A number of IBIS' partner organisations have analysed the need for capacity building and access to information around climate change related issues, both at political and practical levels.

IBIS will engage in climate change at programmatic as well as political levels, by connecting issues identified by local partners to national and global advocacy initiatives, and to campaigns and information activities in Denmark. The level and nature of the commitment and initiatives will

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<sup>9</sup> UNFCCC article 4 requires developed countries to assist developing countries that are "particularly vulnerable" to climate change in meeting costs of adaptation. The various vulnerability indexes are also highly politicised tools for capturing future funding for adaptation.

depend of the specific local context, but will adhere to the Political Positions and Focus Areas defined in this policy.

## **IBIS Focus Areas**

Climate change already exists in various existing IBIS strategies. In the Global Strategy for Democratic Governance, Citizens' Rights and Economic Justice 2012-2016, (section 2.3), Natural Resources and Climate Change is defined as a specific Line of Action for the Governance work of IBIS. Areas of intervention include support to indigenous peoples and affected communities to ensure their rights in REDD and REDD+ initiatives, and budget monitoring and advocacy related to international and national climate funds.<sup>10</sup> It is also a specific aim of the Latin America Against Poverty and Inequality programme (LAPI).

The following three areas of intervention have been defined as relevant for IBIS, based on the strategic framework of IBIS partners and programmes:

- 1) Forests, Rights and REDD / REDD+
- 2) Climate Change Financing, Resource Tracking and Budget Monitoring
- 3) Vulnerability and Resilience - Disaster Risk Reduction

### **1. Forests, Rights and REDD / REDD+**

Approximately 20% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are estimated to stem from eradication and degradation of forests. The idea of REDD (Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation) was first introduced in 2005, and is the area on which most progress has been made in the international negotiations. The basic principle of REDD is to create a financial value for the carbon stored in forests, offering incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from forested lands. The concept of REDD+ goes beyond deforestation and forest degradation, and includes the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.<sup>11</sup>

However, REDD / REDD+ initiatives and programmes have also met heavy criticism. While some actors describe REDD initiatives as a potent tool for mitigating climate change, others criticize REDD for being nothing but a new offset mechanism – a false solution where industrialized countries in the North preserve forests in the South instead of cutting domestic emissions.

Forest conservation through REDD / REDD+ is a significant foreign policy priority of Nordic countries, which have supported implementation through bilateral aid, multilateral assistance via UN-REDD, FCPF and NGO projects. Through some of these initiatives, the land rights of indigenous peoples have come under pressure from companies, NGOs and carbon merchants looking for quick profits. REDD programmes are seen by some as an opportunity for the promotion of local forest management, while others point to how REDD effectively dispossess communities of lands, territories, rights to self-determination and undermine their rights to influence on their own development priorities. Serious concern has arisen among indigenous and forest dependent

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<sup>10</sup> IBIS Global Strategy for Democratic Governance, Citizens' Rights and Economic Justice 2012-2016.

<sup>11</sup> Definitions of REDD and REDD+ see <http://www.un-redd.org/AboutREDD/tabid/582/Default.aspx>

communities as to the consequences for human and collective rights. Indigenous peoples are seldom appropriately consulted.<sup>12</sup>

IBIS finds that Rights must come before REDD, meaning that REDD / REDD+ must be implemented in accordance with Human Rights instruments, particularly the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the ILO Convention 169, and following appropriate consultation and free, prior and informed consent procedures. REDD / REDD+ initiatives must institutionalise the land ownership and resource management systems which provide optimal livelihoods to the affected groups. Solutions must be developed in a dialogue between target groups, experts and government authorities. IBIS will work to ensure that such dialogue takes place and that solutions respect and comprehend all stake- and rights holders.

IBIS will promote legislation and policies, which respect the right to land and resources both nationally and internationally, hereunder promoting concrete and alternative models for sustainable and low carbon development.<sup>13</sup> IBIS will provide affected groups with access to information on climate change issues, on rights and on adaptation and mitigation opportunities. In this, IBIS and partners will seek to safeguard and promote local knowledge on the environment, sustainable use of natural resources, and adaptation and mitigation strategies of local communities and indigenous peoples. It is necessary to make assessments of the most vulnerable groups, such as women, in the implementation of activities.

## **2. Climate change financing, resource tracking and budget monitoring**

It is widely recognised that responding to climate change impact, and keeping air temperatures from rising over 2 degrees Celsius, requires substantial change of economic policies and economic resources. The funding agreements for climate change adaptation under the UNFCCC are envisioned to enable poor countries to deal with the impacts of climate change, which should imply substantial transfer of funds from North to South. However, there is no agreement on how to obtain sufficient funding for a comprehensive global response. In international negotiations, developed countries have declared their good intentions, but are hesitant in committing to provide the funding, although Scandinavian countries and the EU appear to be relatively progressive actors.

A tax on financial transactions is one of the most obvious and realistic options available as a mechanism to ensure some of the funding needed. The tax is currently discussed in the EU, and the most likely result seems to be a group of willing countries implementing the tax within the framework of the enhanced cooperation procedure. Denmark has so far been surprisingly hostile towards the idea.

During the COP 15 in Copenhagen, the parties agreed to allocate new and additional resources through a Green Climate Fund of 30 billion USD in the period from 2010 to 2012, scaling up to 100 billion USD annually by 2020. Meanwhile, these amounts are arbitrary figures, and do not reflect an assessment of the real or future financial needs for mitigation and adaptation purposes.<sup>14</sup>

If the interventions to alleviate the negative effects on climate change are to have a real impact, the finances for climate adaptation and mitigation must be additional to development aid, and offset mechanisms must be avoided. New and innovative proposals must be sought for procuring

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<sup>12</sup> Evaluation of REDD programmes and related problems see “Realising Rights, Protecting Forests” case studies from Accra Caucus, April 2011.

<sup>13</sup> An example of this is the Yasuní initiative in which Ecuadorian government has committed to leaving the oil in the ground and protect rainforest with economic compensation from the international community.

<sup>14</sup> The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs’ 2009 survey estimated that USD 500-600 billion annually is needed for adaptation and mitigation in developing countries (see Third World Network 2011:19).

additional funds. IBIS finds that the Green Climate Fund must ensure coherence in the global architecture regarding climate finances, under the authority of the COP, with a board with democratic representation of peoples and countries. It must develop strategies on adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer, capacity building and institutional development. The funding must be in the form of grants and be directly accessible through transparent mechanisms.

In line with the activities of monitoring local and national government budgets, IBIS will support the monitoring of climate change related funds to ensure that they are transparently managed and benefit the target group. IBIS will support partners to obtain funds for sustainable resource management and to ensure that funds are used where they are most relevant to poor and vulnerable groups and have the greatest effect.

### **3. Vulnerability and Resilience – Disaster Risk Reduction**

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) covers a range of different issues, many of which coincide with long term development concerns. Investment in DRR is intended to concentrate on reducing vulnerability of target groups rather than reacting to emergencies. The aim of reducing vulnerability is enhancing resilience. Resilience is the ability to anticipate, absorb, accommodate and recover from the effect of a hazardous event, be it climatic, social or political.

In signing the Hyogo Declaration in Japan in 2005, governments of 168 countries acknowledged that it is crucial to reduce disaster risks, thereby reducing vulnerability and enhancing resilience, especially at community level. Vulnerability assessments and resilience analysis need to be built into development planning processes in order to ensure the sustainability of development projects and programmes.

IBIS finds that redressing the underlying causes of vulnerability, such as detrimental policies and poor governance, social discrimination and degraded ecosystems, is crucial and must be addressed by regulation and policies by international society, multi lateral and bilateral organisations and governments.

IBIS will work to ensure that populations have a strong voice and an active role in advocating against climate injustice, in assessing the causes of vulnerability and in emergency preparedness. This will be sought through strengthening the capacity of local actors and government to better understand the nature of risks they may face, and to take appropriate action to reduce such risks and enhance resilience, and improving the accountability of governments and service providers to populations at the risk of being affected by disasters.

## **Implementation**

The implementation of political positions and focus areas presented in this policy into the thematic programmes will vary in accordance with the context of each country. The identification of concrete issues to address and activities to implement in each of IBIS' programmes will depend on the situation and relevance of climate change impact for local partners.

In some countries, issues related to vulnerability and resilience may be most relevant. This may include the effects on children and education of urbanization and internal displacement due to climate change, or land grabbing by international companies for production of biofuel crops. In other countries, the need for transparency and accountability of foreign investment and the violation of the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples' rights to free prior informed consent are urgent matters.

Most new thematic programmes have considerations and assessment of climate change issues in their context analysis, and many have planned activities to address climate related issues. So far, mostly Governance programmes have identified specific objectives related to climate change, but as needs and possibilities are analysed, Education programmes will also incorporate the issues when relevant. In several IBIS countries, national strategies and programmes are beginning to include activities of capacity building on REDD+, the right of local communities to consultation and to free prior informed consent; monitoring of climate funding, as well as initiatives for reducing vulnerability through capacity building and organization.

In Latin America, thematic programmes will link climate change activities to the global advocacy programme LAPI (Latin America against Poverty and Inequality), which has climate change as one of its programme objectives, aiming for IBIS and partners to *have contributed to ensure that public awareness, lobbying and advocacy actions from civil society networks' have influenced the (...) UNFCCC's (...) negotiations; and furthermore, influenced international institutions and national climate change policies/strategies toward sustainable development and ensure that indigenous peoples and the poor population are considered.*<sup>15</sup>

In African countries, programmes will relate advocacy activities to regional climate initiatives and networks, and link to AAP (Africa Against Poverty) activities around natural resources and extraction industries.

In Denmark, IBIS will seek to put emphasis on climate change through campaign and information activities, e.g. through the divulgation of teaching materials on climate change and development.<sup>16</sup>

To facilitate and ensure a coherent implementation of the policy into new as well as existing programmes, IBIS will develop a tool for analysing the climate change sensitivity of country strategies, programmes and activities. The resulting analysis will ensure that climate change and its consequences are identified and that activities are developed and implemented adequately in the different countries, contexts and programmes, both for local programme activities and national and international levels, around the focus areas of the policy. Finally, climate change must be considered in relation to national and international fundraising strategies.

An implementation plan for climate change capacity building and activities will be elaborated according to the specific needs in each country, including Denmark.

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<sup>15</sup> LAPI Programme Document, 2009

<sup>16</sup> IBIS Denmark has elaborated a web-based teaching material called Agent Footprint where complex global issues are simplified and arranged for children to assess and consider their options as stakeholders in future policy decisions.

## Annex 1: References and resources

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