

In Durban, Indonesia to fight for a global carbon reduction deal

Amid growing resistance to the Kyoto climate treaty, Indonesia has pledged to encourage developed nations to agree on a carbon reduction framework in the upcoming UN climate change conference.

Speaking about the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Durban, South Africa, this month, a member of Indonesia's National Council on Climate Change (DNPI), Donny S. Sukadri, said that reaching the agreement was important to avoid climate-related calamities.

"Reducing carbon emissions by using a business-as-usual scenario won't be much use," said Doddy S. Sukadri, a member of the National Council for Climate Change (DNPI), on Saturday.

At the Durban conference, he said, the Indonesian delegation would guard a global commitment of "common but differentiated responsibility [CBDR]" achieved in the Bali COP13 in 2007.

Under the commitment, developed countries bear heavier responsibilities in carbon reduction compared to developing countries as they account for 80 percent of the total global carbon emissions produced since the industrial revolution over 200 years ago.

Since the UNFCCC was enacted in 1995, the COP countries have been meeting annually to assess progress in dealing with climate change.

In 1997, the conference adopted the Kyoto Protocol, which set binding targets for 37 industrialized countries and the European community for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These amount to an average of 5 percent against 1990 levels over the five-year period 2008-2012.

The industrialized countries, which are also among the world's largest emitters, have been reluctant to adopt the protocol, causing stalled negotiations until the most recent conference in Cancun, Mexico, last year.

Currently, COP countries run two-track negotiation mechanisms aiming to achieve global agreements on a new climate deal, namely Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) for developed countries and Ad Hoc Working Group on long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) for developing economies.

The developing countries want the developed countries to sign first the Kyoto Protocol's second-round commitments before others. On the contrary, developed countries want those in the developing world to first have their promises for the legal framework completely arranged.

Doddy said there had also been growing resistance to renewing the protocol from China and the United States, who were later followed by Canada, Japan and Russia.

"Such reluctance will heavily affect other countries," Doddy said.

Australia has also recently indicated its unwillingness to participate in the new global climate pact although it ratified the protocol in 2010.

Stuart Bruce, climate politics adviser at UK Climate Change Unit (UKCCU) Indonesia, said that the UK government was willing to continue progress toward a new global legally binding agreement on climate change but only if the developing countries showed similar intentions.

"What we would like to see first is that other countries – both developed and developing – showing similar willingness; so there will be mutual trust and confidence," he added.

He said he doubted that the agreement would be achieved at the Durban conference.

