



EXPERT CONSULTATION

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The effect of climate change on poor people is an area of serious concern for many organizations in the development and environment fields. But addressing this requires going beyond technical factors to developing a much greater understanding of the effects specific adaptation and mitigation measures will have on the livelihoods of the poor. These, in turn, are heavily influenced by institutions at the global, national, and local level. Much of the emphasis has been on global-level institutions, but there is a need for much greater attention to developing or adapting institutional frameworks at the national and local level, and how institutions from different levels are connected.

The consultation aimed at unpacking the concept of pro-poor climate change and discussing possible collaborations and ways forward to ensure that both social and environmental concerns are addressed when devising responses to climate change.

Rights and Climate Change

Much of the discussion focused on the role of rights to natural resources. Climate change measures are having a profound impact on natural resources and people's ability to use and manage them. While potentially an opportunity to reduce poverty and hunger, climate change solutions also result in additional pressures on people's livelihoods. Land which was previously considered marginal and of no commercial value (e.g. rainforest or rangelands), has become the target of investment for carbon sequestration or agroenergy projects. These new pressures on land and other natural resources join old ones such as population pressures, conflict and poverty and put additional stress on the resources. This in turn can threaten the livelihoods of those depending on these resources and undermine the legitimacy and effectiveness of climate change mitigation measures.¹

Rather it is felt that to achieve sustainable mitigation systems, rights of affected people to the resources they depend upon need to be strengthened² ensuring that local needs and interests are addressed and benefits are shared between rightsholders, governments, and other investors.

Moreover, the importance of upholding general human rights was stressed. In addition to being a value in its own right, guaranteeing human rights and raising awareness of opportunities to participate in policy processes can help significantly increase participation by affected people (in particular the poor, women, and indigenous peoples).

Similarly, fostering collective action at local level will be crucial for sustainable implementation of both adaptation and mitigation measures. More synthesis and summary work is needed to showcase the importance of collective action specifically in the context of climate change. However, there is also the need to evaluate what effects climate change will have on local institutions governing collective action to enable these institutions to remain effective.

¹ On biofuels and land, see [Climate Change, Biofuels and Land](#) (Infosheet for the High-level Conference on World Food security, FAO, 2008) and [Fuelling exclusion? The biofuels boom and poor people's access to land](#) (IIED, 2008). On land rights more generally, see [Growing Insecurity: Land and Vulnerable People](#) (Position Paper for UN CSD, International Land Coalition, 2008)

² The value of recognizing collective use and management rights is discussed in [Pro-Poor Land Tenure Reform, Decentralisation and Democratic Governance](#) (UNDP Oslo Governance Centre, 2008).

What is pro-poor climate change?

While participants differed as to whether they stressed process or outcome measures, participants did agree that in order to be pro-poor climate change frameworks have to:

- Be designed and implemented with meaningful **participation by affected people** (for instance income poor, women, and indigenous groups);
- Include the principle of **free prior informed consent** as a tool to ensure benefits of local initiatives and investments are shared with affected communities;
- Mainstream **gender** issues;
- Allow for **feedback and adjustment** to deal with new insights into the socio-economic effects of climate change;
- Be integrated with **other development strategies and programs** at international and national levels; and
- Include provision to **build the capacity** of governments, affected communities, and NGOs to effectively engage in or mediate negotiations of climate change projects.

Next steps

There is considerable data and insight in the social impacts of climate change, but a lot of this information is not widely shared or easily accessible. Research outputs that are available are often not in the format to be easily understood and used by policy makers and climate change experts.

Climate change solutions have to aim to be equitable and socially and economically sustainable in addition to promoting a reduction of greenhouse gases. To achieve that the negotiations at various levels have to include the people that are most affected by climate change (income poor, women, indigenous peoples). In addition, efforts have to be made by the participants of the consultation to:

- Be present at international level to ensure that effects on affected people are embedded in the international climate change framework;
- Get involved not only in international policies, but also in debates on how to implement climate change measures at national and local levels;
- Engage with big donor/agency groups, who can influence countries implementation measures, e.g. REDD readiness group and UN Development 1 Group.
- Package information specifically for policy makers and implementers;

To achieve these ends, the group decided to:

- Develop and disseminate 2-page policy briefs on suggested topics, such as:
 - Forest tenure systems: What works where?
 - Legitimacy and climate change mitigation: The need for a rights-based approach
 - When marginal land becomes valuable, do its users win?
 - Agrofuels, land and livelihoods
 - Climate change and collective action
 - Cases in which international policies furthered or hindered sustainable development
- Existing Briefs on the role of collective action and property rights in natural resource management:
 - Collective action and property rights for sustainable development ([2020 Focus 11](#), set of 16 briefs)
 - Securing the commons ([CAPRI Policy Brief No. 4](#))
- Draft legal text to insert into international and national policy frameworks;
- Draft sample engagement rules for affected communities based on work at the local level;
- Share information about new publications, events, initiatives among the group;
- Identify ways to be represented at key events and in key initiatives.