



# Mainstreaming Adaptation to Climate Change into Official Development Assistance:

## Promoting Synergies or Diverting Money?

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Links between climate change and development are becoming increasingly apparent. It is now virtually certain that climate change is happening and that it is largely caused by human induced greenhouse-gas emissions. These emissions are driven by socio-economic development patterns characterized by economic growth, technology, population and governance. At the same time these patterns influence people's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, which will in turn influence socio-economic development and thereby future greenhouse-gas emissions.

### Adaptation and official development assistance

The links between greenhouse-gas emissions, mitigation of climate change and development have been the subject of intense study (for an overview see Markandya and Halsnæs, 2002). More recently the links between climate-change adaptation and development have been brought to light. In particular when seeking to enhance the capacity of people to adapt to climate change, the link with development is evident. Adaptive capacity is often limited by a lack of resources, poor institutions and inadequate infrastructure, amongst other factors that are typically the focus of development assistance (Smith et al., 2003). People's vulnerability to climate change can therefore be reduced not only by mitigating greenhouse-gas emissions or by adapting to the impacts of climate change, but also by development aimed at improving the living conditions and access to resources of those experiencing the impacts, as this will enhance their adaptive capacity.

Adaptation and development are linked also because climate change poses a challenge to meeting development objectives. Successful adaptation to climate change would help to address this challenge and, as climate change intensifies, is likely to become increasingly important in official development assistance (ODA) and other activities aimed at eradicating poverty (e.g., Sperling, 2003). Adaptation would have to consider three distinct ways in which climate change can impinge on the success of development projects (Klein, 2001):

- The risk of climate change to the ODA project and its deliverables (such as water supply, food security, human health, natural resources management and protection against natural hazards);
- The vulnerability to climate change of the community or ecosystem that is intended to benefit from the ODA project;
- The possible effects of the ODA project and its deliverables on the vulnerability of communities or ecosystems to climate change.

### Mainstreaming adaptation

As the links between climate change and development have become apparent, the term "mainstreaming" has emerged to describe the integration of policies and measures that address climate change into development planning and ongoing sectoral decision-making. The benefit of mainstreaming would be to ensure the long-term sustainability of investments as well as to reduce the sensitivity of development activities to both today's and tomorrow's climate (Klein, 2002; Huq et al., 2003; Agrawala et al., 2005). By its very nature, energy-based mitigation (e.g., fuel switch and energy conservation) can be effective only when mainstreamed into energy policy. For adaptation, however, this link has not appeared as self-evident until recently.

Mainstreaming would entail making more efficient and effective use of financial and human resources as compared to designing, implementing and managing climate policy separately from ongoing activities. Prospective efficiency and effectiveness gains provide a rationale to development agencies for analyzing the potential for mainstreaming adaptation to climate change in their development activities. Over the past five years, six development agencies have taken the initiative to screen their portfolios of development activities, generally with two goals in mind: (i) to ascertain the extent to which existing development projects already consider climate risks or address vulnerability to climate variability and change, and (ii) to identify opportunities for incorporating climate change explicitly into future projects.

A recent study by Klein et al. (2006) assessed the screening activities to date, focusing on both the results and the methods applied by the six agencies. They found that the agencies do consider climate change as a real albeit uncertain threat to future development, but that they have given less thought to how different development patterns might affect vulnerability to climate change. They also found that different approaches towards screening consider different types of challenges for the mainstreaming of adaptation to climate change (see Table 1).

The OECD is currently preparing a Declaration on Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Development Co-operation, to be adopted at a joint development and environment ministerial meeting in April 2006. Whilst it is too early to comment on the contents of the declaration, the fact that such a declaration is being prepared is evidence of the importance that is now being attached to mainstreaming adaptation into ODA activities. The OECD declaration is expected to provide an impetus to all development agencies to consider climate change in their operations.



Table 1: Types of portfolio screenings and key challenges for the mainstreaming of adaptation (+++ = high level of attention, + = low/negligible level). For details see Klein et al. (2006).

Challenges	Review of policies and strategies (Norad)	Country case studies (OECD, DFID)	Programme and project review (World Bank, GTZ, SDC)
Range of adaptation options considered	++	++	+
Link to political processes	+	+++	+
Identification of synergies and conflicts/contradictions between poverty reduction and vulnerability reduction	++	+++	+
Identification of new challenges caused by climate change	+	+	+
Enabling proactive strategies	+	++	+
Attention to process of mainstreaming adaptation	+	+	+
Link to practical ODA activities	+	++	+++
Awareness raising on climate-development links	++	++	+++

## Concerns

The above may give the impression that a broad consensus has emerged that mainstreaming adaptation into ODA is the most desirable way of reducing the vulnerability of people in developing countries to climate change. There is indeed an emerging consensus amongst development agencies, as will be reflected in the OECD declaration. However, concerns about mainstreaming have been voiced within developing countries and amongst academics. On the one hand there is concern that scarce funds for adaptation in developing countries could be diverted into more general development activities, which offers little opportunity to evaluate, at least quantitatively, their benefits with respect to climate change (Yamin, 2005). On the other hand there is concern that funding for climate policy would divert money from ODA that is meant to address challenges seen as being more urgent than climate change, including water and food supply, sanitation, education and health care (Michaelowa and Michaelowa, 2005).

A concerted research effort is needed to answer questions concerning the efficiency and effectiveness of mainstreaming, barriers to and opportunities for mainstreaming, the accountability of industrialized countries with respect to their commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and, ultimately, the practical desirability of mainstreaming adaptation into ODA.

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## Climate Policy After Montreal What Can Development Agencies Do?

Lorenz Petersen

### The mood after Montreal

According to delegation reports and NGO publications the general mood afterwards was good: commentators from governments to environmental NGOs felt the 11th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Climate Change and the first official meeting after ratification of the Kyoto protocol in December of 2005 was a success. The Climate Convention Secretariat spoke of it as an “historic event”. Business leaders were slightly more skeptical pointing out to that what came out was rather “general”. The feedback from developing countries I picked up was also more subdued. While the interest in participating and discussing climate change was strong in almost all quarters, many of the developing country issues remained unresolved.

### Results

But let's first look at the concrete results Montreal did bring: The Kyoto Protocol is in place with all the detailed rules for the implementation of the flexible mechanisms, the so-called Marrakech

Accords. The Clean Development Mechanism, meant to attract investment from the developed world in the developing world, is going to be strengthened financially and institutionally. Agreement has been reached on a “Compliance Mechanism” how to check whether the Kyoto obligations have been implemented. Importantly, there is a “road map” on how the process of discussing the climate regime after 2012 will be organized. Even the US and Australia will be talking about the future of the convention – albeit on a completely non-binding, non-committing basis.

### Development related topics on the Montreal agenda

In the field of adaptation to climate change a five-year work programme has been agreed, by which some felt this critical issue from a developing country point of view has been rather put off. This impression was reinforced by the ongoing debate on where the funding for adaptation, particularly for vulnerable poor developing countries, should come from. The international financial instruments cre-