



TOWARDS A PARIS AGREEMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

A VOICE FROM CAMBODIA



To avoid the impact of floods, villagers in Kampong Thom province, Cambodia, have borrowed money from their savings groups to raise their houses above the water level. Photo: Savann Oeum, Oxfam

CAMBODIA'S PERSPECTIVE ON COP21

As the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) approaches, **Cambodia notes that the ambition is low:** mainly regards mitigation measures to achieve the 1.5/2 degrees Celsius goal; and the financing of \$100bn per year by 2020.

Based on the consolidated Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) report by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat, we are seriously concerned that the 1.5/2 degrees Celsius target will be difficult to achieve. Therefore, **it is important to increase ambition, in particular from the developed countries, in terms of national mitigation and finance commitments.**

On the eve of COP21, we voice our concerns and expectations as follows:

A. AMBITION AND GOALS

1. The Parties to the Treaty must deliver **an equitable, fair-share, ambitious and legally binding post-2020 agreement** applicable to all parties according to the principles of Common but Differentiated Responsibility and Respective Capabilities (CBDRRC);
2. **Long-term goals on decarbonization** should be developed to operationalize the 1.5/2 degrees Celsius goal and to ensure international support to people vulnerable to climate change by addressing both adaptation and mitigation.
3. **Disaster Risk Reduction (Loss and damage), long-term climate adaptation and resilience goals must be an integral part of the Paris package,** committing all Parties in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Convention, of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the Sustainable Development Goals, to increase climate resilience by systematically assessing and reducing climate risks, adapting to climate change impacts, and reducing vulnerability. 'Climate resilience' refers to both climate adaptation, climate-induced disaster risk reduction, and Loss and Damage.

THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON CAMBODIA

There is no doubt that Cambodia is one of the world's most vulnerable countries.

Cambodia is ranked the 9th most at risk country in the World Risk Report 2014 (UNU-EHS 2014). The University of Notre Dame's Global Adaptation Index (ND-GAIN), which measures vulnerability and readiness, puts Cambodia at 135 out of 180 countries assessed. In April 2016, ratings agency Standard and Poor's designated Cambodia the lowest out of 116 countries in terms of vulnerability to climate change (measured by considering the ND-GAIN index along with the proportion of people living below sea level, and agriculture as a share of GDP).

According to 'Understand the past, save the future' by UNDP and Cambodia's National Committee for Disaster Management 2,050 people died from disasters between 1996 and 2013. Flooding was the number one killer, accounting for 53% of lives lost in this period. The total damage and losses from the floods in 2013 alone cost around USD 356 million.

With 70% of the population dependent on subsistence agriculture, natural disasters can have devastating consequences on their livelihoods and other economic assets. This year, for example, El Nino has prolonged dry conditions that will result in lower yields from rain-fed crops, a major driver of poverty for the affected smallholder farmers.

4. Set up a **review and ratcheting-up mechanism every five years**, covering cumulative emissions and climate finance. All relevant key stakeholders including civil society should be meaningfully involved in the review process.
5. Ensure **the transparency and accountability of climate action**, facilitating measurement, reporting and verification (MRV), and demonstrating the fairness of climate actions.
6. **Pre-2020 action**, including important initiatives to tackle climate change, needs to be addressed and implemented according to the Lima–Paris–Action Agenda.

B. FINANCING

1. Ensure **predictable financing of at least USD 100 billion per year by 2020**, with easy access for the most vulnerable countries including Cambodia. The finance must be **new and additional** to existing Official Development Assistance (ODA). At least 50 percent should be sourced from public finance and go towards climate adaptation.
2. **Finance for adaptation must be prioritized** for the most vulnerable countries, such as Cambodia.
3. **The climate finance architecture** must respect human rights, gender equality, social cohesion and the environment, and include enhanced capacity building and technology transfer.
4. In addition, we want to see **national and international financial support to foster climate adaptation**, including through the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund, and the LDC Fund in a predictable and reliable long-term manner.

5. **The Paris agreement must include Loss and Damage** in order to continue the implementation of the Warsaw International Mechanism. The budget for Loss and Damage should be separated from adaptation.

C. PACKAGE OF SUPPORT AND OTHER ASPECTS

1. In the application of climate justice, **developed countries must be able to facilitate a comprehensive package of support** which includes technology transfer, climate finance, and capacity building that gives consideration to specific country contexts and adherence to the principles of respect for human rights, gender responsiveness, private sector participation and responsibility.
2. The comprehensive package of support from developed countries must be **safe, low-risk, efficient and sustainable by allowing access to appropriate information** necessary for the operation and maintenance of the any transferred technology for mitigation, adaptation and avoidance of loss and damage.

3. Climate change puts our agriculture, livelihoods and ultimately our smallholder farmers at high risk. Therefore, we call for the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) **to assess the impacts of adaptation policies on food security** and whether they adequately support the most vulnerable, particularly small-scale food producers.
4. Our gender sensitivity assessment confirms that women and girls are the most vulnerable group to the negative impacts of climate change and disaster. **The Paris Agreement must mainstream gender** in the development of relevant climate change and disaster risk reduction policies, plans and their implementation at all levels.
5. In all the above, the application of climate justice must not only consider historical responsibilities but also the current emission contributions of both developed and developing countries.



Pha Sokphun, a 35-year old farmer assisted by an ECHO-funded project in Kampong Thom province, Cambodia, works on her land. Photo: Savann Oeurm, Oxfam

CAMBODIA'S EXISTING MEASURES

To be ready for the negative impacts of climate change and natural disaster, Cambodia has put in place policy frameworks such as the Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan 2014-2023, along with sectoral strategic and action plans that include both mitigation and adaptation. In addition, Cambodia is moving towards local climate change mainstreaming, in particular in Commune Development Plans, one of the main financing mechanisms for village-level development.

The synergy between Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is strong. Stakeholders all want to coordinate and strengthen the capacity to develop an integrated CCA/DRR plan. However, the resources for the implementation of this policy are still lacking. For example, neighbouring countries such as Viet Nam, Thailand and Lao PDR have allocated budget to prepare for and respond to the 2015 drought, but Cambodia capacity has been relatively restricted.

It is important to note that there remains strong collaboration between the Royal Government of Cambodia and CSOs in policy dialogue and practice. Cooperation in addressing disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action and climate change among the Mekong Region countries is also good.