

## African CSOs to lobby over gaps in climate change regimes

Contributed by Henry Neondo  
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African Civil Society Organisations have said they are to mount serious lobbying to redress gaps identified from the COP13 held in Bali Indonesia last December.

Patricia Parsitau of OXFAM said there are weak commitments in the mitigation measures (emission cuts), and that this needs Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to lobby on emission reductions. Speaking at the second Kenya CSO forum (KCF), Patricia said it was agreed that there should be a clear mechanism by industrialized countries to show that they are absorbing Green House Gases (GHGs) emissions they produce. She said KCF should engage with other CSOs so as to have a voice internationally, on reductions of GHGs emissions. Patricia said developed countries left COP13 with no binding commitments to providing additional financing for adaptation and the forum said it was unfair for some countries getting additional funds while others do not. She asked CSOs to lobby for separation of adaptation fund from development funds. Dr Dominic Walubengo, Forest Action Network lamented the low funds spent on climate-related problems, which he noted that at USD11 billion are less than USD20 billion spent on Agriculture. He asked CSOs to lobby the national governments to allocate more funds to deal with climate change issues. He said there was need to strengthen climate change National Focal Points as they are a bridge to the national government. Alex Obara of Research Programme for Sustainable Use of Dryland biodiversity, RPSUD, said there was need to package climate change information in a way that policy makers could understand how crucial the matter is, and know how to act. He said as a forum, KCF should come up with policy briefs on economics, and social impacts and costs of climate change, which should provide clear guidelines on what measures to be undertaken on climate change adaptation and mitigation. Agreeing, Dr. Maggie Opondo of the University of Nairobi's Department of Geography said the CSOs should build strategic partnerships with already existing government projects so as to promote the adaptation agenda and sensitize government officials to support adaptation. Cynthia Awuor Research Fellow at the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) said adaptation measures to be undertaken should be dependable and affordable and favourable to vulnerable communities. The KCF said COP13 was clear demonstration that there were no strong commitments by developed countries to Technology Development and Transfer. They suggested that time was ripe for African scientists to demystify 'technology transfer' from a complicated and technical 'animal', to easy adaptable technologies within the continent that are ignorantly not recognized. For example said Dr. Walubengo there are many organizations locally that have technologies that could be transferred to vulnerable areas. He cited the BT Maize by CIMMYT, which can withstand droughts, New Rice for Africa NERICA that is rain fed and can withstand drought, the Borana cattle. Obara added that there are some clones of tree seedlings that mature very fast and ought to be transferred to farmers of these seedlings to plant in areas that partially or totally lack trees will really be necessary, and through this way, we will have provided an adaptation measure to climate change i.e. droughts. Another adaptable technology cited was given by Dr. Maggie who gave an example of a project she is involved with, where they want communities to curb (adapt to) Malaria in Kakamega and Kericho. In this project, communities intend to plant Napier grass along watersheds, hence interfering with mosquito breeding sites. She said this technology will hence be transferred to other malaria prone areas. But she said communities fear sharing these technologies for fear of biopiracy, an issue the forum said was being promoted by long and tedious patenting procedures.