

ASEAN for a Fair, Ambitious and Binding Global Climate Deal (A-FAB)



What is the A-FAB?

The ASEAN for a Fair, Ambitious and Binding Global Climate Deal (A-FAB) is a network that calls for a more active and transparent engagement of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Set up by the coalition of Greenpeace, Oxfam and WWF, A-FAB aims to sharpen and strengthen ASEAN's position as a regional bloc at the UNFCCC and as a community that collectively struggles to avert the impacts of climate change. Moreover, it intends to complement ASEAN's attempts at ensuring the participation of its "community in the global community," following the increasing processes which put its Charter at work.

Climate change and the ASEAN

The practical and political stakes of ASEAN in the climate negotiations are high. ASEAN consists of countries which are considered vulnerable to sea level rise, droughts, flooding, water scarcity and disasters, with its extensive coastlines and location within the so called "ring of fire." Many of ASEAN's 563 million are concentrated along the coastlines. Many are also engaged in agricultural activities. Meanwhile, about 150 million people in the region are considered working poor, who could easily slide way below the poverty thresholds due to disturbances. Sixty percent, mostly women, are engaged in the informal economy.

The ASEAN in the UN climate talks and the A-FAB position

This April 3-8, 2011, Bangkok will be the venue of the United Nations Climate Change Conference intersessional. A-FAB is urging the ASEAN to convene a high-level meeting with the goal of strengthening the mandate of ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change (AWGCC) and further opening itself to the ASEAN community, including civil society. The AWGCC established the ASEAN Climate Change Initiative (ACCI), a regional consultative platform that is specifically meant to advance the region's interests in the negotiations around climate change. With such mandate, it is hoped that ASEAN will articulate a more unified and stronger position in COP 17 in Durban, South Africa later this year. The high-level meeting comes at an opportune time given that host Thailand is an ASEAN member state and ASEAN's current chair Indonesia has adopted the theme, "ASEAN community in the global community."

The Bangkok intersessional has among its agenda adaptation, climate finance, mitigation and technology transfer mechanisms. A-FAB has forwarded some policy recommendations for ASEAN in the Bangkok intersessional. Among these is the assurance that the newly created Adaptation Committee consists primarily of developing countries, follows a country-driven and gender-sensitive approach in the development of national adaptation policies and programs and is linked to financing mechanisms. ASEAN must ensure that the adaptation gets much of the resources in the new Green Climate Fund established in Cancun, as it is more urgently needed by the majority of the poor population.

A-FAB likewise urges ASEAN to push for the peaking of global emissions by 2015 and to demand a 25 to 40 percent greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction by developed countries by 2020, and at least a 95 percent cut below 1990 levels by 2050. Another task is to decide on the most accurate and appropriate measurable, reportable and verifiable (MRV) instruments in ascertaining GHG emissions reduction.

A-FAB welcomes ASEAN's earlier affirmation of the need for legally binding agreements and the demand for scaled up and additional financial resources from developed countries owing to the principles of historical responsibility, as well as common but differentiated responsibilities. A-FAB believes that such stance must be strengthened, with key agreements struck by COP-17 in Durban, South Africa, on the sources of climate finance to fill the new Climate Fund.

Finally, as stakeholders in the ASEAN community, A-FAB urges ASEAN to take the higher ground in responding to the real and urgent challenge of climate change.

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