

# Climate Change and Development: Global Responses and Policy Challenges

Friday 4 September 2009, 3pm-6pm,  
Room XXVI, Palais des Nations, Geneva

## Draft Programme

### Presentation of the *World Economic and Social Survey (WESS) 2009* “Promoting Development, Saving the Planet”

- ♣ Richard Kozul-Wright, Team Leader for the Report,  
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)

### Discussants

- ♣ Martin Khor, Executive Director, South Centre (TBC)
- ♣ Ulrich Hoffmann, Head, Trade and Sustainable Development Section,  
International Trade Division, United Nations Conference on Trade and  
Development (UNCTAD)
- ♣ Fulai Sheng, Senior Economist, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

### Moderator

- ♣ Hamish Jenkins, UN-NGLS

## What is WESS 2009?

“Unprecedented steps have been taken to halt the global financial meltdown and to enable the world to recover from the economic crisis that emerged in 2008. But the world also faces a climate crisis which has been building over a much longer period of time. If we do not bring to this challenge the same determination and sense of common cause with which we have addressed the economic crisis, not only will the climate catastrophe feared by the scientific community occur, but recovering from it will be an impossibility. Fortunately, the appropriate responses to the climate crisis can also contribute to long-term economic prosperity.

“The sad fact is that we have missed multiple opportunities to change course. Developing countries are the first—and worst—sufferers from a problem for which, from a historical perspective, they bear the least responsibility. Issues of equity and burden-sharing must be addressed.

“The United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009, will provide an unprecedented opportunity to map out a more sustainable economic future. As the advanced economies have the resources and the responsibility to lead the way, they will be required to make bold commitments to reducing their emissions and helping developing nations undertake mitigation and adaptation.

“There is no single blueprint for achieving these goals. The Survey examines the key building blocks in order to assess the best possible options available to countries at different levels of development.

“The onus is on the international community to deliver the resources and leadership required to ensure that whatever is feasible becomes both practical and fair. The present Survey makes a timely contribution to that effort, and I commend it to a wide global audience.”

*United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, Extract from his preface to WESS 2009*

**UN Non-Governmental  
Liaison Service  
Geneva Office**

Palais des Nations  
1211 Geneva 10 - Switzerland  
Tel. +41 22 917 2076  
Fax +41 22 917 0432

Email: [david.vergari@unctad.org](mailto:david.vergari@unctad.org)

## Key messages of World Economic and Social Survey 2009: Promoting Development, Saving the Planet

The separation in practice of the climate change and development agendas has distorted the global debate on the two biggest policy challenges facing the international community. According to the *World Economic and Social Survey 2009*, an integrated approach based on the concept of sustainable development is urgently needed. The key to such an approach is a low-carbon, high-growth transformation of the global economy – a transformation that can keep temperature increases consistent with environmental stability as identified by the scientific community, while at the same time fostering the strong growth and economic diversification in developing countries that would allow convergence of incomes worldwide. The greening of catch-up growth will have to be further tailored so as to meet the adaptation challenges facing vulnerable countries and communities whose economic security will be threatened even if climate change is kept within globally manageable limits.

To date, the concept of development has too often remained in the background during the evolving climate debate. As a result, the discussions concerning both normative issues (invoking “common but differentiated responsibilities”) and financial ones (entailing how to fund mitigation and adaptation) have become polarized. Moreover, the discussion on creating policies and programmes to support the greening of catch-up growth has hardly started.

The *Survey* seeks to bridge this gap within the public policy debate. It argues that mitigation and adaptation efforts can move forward effectively only if they are part of a consistent development strategy built around a massive investment-led transformation along low-carbon, high-growth paths. While acknowledging that a variety of market and non-market institutional mechanisms will be needed if advances are to be made along those paths, the *Survey* contends at the same time that a critical role must be played by developmental States able to mobilize public finance and build appropriate technological capacity. This potentially win-win strategy will require the readiness of the international community to step up to the plate with multilateral financing on a much larger scale than has been forthcoming to date and new approaches to transferring technology from rich to poor countries.

For more information, see

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wess2009forthcoming.html>