

Final Report – Alberta Participation at the 16th Conference of the Parties on Climate Change

Overview

The Honourable Rob Renner, Minister of Environment, led a delegation at the United Nations annual climate change conference (COP16) from December 6-10, 2010.

The objective of this annual forum is to bring nations together to advance global cooperation on climate change. Alberta has been an active participant in these discussions since they began in the early 1990s.

As with past meetings, the core objectives for Alberta for this session in Cancun were:

- Represent Alberta's interests as part of the Canadian delegation contributing to the development of a practical global carbon management framework;
- Share Alberta's experience and commitment to environmental management, climate policy accomplishments; and
- Discuss Alberta's clean energy story, technological and research investments, and commitment to being a responsible global energy supplier.

Accomplishments

Following from the 15th Conference of the Parties in Copenhagen, where there was significant desire and momentum for an agreement that bound all major economies, Cancun reviewed progress and set a path forward for subsequent meetings to reach a final agreement.

Given this context, Alberta's contribution to the dialogue was focused on ensuring the shared interests reflected by Canada in Copenhagen remained. These included:

- Advancing a long-term agreement that binds all major economies;
- Ensuring objectives reflect global energy realities; and
- Maintaining emphasis on enabling technology development.

Overall, these interests were recognized and reflected in the final outcomes of the various Cancun agreements.

Alberta also used this forum to engage in a series of bilateral discussions with key jurisdictions and international clean energy stakeholders.

Over the week, Minister Renner met with government representatives from the United States, Germany, United Arab Emirates, and Mexico. While much of the emphasis was on greenhouse gas emissions, there was a strong desire to better understand work underway in the province on overall environmental management, including commitments to enhance the monitoring and reporting systems in the oil sands region.

Meetings also took place with representatives from the World Bank, SunEdison, Pembina Institute and the Global Water Partnership where the focus of discussions ranged from water and cumulative impacts to carbon regulations and offset credits. This provided an opportunity for Alberta to better understand the perspectives of various organizations, as well as share information on the efforts underway to promote responsible development in the province.

A major area of focus in Cancun – for Alberta and more broadly – was the need to develop clean energy solutions. Carbon capture and storage was recognized as a critical technology in this equation, to complement the efforts around increasing renewable and alternative energy across the world.

Minister Renner joined government, industry and non-governmental representatives on two panels, including one put on by the Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute, to speak about the importance of developing clean energy solutions. Alberta's commitment to carbon capture and storage was highlighted, but also complemented by the range of other actions, including investment by the Climate Change and Emissions Management Corporation, to support the development of clean energy technologies in Alberta.

Summary of the Cancun Agreements

The Cancun Agreements build on the structure of the Copenhagen Accord with a balanced package that takes meaningful steps toward implementing key elements of the Accord. In summary, under the agreements:

- Approximately 80 countries – including China, the United States, the European Union, India, and Brazil have committed to emission mitigation targets and actions. The Agreements make clear that action by every country, developing or developed, is required.
- Countries agreed to keep temperature increases below a global average of two degrees Celsius. This agreement brings these aspirations, as well as the emission pledges of individual countries, into the formal United Nations process for the first time, essentially adopting the Copenhagen Accord.
- The mechanisms for monitoring and verification laid out in last year's Accord were elaborated upon. Notably, these now include international consultation and analysis of developing countries' mitigation actions. Countries will report their greenhouse gas inventories to an independent panel of experts, which will monitor and verify

reports of emissions cuts and actions.

- A Green Climate Fund will be established to deliver financing for mitigation and adaptation. The Agreements name the World Bank as the interim trustee of the fund and create an oversight board, half of which consists of donor nation representatives. In addition, the Agreements establish a goal by developed countries to invest \$100 billion annually by 2020 to support mitigation and adaptation in developing countries, a funding target which would include public and private resources (carbon markets and private finance), bilateral and multilateral flows, as well as the Green Climate Fund.
- A program will be established in which wealthy countries can help prevent deforestation in poor countries, possibly working through market mechanisms.
- A structure to assess the needs and policies for the transfer of technologies to developing countries for clean energy and adaptation to climate change, and a Climate Technology Center and Network to construct a global network to match technology suppliers with technology needs will be established.
- An ongoing role for the Clean Development Mechanism and other market-based mechanisms was endorsed, which indicates that carbon capture and storage projects should be eligible for carbon credits in the Clean Development Mechanism.