

**CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE      Copenhagen 7 - 18 December 2009*****What is happening?***

World leaders will meet in Copenhagen to discuss the future of our planet. The United Nations Climate Conference will provide an opportunity for world leaders to address a problem that affects all of the world's citizens.

While the effects of climate change know no borders, action to slow climate change has, all too often, been defined by what individual countries are prepared to do within their own political and economic systems. In Australia we have witnessed the difficulties of reaching a consensus about what action is appropriate. The Government's attempts to pass their Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) bill have demonstrated these difficulties.

***What is the Goal of the Conference?*** To reach consensus on a global scale.

Attempts to map out global action bring with them moral and political issues. Many would argue that in order for the planet to avoid catastrophic climate change each and every country needs to reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. However, there are also those who argue that developing countries should be allowed to pollute at a higher level until development imbalances can be redressed.

***What have we done?***

Phil Glendenning, the director of the Edmund Rice Centre has seen first-hand the link between climate change and development. Phil will travel to Copenhagen with over a dozen fellow Pacific Calling Partnership (PCP) members. There they will continue their efforts to have the dire situation of those living in vulnerable low-lying communities recognised. The PCP will work to ensure that, international treaty or not, our Pacific neighbours are not forgotten. The JPIC Commission has financially supported the PCP and the work of its members in the lead up to Copenhagen. This includes supporting the training of people from Tuvalu and Kiribati to be able to participate in the conference and to have their voice heard

***The Outcome?***

If a strong international treaty can be reached it will mean that the world will have a clear action plan to collectively mitigate climate change. International cooperation is key to the success of real climate change mitigation. A close relationship will need to be formed between economically developed and developing countries.

No matter which way you look at the Copenhagen conference it will be a historical event for our planet. Copenhagen presents not just an ecological challenge, but a democratic one. Coming to an effective international consensus about climate action will be difficult, but if one is reached it will be a sign of hope.

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