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PRESS RELEASE

Kyoto Protocol market mechanism strives to grow, improve for good of present and future generations

Ukraine hosts 6th Joint Implementation technical workshop and 17th Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee meeting

(Kiev, Ukraine, 10 September 2009) – Private and public sector stakeholders from 20 countries gathered in Ukraine this week to find ways to speed up and scale up a key market mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol, and ensure that lessons learned are carried to the critical international climate change conference in Copenhagen in December.

“The international consensus is clear: climate change is a global threat that requires a global response. It is equally clear that addressing climate change will take a great deal of resources. The Kyoto Protocol’s market-based mechanisms, including Joint Implementation, are among the few tools we have at our disposal, now, up and running, that can help deliver those resources,” said Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The Executive Secretary was marking the close of a two-day workshop of project developers, investors, national approval agencies and experts involved in Joint Implementation (JI). Under the mechanism, projects in any country with a commitment under the Kyoto Protocol can earn saleable, tradable emission reduction units (ERUs) by reducing greenhouse gas emissions below business-as-usual. Countries and companies can use ERUs to cover a part of their commitments under the Protocol.

Among other things, participants at the 6th JI Technical Workshop, the first held in a JI host country, shared their views on the future of JI after 2012, affirming a consensus by Parties to the UNFCCC negotiations that the mechanisms will continue to have an important role to play.

“Parties have already said that the Kyoto Protocol mechanisms – emissions trading, JI, and the clean development mechanism, with its projects in developing countries – should continue. Parties have also said that the mechanisms could be improved. The results of the technical workshop will help define those improvements, and thus contribute to a positive outcome in Copenhagen,” Mr. de Boer said.

Stakeholders expressed their views on how to further facilitate implementation of JI. Their discussions focused on existing, country-specific and process related barriers to effective and full implementation of the mechanism. These will be considered further by the Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee (JISC), which begins today in Kiev its 17th regular meeting.

“Ukraine is the leading host country for JI projects with 11 approved projects under the Track 1 and Track 2 processes already. Our efforts to mitigate climate change through environmentally sound project-based emissions reductions are significant and growing. We hope the lessons learned here can help spur the mechanism’s growth throughout the region, and beyond,” said Igor Lupaltsov, Head of the National Environmental Investment Agency of Ukraine, the hosting agency.

The more than 200 participants made observations that might stimulate the growth of JI now, in the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, 2008–2012. They also kept one eye to the future.

“It makes sense that experiences to date should be taken into account in the ongoing negotiating process under the UNFCCC, with a view to further facilitating the implementation of the mechanisms in the future. Joint Implementation is having a positive effect now, and it will do so in the future, if we make good use of the lessons learned,” said Ricarda Rieger, Country Director, United Nations Development Programme, Ukraine, which helped to organize and run the workshop.

When it meets this week, the JISC will consider the inputs from the technical workshop with a view to adopting new guidance and procedures by its 19th meeting, to be held in Copenhagen in December, just prior to the international climate change conference. The next meeting of the JISC will be held in Bonn, Germany, on 22–23 October.

About the UNFCCC

With 192 Parties, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has near universal membership and is the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol has to date 185 member Parties. Under the Protocol, 37 States, consisting of highly industrialized countries and countries undergoing the process of transition to a market economy, have legally binding emission limitation and reduction commitments. The ultimate objective of both treaties is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.

About Joint Implementation

Under JI, greenhouse gas emission reduction projects in any country with a commitment under the Kyoto Protocol can earn emission reduction units (ERUs). Countries with an emission reduction or limitation commitment under the Kyoto Protocol can use ERUs, each equivalent to one tonne of carbon dioxide, to meet a part of their obligations under the Protocol.

There are two approaches for verification of emission reductions under JI. Under Track 1, the verification of emission reductions and issuance of emission reduction units are left up to the host country, provided the country meets a series of eligibility requirements laid down by the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. Under Track 2, projects are subject to verification procedures supervised by the Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee.

Note to journalists

For information on Joint Implementation, please contact James Grabert, Secretary to the Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee, at e-mail: jgrabert@unfccc.int. To schedule interviews with the UNFCCC Executive Secretary, please contact Carrie Assheuer, cassheuer@unfccc.int. For any other inquiries about the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, please contact press@unfccc.int.

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