INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

Submission from the International Telecommunication Union to the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Collaborative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA)

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) welcomes the opportunity to submit this supplemental input concerning the important role that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) can play as a cross-sectoral tool to tackle Climate Change in the framework of the AWG-LCA and the Bali Plan of Acton.

ITU is the UN specialized agency for information and communication technologies and telecommunication issues.

ICTs can be a major cross-sectoral tool to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. A recent study estimated that ICTs could help reduce total global emissions by 15 percent in 2020, representing carbon savings five times higher than the estimated emissions for the whole ICT sector in 2020[1]. Moreover, radio-based remote sensors and telecommunication infrastructure form the backbone of the Global Observing System (GOS), which is employed for climate monitoring (including CO_2 emission monitoring), prediction of climate change and development of adaptation/mitigation programmes. ITU, as the steward of the radio-frequency spectrum and satellite orbits, provides the necessary radio-frequency spectrum and protection from interference to remote sensing systems.

ITU has been asked by its Member States to significantly enhance efforts to raise public and policymaker awareness of the critical role of ICTs in addressing climate change in the run-up to COP-15, to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009. Building on this mandate, ITU has submitted written input to the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA). You may download the submission from the UNFCCC website:

http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/smsn/igo/052.pdf

Reviewing the current revised negotiating text (FCCC/AWGLCA/2009/INF.1) we have noted that the critical role of ICTs in combating climate change is not currently reflected in the draft sections on: A shared vision for long-term cooperative action; Cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions; or Capacity-building.

In this regard, ITU respectfully requests consideration of the following input for inclusion in revisions to the draft text (FCCC/AWGLCA/2009/INF.1):

I. Shared vision for long-term cooperative action (paragraphs 1-9, page 5)

Suggested addition:

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) can be powerful enablers to achieve cuts in emissions; used as monitoring tools on a global basis, provide information for developing adaptation/mitigation plans; contribute to adaptation and mitigation efforts, and thereby are a vital means to achieve the ultimate objective of the convention.

[1] The Climate Group's SMART 2020 report, researched by McKinsey and Company.

D. Cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions (page 130)

Suggested amendment:

x.1 Cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions" shall be focused on the enhanced implementation of Article 4.1 (c) of the Convention, on:
(a) The development, application and diffusion, including transfer, of technologies, practices and processes that control, reduce or prevent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montréal Protocol, in all relevant sectors, including, but not limited to, energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry, health, tourism, [and] waste management sectors, and information and communication technologies;

3. Capacity-building (paragraphs 199-201, page 196)

Suggested addition:

Capacity-building on the potential of ICTs related to climate monitoring, prediction of climate change, adaptation and mitigation, are used in the preparation and implementation of National Adaptation/Mitigation Plans.