



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

CLIMATE CHANGE - Modest, consensus-driven measures are expected to emerge from the Cancun, Mexico, climate talks, kicking off yesterday. Although some countries are pursuing individual and regional carbon-reduction plans, many see a United Nations framework as the only viable way to limit and remedy the effects of carbon emissions.

■AFRICA

Africa Region - Least developed countries (LDCs) in Africa did not use the commodity export boom of the mid-2000s to diversify their economies from commodity dependence to manufacturing value-added products. Significantly, the agricultural sector has also not benefited, with the result that LDC reliance on imported food has become even worse.

SOMALIA - Many African countries are struggling to eliminate mother-to-child HIV transmission, a vital component of the universal access to HIV prevention target, but in Somalia a programme to prevent such infections is just getting started.

SOUTH AFRICA - Recent studies have shown that antiretroviral drugs can reduce the risk of HIV-infection but for researchers and governments - the research raises more questions than answers about its implementation.

■ASIA & PACIFIC

INDIA's first-ever major scientific assessment of its climate change scenario by the 2030s, released in November, has the report's scientists rooting for the government to take concrete action.

INDONESIA - Environmentalists charge that Indonesian authorities' plans for forest preservation are hobbled by long-term plans for plantation development, dealing a severe blow to UN-backed efforts to slow deforestation. Indonesia signed a \$1 billion deal in 2010 to promote a moratorium on forest clearance for two years and reduce emissions by 2020, but the government plans to ramp up forest destruction by 2030 - effectively negating the entire effort.

MYANMAR is being called upon by a UN envoy to address claims of vote-rigging in the recent elections that gave a wide majority in parliament to the party backed by the country's military government. Vijay Nambiar, who serves as chief of staff to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, said that a transparent investigation would help lay a foundation for democratic rule.

■MIDDLE EAST

Middle East Region - The UN International Labour Organization (ILO) is encouraging the drafting of labour legislation to provide foreign domestic workers (FDWs) in the Middle East with legal protection.

AFGHANISTAN - The planned withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan over the next four years will also reduce development aid, particularly for so-called "hearts and minds" projects aimed at social upliftment, experts say.

IRAQ - The improved political representation of women in Iraq is in sharp contrast to their broader disempowerment, as highlighted by the persistence of domestic violence and early marriage, according to a new report by the UN Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

LAC Region - Waste recycling as a way to save money, create jobs and take care of the environment is finding footing in Central America, where hundreds of tonnes of paper, plastic, tyres and other products are now being marketed through innovative initiatives.

WFWO's Communications Team