

Belarus' Efforts to Reduce CO2 Footprint Found Little Support



The international community showed little interest in the Belarus-initiated amendment to the Kyoto Protocol at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

The amendment would enable Belarus to participate in the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development mechanism – Belarus' main mechanism of international technology financing which provides carbon dioxide low emission. The document needs to be ratified by 75% of Parties (or 132 countries) to enter into force. The Belarusian amendment has been ratified only by 18 countries so far.

Belarus hopes that the new agreement will help create mechanisms of the fair distribution of available financial resources and improve the terms of transfer of advanced technologies to mitigate the climate change and adapt to it.

At the second conference of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol, Belarus voluntarily undertook extra obligations to reduce the carbon footprint, but its inability to access to flexibility mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol puts it at a disadvantage in comparison with other Annex I countries.

By 2020 Belarus plans to reduce the greenhouse emissions by 600 million tons in the CO2 equivalent. Its contribution to reducing greenhouse emissions includes re-swamping degraded peat bogs. The country is also financing the research into the wind potential of some 30 areas.

Alexander Grebenkov, a climate change expert, said that “[f]rom 1995 to 2008 Belarus reduced the greenhouse gas emissions by 134 million tons in the CO2 equivalent. From 2008 till 2010 we are going to cut the emissions by another 600 million tons.” The cuts of greenhouse gas emissions could be bigger if the country got access to the new technologies and mechanisms within the framework of the Kyoto Protocol.

Belarus acceded to the Kyoto Protocol in 2005, and the amendment was negotiated at the November 2006 meeting of parties. Minsk reiterated its commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions past 2012 by undertaking obligations adequate to its capabilities at the 2009 climate change summit.

Read more about Belarus’ plans to reduce the greenhouse emissions at [REVE](#).