



INSTITUTE FOR AGRICULTURE AND TRADE POLICY

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Copenhagen is Not the End, but the Beginning

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About IATP

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. IATP is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with an office in Washington, D.C.

COPENHAGEN. A watered-down political agreement in Copenhagen lacks the firm commitments needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address global climate change, said the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. Progress on agriculture within the climate talks sets the stage for important negotiations in 2010.

“It’s fortunate that a total breakdown was avoided, but this weak agreement needs to go much further in 2010,” said IATP President Jim Harkness. “The meeting lacked both transparency and democratic participation, both inside and outside the negotiating convention. The UN needs to do a comprehensive review of what went wrong in Copenhagen so that we can avoid having tens of thousands of accredited NGOs, including IATP, as well as country delegates locked out of the negotiations.”

“It’s shameful that developed countries still haven’t taken responsibility on climate nor made firm, legally binding commitments,” said Harkness. “Instead, they often attempted to cast developing countries as an obstacle to reaching a deal, even when leaked UNFCCC documents indicated that the total pledges of developing countries were larger than developed countries.”

The controversial ending to the meeting meant that countries did not approve an agriculture work plan for 2010. That work plan had cited the need to safeguard food security and livelihoods in climate adaptation and mitigation, also making specific reference to the interests of small farmers, the rights

of indigenous peoples and the importance of traditional knowledge. Now, it is unclear when that work plan will be approved.

In contrast to the timid approach of the official negotiations, civil society groups engaged in a series of vigorous discussions throughout the rest of Copenhagen. On December 16, IATP participated in the founding of the Round Table of Organic Agriculture and Climate Change, which established a new international consortium of the world's leading organic research institutions to provide strong evidence to the SBSTA process and coordinate research efforts on organic agriculture's solutions to climate change.

