UN Secretary-General: Rio+20 must provide Roadmap for the Future We Want

Published on **25 Apr 2012** | Written by **Maggie Comstock**

Last week, the Center for Global Development (CGD), in partnership with Climate Advisors and the Embassy of Denmark, hosted a high-level event on Delivering Sustainable Energy for All: Opportunities at Rio+20. The event, which boasted two panels of seasoned experts and keynote addresses by Christian Friis Bach, Denmark's Minister of Development and Cooperation, and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, also featured the release of a CGD report, "Energizing Rio+20: How the United States Can Promote Sustainable Energy for All at the 2012 Earth Summit."

The report by the Center for Global Development and Climate Advisors was released ahead of the upcoming Rio+20 in June with recommendations for U.S. engagement in the Earth Summit. The report explains realistic and measured expectations for Rio stating, "Few people following the preparations for Rio+20 have high hopes for the upcoming summit. No new treaties or financial mechanisms will be concluded." However, it goes on to offer tangible and viable recommendations for U.S. engagement as part of the UN's Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) initiative. The SE4ALL initiative sets ambitious goals to achieve universal access to energy, double the rate of energy efficiency improvements, and double the share of renewable energy worldwide by 2030. Ideally, the provisions of SE4ALL will be incorporated into a suite of sustainable development goals, similar to the UN's Millennium Development Goals adopted in 2000.

In his remarks, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon imparted the urgency and importance of addressing energy access and sourcing: "Providing sustainable energy for all benefits developed and developing countries alike." He continued, "Even with renewed political commitments to sustainable development, nothing can be realized without addressing energy." The Secretary-General looked towards the rapidly approaching Rio+20 conference as an opportunity for leaders to both embrace SE4ALL's mission and to provide necessary support. He explained, "Commitments alone are not enough, we need financing and technical assistance." He then called upon the business community and civil society to take initiative on energy and sustainable development because they often play a larger role in affecting change than the delegates themselves. He closed on the importance of Rio and a call to action: "We must seize this once in a generation opportunity to create a clean and inclusive economy...Rio+20 must provide a roadmap for the future we want."

Maggie Comstock
Policy Analyst
U.S. Green Building Council

USGBC Articles can be accessed in the USGBC app for iOS or Android on your iPhone, iPad or Android device.

0 comments

Leave a comment

Leave a comment

Don't have an account? Create one

You must be signed in to leave a comment.

Email

Password

SIGN IN

Washington, DC 20037

Within the United States:
1-800-795-1747

Outside the United States:
1-202-742-3792

© 2012-2015 U.S. Green Building Council