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WRI CCS Community Engagement Guidelines:

Third Working Group Call Summary

June 4, 2009 11 AM-EDT

Discussion Topic: Community Engagement in the Context of Climate Change and Coal

Call Attendees:

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Judith Bradbury	Battelle
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Sarah Forbes	World Resources Institute
Josh Habib	Cadmus Group
Gretchen Hund	Battelle
Gretchen Leslie	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Sarah Mander	University of Manchester
Gary McNeil	USEPA Office of Air
George Minter	Hydrogen Energy
Karen Obenshain	Edison Electric Institute
George Peridas	Natural Resource Defense Council
Helen Silver	Clean Air Task Force
Chris Smith	Environmental Defense Fund
Lindsey Tollefson	Big Sky Regional Carbon Sequestration Partnership
Preeti Verma	World Resources Institute
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Discussion Questions: It's not just about coal it's about climate change!

- In the context of climate change how much should we dissociate CCS from coal and how much should we associate and the implications of both choices with one another?
- How do different views on climate change affect the perceptions of local communities towards CCS?
- How can environmental justice concerns be addressed in the Community Engagement Guidelines?
- How do we address the views that CCS may detract from investment in renewable energy technology? What about general opposition to coal in the context of CCS?
- What recommendations should we have in the Guidelines for different audience segments in this context?

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Key points from Discussion:

- On the question of associating or dissociating CCS from coal, the stakeholders acknowledged that we need to emphasize the technology in the climate change context. However, in doing so, many stakeholders felt that it is also important to frame CCS in the coal context by acknowledging the global dependence on coal and its associated emissions.
- The stakeholders group is divided on whether the guidelines should focus on the complete CCS project chain, including capture, transport and storage or solely on storage. Some felt that from the public interest and education standpoint it would be better to focus on all stages of CCS, whereas others felt that, due to more pronounced uncertainty from communities regarding storage, it would be better to focus specifically on the storage component of CCS.
- While communicating with the public it is important to mention the issue in the global context and use real examples. In addition, it can be important to highlight the non-climate change benefits of the CCS projects
- It is important to understand environmental justice concerns and define a meaningful and timely strategy to engage with the environmental justice community

In the context of climate change, how much should we dissociate CCS from coal and how much should we associate and the implications of both choices?

Different views emerged from the discussions:

- Considering the amount of coal used for electricity production in the United States, it is imperative that CCS be considered in the context of coal.

- CCS is a critical technology globally because of the global impacts of climate change and dependence on fossil fuels.

- It does not have to be either/or (with respect to disassociating CCS from coal). It is possible to do both, and the amount of discussion around coal will vary depending on the specifics of a project. For example, a CCS project on a paper mill may focus more on the climate message, whereas a coal-fired power plant project would focus on both climate change and coal.

- It is important to acknowledge that carbon capture can be applied to industrial sources that are not coal-fired power plants.

- The local context dictates the importance of coal. Linking CCS to coal-only galvanizes ideological opposition. Just because a technology is good does not mean it should be built in a particular location.

Do we need to separate Guidelines for capture, transport, and storage? Do we focus on storage only?

- The risks vary for different stages of a CCS project. But the main challenge from a community engagement perspective lies in the storage component. The challenges facing the capture component are more policy-related; whereas for storage, the

challenges are both technical and policy-related. As a group, we should therefore think about focusing on the storage component.

- Understanding all the technologies (capture, transport and storage) is important from the public education standpoint. It is not possible (nor advisable) to isolate storage when communicating with the public.

- It is important to consider the roles of other stakeholders besides the project implementer when communicating with the public. What are the best practices for government? How can they be an arbiter?

- Recent workshops sponsored by NGOs (Natural Resource Defense Council and Environmental Defense Fund) have been extremely effective in informing the public about CCS technologies. It is important to think who is responsible for this type of work going forward and how to facilitate collaborative educational processes.

How do different views on climate change affect the perception of local communities towards CCS?

- Communities are often supportive of CCS because of the 'cool factor' associated with it and the potential economic benefits. For example, in FutureGen the community wanted the project as it was the first of its kind. And this community acceptance was mirrored in other such examples including CCS projects in Ketzin, Germany and Washington State.

- In addition to talking about climate change, it is also important to acknowledge the local economic benefits and business perspectives.

How can environmental justice concerns be addressed in the community engagement guidelines? Have environmental justice (EJ) communities protested against CCS openly because of the upstream impacts associated with coal mining? Are there any EJ concerns we should be aware of?

- It is important to be upfront with communities about environmental justice concerns and understand if the environmental concerns are well-founded. A community engagement process can be used to address these concerns.

- The following EPA definitions for Environmental Justice[1] provide a good example and should be considered:

    - **Environmental Justice:** the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, culture, education, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.
    - **Fair Treatment:** no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal environmental programs and policies.
    - **Meaningful Involvement:** (1) potentially affected community residents have an appropriate opportunity to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that

[1] EPA Definition of Environmental Justice http://www.epa.gov/compliance/resources/faqs/ej/index.html

will affect their environment and/or health; (2) the public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision; (3) the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision-making process; and (4) the decision-makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected".

- It is critical to acknowledge that there is enough history that points towards the importance of timely engagement of environmental justice communities in the projects. It is crucial to carefully think about what is the best way to define meaningful engagement. What is the right time to engage environmental justice communities? Before siting decisions are made or afterwards? When is it possible from a CCS project implementer's perspective to engage?

- It is important to ask the right questions. Is it appropriate to site or think of siting CCS projects in the environmental justice hotspots? Where there is a history of opposition to industrial facilities in an area, there may be opposition to CCS as another industrial activity, not necessarily opposition to CCS as a technology.

- Some environmental justice concerns may be allayed by a future portfolio of successful CCS demonstrations already in operation.

How do we address the views that CCS may detract from investment in renewable energy technology? What about general opposition to coal in the context of CCS?

- This is an ideological question. Climate change cannot wait- we have to use a multi-pronged approach to solve the issue. CCS is a bridge technology to a renewable energy-based future.

- Proponents of CCS need to acknowledge that any dollar spent towards CCS is a dollar not spent towards renewable energy and energy efficiency..

- Making an international argument about global coal use can resonate with communities. Using real examples makes it more compelling for the public. For example, one stakeholder was able to explain how CCS technologies would help address a local environmental concern that the community was also alarmed about.

- Communities are conscious about the high costs associated with CCS. Illustrating how costs are projected to decline over time is important.

- It is also important to emphasize that the cost of dealing with climate change without CCS would be much higher than dealing with climate change using a portfolio of technologies that does include CCS (IEA 2008)[2]

[2] CO2 Capture and Storage: A Key Carbon Abatement Option, IEA 2008
http://www.iea.org/textbase/publications/free_new_Desc.asp?PUBS_ID=2052

- Several stakeholders also flagged the potential for carbon-negative energy from CCS plus biomass (either alone or in combination with coal) as a potential consideration when framing CCS in the climate context

What recommendations should we have in the Guidelines for different audience segments in this context?

- It is important to think about the roles of each audience segment when conversing with communities. There is a need for sources of unbiased and objective information for CCS.