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## Nations Get on Board CDR Launchpad at COP27

By Mark Fogarty

Six nations agreed to start a cooperative venture to reduce the cost of carbon dioxide removal at the recent 27th Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. And there is some real urgency behind the new proposal, which is looking for implementation by 2025.

Attendees of the recent Institute for Carbon Removal Law and Policy webinar “Scrubbing the Skies: The Role of Carbon Dioxide Removal in Combating Climate Change” at American University heard host Wil Burns say “Many of us believe COP27

may be looked back on as an inflection point for carbon dioxide removal in meeting the objectives of the Paris Climate Agreement.”

Burns, visiting professor in the Environmental Policy & Culture Program at Northwestern University and co-founder of the Institute, led a panel of COP27 attendees on the proposal by a 22-country coalition (including the European Union) called Mission Innovation.

“It’s a group of countries that participate in the framework convention, and the Paris Agreement, as parties to help both national development of what they denote clean energy approaches to address climate change, as well as to try to foster collaboration between the members,” he said.

Burns said that at COP27, the coalition “announced a new initiative called the Carbon Dioxide Removal Launchpad.” (CDRLaunchpad.org.)

Perspectives on the launchpad were given by panelists Chris Neidl, the co-founder of the Open Air Collective; Tracy Hester, associate professor at the



Launchpad panelist, Chris Neidl

University of Houston Law Center, and Ben Rubin, executive director of the Carbon Business Council. Each of them attended COP27.

“It definitely was something that reverberated,” said Neidl. “What the launchpad aims to be is a coalition of government members like Canada, the European Union, Japan, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States.”

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Ministers and senior leadership at the COP27 announcement of the CDR Launchpad on November 17, 2022. Pictured from left to right: Japan Deputy Director-General for Environmental Affairs Shinichi Kihara; Denmark Head of Department in the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities Asser Rasmussen Berling; Canada Assistant Deputy Minister for Environment and Climate Change Stephen de Boer; U.S. Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm; U.K. Minister for Climate Graham Stuart MP; Iceland Special Envoy for Climate Benedikt Höskuldsson. CDR Launchpad founding members not pictured: European Commission and Norway. Credit: Mission Innovation

One big goal is to bring down the cost of CDR to \$100 a ton, an oft-cited benchmark to make CDR financially viable. Another goal, Neidl said, “is each of the first wave member states will commit to build one 1,000 ton CO<sub>2</sub>/year CDR project by 2025, which is right around the corner.”

And then, “collectively contributing at least \$100 million by 2025 to support CDR projects and demonstrations globally.”

The year 2025 “is just a blink away, so it’s really kicking off with a specific near-term goal,” he said.

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Burns commented “It’s an interesting development, in the sense that for a long time at these COPS there seems to have been a lot of hesitation on the part of governments to talk about the role of CDR. There’s an acknowledgement of the importance of this, some initial investment and specific metrics of what success will look like.”

Not every panel reaction was totally positive.

“My reaction when it was announced was the amounts did seem surprisingly small,” said Hester.

“But it’s an important icebreaker in terms of the identity of the parties that have signed up. They’re big players. They’re just defining the rules using small stakes. But once they’re in place and fully operational it’s a great framework to really ramp it up.”

Rubin called the development exciting.

“In addition to the Launchpad announcement that came out on December 17, the carbon dioxide removal within Mission Innovation has also been moving some important cross border collaboration forward on carbon removal. An Innovation roadmap and action plan was released in September, during Climate Week,” he said.

Neidl added, “The goal is to get us to one gigaton per year within the next one to two decades, which might seem like a long time out, but if we can get on that trajectory, to where we ultimately need to get to 10 gigatons per year by 2050, the idea is to have a specific gigaton goal for deployment.”

Burns concluded, “In some ways, not establishing ridiculously ambitious goals made it more credible that somehow can actually be accomplished.”