

## CEMS Climate Change Strategy Role-Play

*„I can clearly say that this was by far the best course I have ever taken part in. [...] This course gave me a clear hint on where my future career path should go.”*

Estelle Tanner, Master Student, University of St.Gallen

University of St.Gallen, ESADE Barcelona, University of Cologne, Corvinus University Budapest, Rotterdam School of Management and already twice the Warsaw School of Economics – a year by year growing number of CEMS business schools and students participate in the Model UNFCCC. In May 2013 as many as 68 students, 3 student reporters and 7 lecturers met in Barcelona to negotiate and simulate an UN Climate Change Conference. For students who played the roles of country delegates, NGO representatives or lobbyists from industry it was a unique learning opportunity.

But how to prepare for two full days crammed with agenda items as “Future emission reduction commitments of countries” or “Funding and related technology transfer for developing countries”? How to give answers as a government representative on questions interspersed with acronyms and technical terms as “Which activities should be eligible for CDM credits (CERs)?” or “Should the adaptation fund continue to work in a post-Kyoto framework”? There is no chance to do this without an intense preparation at each of the participating universities. During the whole spring term students followed lecturers’ presentations, wrote several papers, took an exam and attended negotiation trainings. After three months everyone felt well prepared to defend his or her countries’ position and to aim for an ambitious global agreement. However, these two goals could have been contradictory, depending on the specific country. We asked Florence Lampe, who played the chair of the Mitigation Working Group, if and how she had perceived this possible contradiction.

**Florence Lampe:** *When talking to the delegates of South Africa, China, USA, Tuvalu Islands etc. after the negotiations, they all emphasized that their greatest challenge was to stick to their country’s perspective and not to let shine through their personal opinions. As chair of the mitigation working group, however, my challenges were slightly different to the ones of the country delegates.*

*I did really enjoy my role as chair, since I like to look at things from different perspectives and try to find consensus. Nevertheless, I found it difficult to adhere to the formal rules, keep calm and stay neutral at all time when debates got very intense. I always wanted to take a position and argue in favor of a particular country or country-group.*

**HCC/KN:** David Loose, you played one of three distinguished delegates of the United States. How do you assess the significance of emotions during the role play?

**David Loose:** *One of my takeaways is that negotiations are strongly influenced by emotions and can hardly be separated from the personal site even if one is aware of such a bias. Human beings are much more likely to try to find an agreement or compromise with partners they like. Therefore you should establish a good personal relationship with the other delegates. We could experience from a movie about the real negotiations in Copenhagen with Obama and Sarkozy that uncontrolled emotions can do a lot of damage.*

**HCC/KN:** You finally could reach with the “Barcelona Protocol” an agreement that was much more ambitious as the Copenhagen Accord or later agreements in reality, right?

**Florence Lampe:** *Yes, we managed to reach the following targets: a) Global greenhouse gas emission reduction of 80% by 2050, b) Country group specific peak years, c) Country group specific annual reduction targets. However, we could neither agree on country-specific reduction targets, nor on a functioning mechanism to transfer money and technology from developed to developing countries. This shows very clearly how complex and difficult negotiations were.*

**HCC/KN:** Mr. Loose, some compromises were found very late during negotiations. Why did this happen?

**David Loose:** *As in real negotiations, the last hours increase the pressure on all parties who want to find an agreement which makes them more agreeable to compromise. One thing I learned during the negotiations is that the*

*last hours are the crucial ones. The integral question - emission reduction targets - was solved within minutes mainly by China and the USA and proposed as a take-it or leave-it offer to the other parties to put them under pressure to accept something which is better than nothing.*

**HCC/KN:** The role of the United States is very challenging, because the US have both, high emissions (today and in history) and a limited scope to agree to high emission reduction targets due to a strong opposition in the American Congress. You did a good job, but you were still a bit unsatisfied with your behavior at the very end. Why?

**David Loose:** *What I have to criticize myself for in retrospect is the easiness with which I gave concessions. Tuvalu got almost all they want without real negotiations at the end, the USA took over some responsibility from Russia, etc. All this only happened since I really wanted to get the proposal through the plenary. What I didn't think about was that the others wanted the deal as much as I and probably would have needed less encouragement than I gave them. Overall, it demonstrated how much one can leverage this situation when solutions is very close but not yet reached, when the "small" obstacles seem meaningless compared to the overall result.*

**HCC/KN:** Florence Lampe, your learnings were certainly different to those of the government representatives, in what way?

**Florence Lampe:** *I learned that it is very important to listen to everybody carefully, to stay calm and neutral at all time and to put important remarks and propositions onto the board in order to lead the debate into a certain direction and ensure that information does not get lost. I also learned that it is important to be able to stick to clear rules of procedure as chair. Otherwise the negotiations would end in chaos. All these learnings are also important for other disciplines and tasks and will certainly help me at my future job!*

The fifth edition of the Model UNFCCC was different from the others. It was an unprecedented role of social media, alternative blogs and hidden strategies that gave some participants advantage over those less participating in the communication. This and other examples mentioned above show how close mock negotiations are to the reality. This is why training negotiation skills, reaching consensus and enhancing team is more important than ever before.

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Report und Questions by Hans C. Curtius & Kate Negacz

More information: [www.modelunfccc.org](http://www.modelunfccc.org) and [hans.curtius@unisg.ch](mailto:hans.curtius@unisg.ch)