**Building an international movement of business leadership groups for a low carbon economy: The International Climate Leadership Network (ICLN)**

**Project start date: May 2010**

**Project end date: April 2012**

**Total cost: £307,045 (original bid £347,317)**

**Project Code: PPY CENTRAL 1004**

**Project Background**

The purpose of the project, targeting 14 countries / regions (was to develop a self sustaining international network of home grown, autonomous, national, cross-sector business groupings that would advocate clear and strong policy measures to deliver a prosperous, low-carbon economy, both within key countries and internationally.

**Executive Summary**

The Low Carbon High Growth Fund (and later the Prosperity Fund) supported the project titled "Building an international movement of business leadership groups for a low carbon economy: The Corporate Leaders Network for Climate Action (CLN)" implemented by the University of Cambridge Programme for Sustainability Leadership (CPSL) from May 2010 to May 2012.

**Key Findings**

* The 2°C Challenge Communiqué (calling on governments to take action at a national level to ensure a successful transition to green growth and a climate resilient economy) was recognised by leaders internationally. Although difficult to assess what the impact of this project was on this outcome, it is clear that business engagement on climate change in 2011 increased dramatically
* CLN groups have been a proactive and positive voice on climate change policy, often more effective than the voice of international organisations
* CLN did not realise the objective of forming a self-sustaining and self-financing secretariat
* The project was effective overall but the degree of effectiveness varied in countries covered
* In Mexico the project contributed to passing the Climate Change act

**Relevance**

The project was highly relevant in the environment as COP 18 President Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiyah in his concluding remarks said that “Doha has opened up a new gateway to bigger ambition and to greater action—the Doha Climate Gateway.” He added “Now governments must move quickly through the Doha Climate Gateway to push forward with the solutions to climate change.”

The 2 Degree Challenge Communiqué – represented a truly international consensus from business on effective climate change policy. The CLN groups were successful in owning it and as a result, it increased their profile as proactive and positive voices on climate change policy. Many groups (specially Brazil, South Africa and Turkey) had their meetings with governments based on this and received excellent media coverage.

Separately, the project fitted into the Low- Carbon High Growth Strategic Programme Fund (SPF) Strategy.

**Efficiency**

The project was ambitious in its outcome and geographical coverage, thus efficiency varied across the countries. Separately, the Corporate Leaders Network (CLN) was not able to realise its objective of forming a self-sustaining and a self-financing secretariat. The group’s members were divided as to what the network would deliver and how they could contribute financially. This led them to focus on building the capacity of existing groups as opposed to seeding new members.

The theory of change behind the project underlines that an international network of home grown business groups has the potential to be more effective on domestic and international issues, than a voice by international organisations. Outputs and activities planned in the project bid were coherent to deliver that change.

Moreover, the most valuable output was the shared ownership of the 2 Degree Challenge Communiqué on Climate Change which represents a truly international consensus from business on effective climate change policy. Based on this, the groups had meeting with their respective governments and this was widely covered in the media. However, as previously mentioned, the noticeable support was only from a few countries like Brazil, South Africa and Turkey. From an economic perspective, it was efficient that the CLSP managed to engage Hungary through another initiative running in that country. However, some of project activities could have been co-funded by business groups in order to bring the costs down and also to achieve a improved ownership.

**Effectiveness**

The project was overall effective: the international network was formed and the most significant output, the 2 C Degree Communiqué received national and international recognition by key political leaders from Brazil, Chile, Germany, Japan, Republic of Korea, South Africa and Australia.

However, the degree of effectiveness varied in the countries covered. There is evidence that CLN is strategic in Chile, Brazil, Ireland, UK and Hong Kong (while in others their participation in the network has been less relevant to influence domestic policy Also, some relevant constituencies in the Climate Change field from the UK and other countries interviewed were not aware about CLN and highlighted that there were numerous business organisations advocating for climate change action. Overall, Posts have been able to access to projects´ benefits (contacts, meetings, information) and use them to deliver their own CBPs.

**Sustainability**

The project is sustainable even though the CLN is not self-financing (primarily paid for by member groups). This is evidenced by:

1. The international business community taking joint ownership of the 2 Degree Challenge Communiqué – this clearly demonstrates a convergence of views within the international business community in support of a prosperous low carbon economy
2. Despite the cut back on communication spending by HMG, the small informative video for SE Asian initiative was completed and published on CPSL’s website. Additionally, a ‘policy executive summary’ was also published in the UK’s CMCI’s report on policy frameworks and exhibited at the ‘Planet Under Pressure’ conference.
3. At the country level sustainability varied – some of the groups have incorporated new members and are financially stable whereas elsewhere sustainability is low.

**Impact**

At the international level, the project demonstrated a strong impact with the 2 Challenge Communiqué which was recognised by important leaders internationally. It is difficult to assess the attribution of the project, but it must be recognised that in 2011, business engagement on climate change and low carbon issues increased dramatically.

One of the strongest impacts worth mentioning is the case of Mexico, where the project contributed to passing the Climate Change act.

**Lessons Learned**

1. In order to effectively achieve the outcome, advocacy is essential to highlight the need for taking action on climate change issues. Significant funds should be allocated for this activity.

2. We would suggest better, coordinated communication with stakeholders:

1. link up companies earlier in the project framework
2. focus on a few countries before broadening the scope

3. It would have been useful to link up governments rather than working individually in different countries

4. It would have been useful if CLN would have started with supporting existing groups already advocating climate change issues as opposed to seeding any new members.

5. We would suggest engaging China and India in Phase II – fastest growing economies – in the climate change initiatives – establishment of low carbon climate action advocacy business groupings.