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SCI Digest vol 24

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A publication to drive action and leverage global partnerships for the solar cooking sector

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SCI Attends UN Conference on Climate Change- COP23

Advising world leaders about the benefits of solar cooking



For the past two weeks, Solar Cookers International has had a strong delegate presence at the [23rd Conference of the Parties](#) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), informally known as [COP23](#). At COP21 in November-December 2015, the parties negotiated what is known as the Paris Agreement, which established specific actions and targets for reducing greenhouse gases emissions, mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change, and financing mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries.

Each year the parties to the agreement convene to assess progress in implementing the convention and, more broadly, dealing with climate change. SCI's participation in COP23 has focused on advocating for Governments to explicitly recognize solar cooking as part of their policy-making, monitoring, and reporting activities. As the convention progressed, SCI delegates made contact with several government ministry officials looking to scale up projects that build the capacity of solar cooking within their countries and communities:

- Hon. John Thomas Pundari, Minister for Environment Conservation and Climate Change, Papua New Guinea
- Hon. Fred Sarufa, Minister and Deputy Permanent UN Representative, Papua New Guinea
- Hon. Dr. Kitutu Kimono Mary Goretti, Minister of State for Environment, Republic of Uganda
- Mr. Abdulkani Barrow, Advisor to the Ministry of Livestock, Forestry and Range, Federal Government of Somalia

"The SCI booth at COP23 in Bonn, Germany is receiving a lot of high-impact visitors," reported Alan Bigelow, Ph.D, SCI's Science Director and Main UN Representative. "We have spoken with national representatives from: Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Somalia, Niger, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and more. This has been a clear opportunity for SCI to engage newcomers in contacting local SCI partners and accessing knowledge already developed within each country.

Our interactions at COP23 with national representatives has connected how solar cooking applies to cutting emissions, and we've suggested that solar cooking be included in their countries' Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). The opportunity to have a booth at COP meetings is valuable to SCI, and has had measurable results for our goals."

Mike Paparian, one of SCI's Board Members, also expressed satisfaction about SCI's presence at COP23. "This is my third U.N. climate summit, but the first one as a Solar Cookers International Board Member," Mr. Paparian wrote in an email to SCI staff. "The urgency and determination to address climate change is stronger than ever and people from around the world are recognizing that clean cooking is part of the solution. As a Californian, I always try to sit in on at least a couple of sessions with our Governor Jerry Brown. He tends to say something surprising, insightful and different every time he speaks, and this meeting was no different. In one session he followed former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. Schwarzenegger reminded us that to connect with people on the issues we care about, we need to connect them to air quality and health. Then

Jerry Brown started talking about awful air quality in India and directly connected it to hundreds of millions of people still cooking over open fires and experience horrendous health impacts. He stressed that clean cooking is critical and that for health AND climate reasons we need to pursue zero-carbon cooking solutions. As more leaders reach the conclusions Governor Brown has, our job of expanding solar cooker use will become easier."

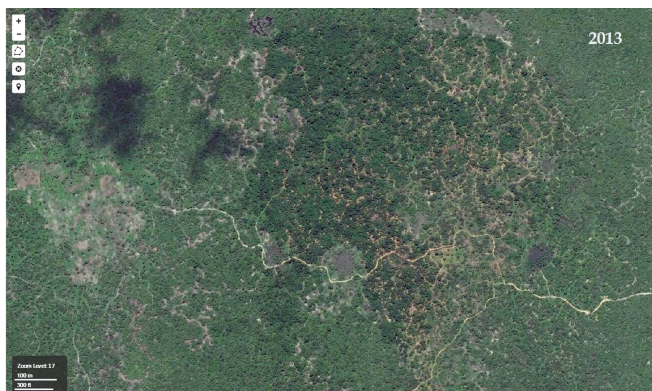
SCI covers the governors' discussion in more depth later in this Digest ("The Urgency of Pollution and Cleaner Cooking"). For additional coverage, photos, and updates from COP23, visit SCI's social media pages on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Severe Deforestation Due to Charcoal Production in Somalia Revealed at COP23

*Selected Statistics from "UN/Somalia Joint Programme for Sustainable Charcoal Reduction
& Alternative Livelihoods"*

Ministry of Livestock, Forest & Range, Govt. of Somalia

- In southern Somalia between 2011-2017, over 3 million trees were cut down and burnt to produce 167,500 tons of charcoal for cooking fuel, **a loss rate of almost 1 tree per minute**.
- In one 4,700 sqKm area between 2011-2013, over 520,000 trees were cut down and burnt for charcoal production.
- The photos below demonstrate the extensive deforestation in just four years outside of Barwaaqo in the Jilib District. Much of the vegetation has been harvested and stripped from the land--several dark round spots can be seen in the 2017 photo, which are burn scars from bonfires to produce charcoal.



Satellite photo of Barwaaqo, Jilib District,
Somalia, in 2013.

Credit- Ministry of Livestock, Forest & Range,
Govt. of Somalia.



Satellite photo of Barwaaqo, Jilib District,
Somalia, in 2017.

Credit- Ministry of Livestock, Forest & Range,
Govt. of Somalia.

- **Somalia is one of two countries to include solar cooking in their declared Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), the national statement that defines a country's approach to achieving the goals outlined in the Paris Agreement.**
- SCI records show there are over 3.1 million solar cookers active throughout the world; and SCI preliminary data on solar cooker performance suggest that number corresponds to a global installed capacity of **377 megawatts** (MW). (For comparison, a standard wind turbine is capable of producing 2 MW, or enough power to electrify 380 homes.)

Recorded Video of SCI Events at COP23

- **SCI Press Conference:** Tuesday, November 14

Video link: <https://unfccc.cloud.streamworld.de/webcast/solar-cookers-international>

- **Tzu Chi Foundation Press Conference:** "The Role of NGOs: Filling the Government's Gaps", Tuesday, November 14
Featuring SCI Program Director Caitlyn Hughes
Video link: <https://unfccc.cloud.streamworld.de/webcast/tzu-chi-foundation-3>

The Urgency of Pollution & Cleaner Cooking



The courtyard of the Jama Masjid mosque in Delhi on Nov. 8 as the city was blanketed in smog.

Credit Sajjad

Hussain/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images



Current California Governor Jerry Brown and Former Governor

Throughout the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP23), many sessions and side conversations revolved around the pressing need for cleaner cooking solutions. This topic was incredibly prescient as cities in India and Pakistan have been coping with severely hazardous levels of smog generated from crop-burning farmers, industrial practices, and cook fire smoke from neighboring rural areas.

Several recent news articles have highlighted the conditions in India and Pakistan:

[In India, Air So Dirty Your Head Hurts](#) (NY Times, Nov. 8, 2017)

[In Lahore, Pakistan, Smog Has Become a 'Fifth Season'](#) (NY Times, Nov. 10, 2017)

[Deadly Air Pollution Becomes a Common Enemy for Rivals India and Pakistan](#) (Bloomberg, Nov. 13, 2017)

The topic of health, pollution, and clean cooking came up often. During a discussion panel of US state governors and nonprofit leaders, former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger stated his stance on climate change and rising pollution levels: "The issue is that fossil fuels create

Arnold Schwarzenegger speak at a panel at COP23, November 13, 2017. Credit- UNFCCC.



Rachel Kyte, CEO of Sustainable Energy for All, speaking during Renewable Energy Day at COP23. Credit- SE4All.

smog, and that is killing people. 9 million people a year die because of pollution. Therefore, we have to talk to people about pollution, and how many people it kills, and how many kids have asthma and emphysema, and how many people are dying early due to diseases from pollution.... When you ask people, 'How many people care about climate change?', you get a certain number. Then when you ask, 'How many people care about pollution?', the number triples."

Current California Governor Jerry Brown agreed: "Arnold laid it out: health. Right now, we'll see what health does. New Delhi is choking as we speak. Will India increase their ambition now, to reduce pollution with soot and carbon and short-term pollutants? That will make a big deal. By the way, talking about India, India has 300 million people, families, principally women, doing the cooking with charcoal. And a lot of them die from respiratory diseases.... To change that to a zero-carbon cooking machine, that can be done. But it takes tens of billions [of dollars]. So there's a clear example: health is the threat, technology delivered is the solution, money is needed along with political will."

Rachel Kyte, CEO of Sustainable Energy for All, expanded on the issue. "We need to look at these [issues] from the perspective not only of the harm, as Governor Schwarzenegger said, that we are ignoring to our own detriment, also because they are opportunities for change. And they are systemic changes: if we are able to make a difference and leave no one behind in these particulars of the health and climate change nexus, we could spur change at a speed and scale which has been beyond us up until now. The first [issue] is cooking. If you look around the room, every third person in this room, if you were a microcosm of the global population, would not be able to prepare a meal for your children without risking poisoning them. It's 2017. And 2.8 billion people face a ridiculous challenge every day of jeopardizing their children's health, jeopardizing their own health, in order to be able to put food on the table."

Solar Cookers International advocates directly for clean, no-emissions solar cooking as an integral approach to reducing household air pollution and improving health for those cooking over open fires. We need your help in 2018 to continue working with partners from around the world, continuing to improve their lives and environment.

When does a solar cook need a match?

When it's a dollar-for-dollar financial match to SCI!

SCI has anonymous donors **challenging us to raise \$45,000 within the next 30 days**, and if we do, they will match it, dollar for dollar.

Imagine the number of solar cooks globally that these funds will impact!

[Donate to SCI's 2017 Matching Campaign today.](#)

When you know that a single solar cooker can save over a ton of wood in a year, you know that your gift, no matter its size, is important.

[You can make an immediate impact on families and communities who struggle to breathe easier by giving to SCI today.](#)

Watch future publications of the SCI Digest for more ways on how you can become part of the global solar cooking movement!

Consider a special gift to SCI in 2017--Honor someone with a gift [today](#).

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Solar Cookers International is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization leading global advocacy for the solar cooking sector.

To learn more, visit www.solarcookers.org

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