UN climate chief praises nations for passing domestic CO2 law

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By Ben Garside

LONDON, Jan 14 (Reuters Point Carbon) – Individual nations need to continue to pass domestic legislation to cut emissions of gases blamed for warming the planet if a global climate deal is to emerge in 2015, the U.N.’s climate chief Christiana Figueres said Monday.

In a statement ahead of a two-day summit gathering lawmakers from 33 countries in the UK, Figueres said: “The clean revolution we need is being carried forward”, adding that it was a “linchpin between action on the ground and the international agreement”.

In 2011, more than 190 nations pledged to sign a new deal to cut emissions of greenhouse gases to levels scientists say is needed to stand a chance of preventing droughts, floods and mass migration due to runaway climate change.

Many nations have since passed their own domestic legislation, but campaigners say collectively they fall way short of what is needed to keep the earth from warming more than safe levels of 2C.

“It will not be possible to reach an agreement in 2015 in the U.N.-brokered climate negotiations unless the national regulatory frameworks are in place,” said Adam Matthews, secretary general of GLOBE International, the association of lawmakers hosting the meeting in London.

GLOBE tracks national climate legislation and helps legislators scrutinise existing laws to help reach a new deal.

On Monday, the group published findings detailing efforts in 32 of the 33 nations represented, which they said had either enacted or were working on significant climate or related energy legislation.
Listed below are the key measures taken in the countries in 2012 outlined in the study:

- Mexico passed The General Law on Climate Change, with a target to reduce emissions by 30 percent versus business as usual by 2020 and creating institutional structures to support delivery. The country also passed the world’s first legislation relating to REDD+ readiness.
- South Korea passed legislation that will see the introduction of an emissions trading scheme by 2015.
- Bangladesh passed the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority Act.
- China has begun to draft its national climate change law and local legislation was passed in Shenzhen to manage emissions – the first such legislation in the country.
- India published its twelve five-year plan, incorporating a range of recommendations from the Low Carbon Expert Group.
- Indonesia passed a ministerial regulation to expand thermal energy.
- Japan introduced a carbon tax and passed the Low Carbon City Development Act.
- Kenya developed its Climate Change National Action Plan and is taking through parliament a Climate Change Authority Bill, both of which are expected to be finalised in early 2013.
- Vietnam passed its National REDD+ Action Programme.

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