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EU: Time to Lead

Remember the days when the EU had a clear impact on international climate negotiations? It had focused, ambitious positions, communicated well in advance before coming to the UNFCCC talks, and it was convinced of the benefits a low-carbon economy would bring to its citizens. Those were the times when the EU could act as a strong and reliable partner for any progressive coalition of Parties.

Today the EU environment ministers gather in Luxembourg to discuss ways in which the EU can take the UNFCCC talks forward. As always ECO has plenty of good ideas, and is not shy in sharing them. So, European Union, here's what you need to do now.

For starters, the EU should upgrade its reduction target well before Cancún to at least a unilateral 30% below 1990 levels by 2020 well in time before Cancún. Really, no one was impressed last year by the EU's leverage game with the conditional pledge, which only resulted in a series of ridiculous conditional pledges from other Annex I countries. The recent EC Communication previously highlighted in ECO shows very clearly

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Homework for Bonn III: New LCA Text

Just before ECO was going to bed, a fresh revision of LCA text landed. ECO congratulates the Chair for moving swiftly forward in facilitating the negotiations.

Now delegates have something to take back home to their ministers, to prove that they weren't just playing football with the Secretariat and the NGOs, and that they indeed have managed to recover from the Copenhagen hangover and started to negotiate. The text includes hobby horses from all corners, but not every single idea from everyone, which is an indication that the Chair is doing her job.

Now the ball is on the ministers' side again. They must start filling the blank holes in the document and making choices, so that Parties can return to the Maritim in August well prepared and ready to hit the ground running – that is to say, start negotiating substance from day one.

With only two negotiating weeks left before Cancun, the August session must take appropriate time for negotiating the crunch issues such as

the legal form of the agreed outcome, which is an issue that cannot be left for the last hours of Cancún.

Another crunch issue with high priority is the gigatonne gap between the current pledges and the 2° C and 1.5° C benchmarks. By August we expect countries to come forward with clear proposals on how to tackle this issue, which is of joint responsibility.

The core message for developed country ministers, after the lengthy elaboration of their pledges and related loopholes in the KP groups this session, is that they simply must score higher. ECO has looked at your potentials and knows that most of you have not even tried serious targets yet.

Finally, Parties should continue supporting the Chair in her challenging task of facilitating the negotiations.

The fresh text, which compiles the views of the Parties, deserves to be reviewed with fresh eyes, after some refreshing football. Any attempts to derail the process with bad faith and delay tactics will earn a red card.

– EU 30%, from page 1 –

that a 30% target is easy to achieve and is in Europe's own economic interests, regardless of what others do.

Secondly, finding friends is vital. Looking critically at the current political environment and the domestic situation in the US, the best way forward to get a comprehensive legally binding outcome – sooner rather than later – will be for the EU to seek a joint understanding with climate leaders among the developing countries. Importantly, the EU needs to clarify its continued commitment to the continuation of the Kyoto Protocol.

Thirdly, the vital ingredient needed for effective progress in Cancún is clarity on financing. To begin with, the EU would be well advised to deliver on previously made promises, such as offering full transparency of new and additional fast start finance, including member state reporting.

Securing adequate and predictable funding for developing countries will enable further negotiations on three important building blocks of technology, adaptation and REDD that can



The LULUCheFs – still searching for the perfect forest carbon accounting recipe...

Photo courtesy of GCCA

– with the money available – be finalised in Cancún.

The EU's impact has been clearly evident in progressing discussions on this matter in the past. An immediate priority must be exploring the options for sources of public finance, with a view to making choices by Cancún. In

the EU, revenues from EU ETS would easily provide an important source of additional and predictable funding.

Last but not least, internal divisions on hot air and LULUCF accounting rules need to be addressed in support of environmentally sound international rules under the UNFCCC.

Fossil #1: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman

First place fossil goes to these four Parties for risking the good faith and integrity of the negotiations by blocking all attempts to secure a technical review of the 1.5° target and suggesting that vulnerable countries use Google to get information that they need/want.

They did this in the teeth of emotional pleas from vulnerable countries and numerous rounds of diplomatic efforts to reach a compromise. Saudi Arabia even gave us a list of traded goods which would be in peril from a 1.5° target.

See if you can spot which one is their true concern: rice, cocoa, tomatoes, coal, oil. (If you're stuck, look up their chief export on Google.)

Honorary Fossil Award: BP-USA

BP-USA is awarded an Honorary Fossil Award from CAN International for fostering our addiction to fossil fuels, an addiction that is driving global warming towards dangerous climate change and lies behind the disaster unfolding in the Gulf of Mexico.

The consequences of forgoing a global agreement to move off fossil fuels and invest in a low-carbon future are clear – scientists have run the numbers. Unless warming is checked temperatures will increase way beyond the threshold for catastrophic climate change.

For some countries the toll is already mounting. As the negotiations began here in Bonn, hundreds died in India and Pakistan during the hottest heat wave on record, with temperatures shooting over 50° C (122° F).

This is bitterly ironic given that we have alternatives. Each year we delay, we pass by opportunities to invest in clean energy. The International Energy Agency has calculated the cost of passing by those opportunities at \$500 billion a year. At same time \$100 billion a year in subsidies are paid to fossil fuel companies worldwide.

Checking climate change and sustaining economic growth depends upon an international agreement to invest in clean energy.

BP-USA, a leader in fossil-fuel development that has played out so disastrously in the Gulf of Mexico, is awarded an Honorary Fossil for failing to fulfill its responsibility to help break the fossil-fuel addiction it has fostered and address climate change.