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H.E. Ms. Patricia Espinosa Cantellano
Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, Mexico
President of UNFCCC COP 16

11 February 2011

Dear Madame President:

Regarding Schedule of work for 2011, including workshops outlined in the Cancun Agreements

Congratulations on the success of the Cancun COP. The Climate Action Network's 550 member organisations were pleased to work constructively with your leadership during COP 16. We look forward to continuing a fruitful engagement this year, to build on the progress made at Cancun, working toward a positive outcome at Durban.

We note that there were many submissions and workshops arising from the Cancun Agreements, which will need to be woven into a comprehensive workplan for this year. In particular, the workshops identified in paragraphs 38 and 51 offer substantial opportunities to advance the work of the LCA and the UNFCCC this year. We welcome the establishment of these workshops and note their importance in making the necessary progress for 2011.

We note that the workshops on developed country mitigation commitments are undertaken in the context of:

- The need to clarify assumptions and conditions (para 38),
- The need to increase ambition (para 37, para 38 and UNEP report),
- Given the agreement at Cancun, and the overwhelming evidence contained in the UNEP and other reports, the fact that this technical work is being done, should not be used as a back door to weaken developed country targets. If targets are to change, it must be to increase them only.

We would respectfully make the following recommendations in regards to the format of these workshops:

- As has been successfully done in the past, both in UNFCCC workshops and in workshops that have been run by parties in parallel with the UNFCCC, we strongly recommend incorporating civil society input into the workshops – in the form of presentations, and as participants able to make interventions on an ad hoc, but coordinated, basis from the floor.
- We strongly recommend that the Bureau and Parties consider a series of workshops, rather than a one off workshop, to examine these issues to ensure that progress is made. For instance, an initial workshop could clarify assumptions and conditions in relation to targets, and a second workshop could undertake a process of examining how to increase the level of ambition of developed countries – to ensure that all elements of paragraph 38 are covered in sufficient detail.

We ask that the Bureau recommend a wide range of input into the workshops, including, inter alia:

- UNEP Emissions Gap Report produced late last year, and any updates and additions to this report,
- Formally recognise submissions from observer organisations,
- The latest scientific findings.

The outcome of workshops could be articulated as:

- An understanding of how the current developed country party pledges will be expressed in quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets,
- An understanding of how the current developed country party pledges are comparable between each other,
- An understanding of what the total current developed country party pledges sum to – and an assessment of the gap between what is recognised as required (Cancun Agreement acknowledges the need for developed country parties to reduce emissions by 25-40% below 1990 (para 37) – which is clearly not sufficient to stay below 2 degrees with a high probability, and more reductions will be needed to stay below 1.5,

- A process coming from workshops (or a series of workshops resulting in) recommendations on how much overall developed country targets need to increase by, and recommendations as to how this additional effort will be shared across parties,
- An understanding of how developed country quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets relate to the low carbon development strategies or plans outlined at paragraph 45,
- An understanding of the mitigation actions submitted by developing country parties,
- An understanding of the support required to enable developing country mitigation actions,
- An understanding of how developing country mitigation action is related to the low carbon development strategies or plans outlined at paragraph 65.

In regards to LULUCF, we recommend:

- An examination of the implications of the logging emissions loophole for targets - ie the extent to which unaccounted emissions undermine claimed emissions reduction,
- An exploration of the rationale underpinning the reference level (RL) approach ie that BAU plus planned emissions increases contained in national forest policies will not be accounted for, and assess whether this differing approach is valid for the forest industry compared with other sectors where reductions on 1990 emissions are sought,
- Consideration of the potential of encouraging emissions reductions in LULUCF below historical levels to add to overall effort and assist with deep, early cuts and increased targets,
- In addressing the above point, give consideration to no offsetting of LULUCF credits, limiting and / or phasing out offsets,
- Examining the further emissions loophole arising from failure to comprehensively account for emissions from land,
- Addressing the bioenergy / biofuels emissions accounting loophole,
- Considering how a truth in targets approach may be applied that would recognise the impact of emissions loopholes on targets, and
- Considering how an accounting system could be developed that addresses carbon stocks (reservoirs) as well as carbon flows.

On market mechanisms we recommend a review:

- For each country on how much of the emission reduction target is assumed to be met with carbon credits and how much is assumed to be achieved domestically including through the use of sinks,
- The above information should be provided not only for one specific year (e.g. 2020 or 2017) but for the entire commitment period, ie 2013-2017 or 2013-2020 depending on which length of period the country's target assumes). In case the amount of usage changes over the period, the estimate for each year must be provided,
- Based on the above information, the share of carbon credits in the entire AAUs and other credits must be shown,
- If a country plans to establish any additional market-based mechanisms that work outside of the UN system, an assessment of such schemes with respect of changing domestic emission reductions is included,
- This information to be used to clarify how much of the carbon budget for the long-term goal is used by developed countries, both individually and jointly,
- They must be compiled so that it is possible to make comparison among different countries' targets in a simple way.

We look forward to working with the Presidency, the Bureau and the UNFCCC Secretariat to ensure that the negotiations in 2011 culminate in a fair, ambitious and binding global agreement.

Sincerely,



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Director

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cc.

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