

# eco



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## European Parliament: EU Should Take Strong Position on Kyoto II

At the UNFCCC, the European Union is represented by its 25 Member States and the European Commission. But the third arm of the EU – the European Parliament (EP) – is often not heard in the climate negotiations. This is a shame. The EP, as the only European institution directly elected by its 457 million citizens, is markedly more progressive on climate change. This was clearly evident in an own-initiative parliament resolution last month. It was adopted by a resounding majority of 450 votes against 66.

Several of these European parliamentarians from across party lines are attending this conference. Their resolution addresses a number of issues extremely relevant to these negotiations.

On Article 3.9 of the Kyoto Protocol regarding new Annex I targets, the Parliament stresses that the EU should undertake strong emissions reductions of 30 per cent by 2020 and progressively greater emissions reductions thereafter. This level of reductions is in line

– continued back page, column 1

## We Are Here to Protect the Planet

Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin opened the high-level segment of the combined COP and COP/MOP meeting before a full assembly with a clarion call to action under the Kyoto Protocol. The lengthy ovation following the speech provides evidence of the broad consensus for strong decisions coming out of these negotiations.

Referring to the growing number of business leaders urging governments to pick up the pace of response to the global warming threat, Mr Martin said: “What they need from us – from government – is the certainty that we won’t fail them in our duty to build the framework they need, whether it’s hard targets or a market for capped emissions and trading credits.”

He addressed one of the major tensions at this meeting – the failure of a few wealthy countries to take responsibility for solving the problem. He said: “Climate change is a global challenge that demands a global response, yet there are nations that resist, voices that attempt to diminish the urgency or dismiss the science – or declare, either in word or in indifference, that this is not our problem to solve.”

In response, he added: “Well, it is our problem to solve. We are in this together. The time is past to seek comfort in denial. The time is past to pretend that any nation can stand alone, isolated from the global community – for there is but one Earth, and we share it, and there can be no hiding on any island, in any city, within any country, no matter how prosperous, from the consequences of inaction.”

In his remarks at the press conference

– continued back page, column 3



## Exciting Competition for Delegates

Delegates are invited to actively participate in an exciting and unique competition specially designed to take away some of the stress and tension associated with the high-level segment of these negotiations.

Apart from receiving a prize which we can only describe as "creative," and "relevant" to this conference, the delegate with the winning response will also get a moment of fame. But more importantly, the winner will be able to feel proud for bringing a smile or two to the faces of the negotiators during this vital and final stretch of the conference.

The world is fully aware that the US is not a Party to the Kyoto Protocol. That train is leaving the station in Montreal and the Bush administration will be left behind on the platform. It does not get any clearer than that.

Yet, the Bush administration seems to think the world is unable to comprehend this. In fact on Tuesday, the US was given a fossil award for intervening to object to the word "dialogue" in the President's draft COP decision text. This

objection made one wonder how many times delegates needed to hear the word "No" from the Bush administration at this meeting.

Subsequently, the US delegation has objected to the use of the word "process." This has left ECO wondering if there is actually a word relating to the negotiations that could be used without the US objecting to it, thereby motivating us to organise this competition.

**The challenge: Submit an alternative word for "process" to describe the negotiations, which you feel the US delegation will find acceptable.**

Submit your entry to ECO at: [ecopaper@hotmail.com](mailto:ecopaper@hotmail.com) by 13:00 today together with your contact details. Submissions with wit and humour will have an advantage. The benchmark has been set at "thingy."

The winning entry will be announced in Friday's issue of ECO and the prize presented to the winner during Friday's Fossil of the Day awards ceremony at 18:00 near the documentation counter. Send your entry now!

– *European Parliament, from front page* –

with the long-standing EU goal of restricting the increase in the Earth's mean temperature rise to a maximum of two degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels. It calls on the EU to ensure that the COP/MOP decides on a timetable for negotiating future climate commitments with a time limit of achieving agreement by the end of 2008. It also calls on the EU to ensure that the multilateral process is not paralysed by individual countries. (We know who you are!)

The Parliament recognises that industrialised countries must assume primary responsibility to help low-income countries adapt to climate change, and to assist them technologically and financially as they adapt. The Parliament insists on the need for increased financial assistance for climate adaptation for the least-developed countries and that the priority for these countries is poverty eradication and development. The EU already has a "Solidarity Fund" of up to one billion Euros per year from which its Member States can request support. Already this year it has paid compensation for damage caused by the extreme drought on the Iberian Peninsula and to Sweden for a winter storm that felled large swaths of forest and caused huge power blackouts. Perhaps this solidarity could be broadened to encompass needy non-EU countries?

Much of EU's energy infrastructure is due to be replaced in the near future. Therefore, the Parliament stresses that new investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency should be the main alternatives for climate change mitigation. The European potential for energy savings are up to 40 per cent of its energy use. With a systematic approach renewable energy could cover 25 per cent of the EU's total energy consumption in 2020. The resolution also calls for the abolishment of all perverse subsidies for fossil fuel that currently distort the energy market.

It is noteworthy that the strong majority (450 vs. 66) came in a parliament dominated by the European conservative party group and that the person who drafted the text, Mr Anders Wijkman, belongs to this bloc. This indicates climate change is no longer seen in Europe as only a "green" issue, but one of essential survival and security as well.

Finally, the European Parliament requested in their resolution that it be forwarded to all Parties to the UNFCCC. If you have not received your copy yet, please get one from Commissioner Stavros Dimas or from Environment Secretary, Margaret Beckett, of the EU Presidency. In addition, delegates should query the EU delegation on why its positions are not in line with the will of Europe's citizens, as expressed by their directly elected representatives?

– *Protect the Planet, from front page* –

immediately following his speech, he said: "To the reluctant countries, including the United States, I say this: there is such a thing as a global conscience and this is the time to listen to it...There is absolutely no excuse for any more delay in action."

As expected, US Minister Paula Dobriansky responded curtly to the Prime Minister's charges at another news conference later in the day. "One size does not fit all," she said. "It is our belief that progress cannot be made through formalised discussions."

In his speech, Mr Martin rebutted the main excuse offered by the US for not taking meaningful action – the fear it would harm the economy. "Some speak of the cost of bringing about change. But surely we realise by now that a greater cost will be exacted if we lack the will or the tenacity to change," he said.

Just before the speech, 25 prominent US economists, including three Nobel Laureates, called upon the US to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions through a market-based cap-and-trade approach that would provide "clear incentives for changes in business practices and the development of new technologies."

The Prime Minister ended with a stirring call to arms. He said: "We are called here to protect our planet. We are called here by our citizens. We must find the will and the way to live up to what they have every right to expect from us...The challenge is ours. So is the opportunity."

The only question remaining is whether Ministers here in Montreal will respond to the Prime Minister's challenge with the serious decisions needed to chart the path forward, for both the Kyoto Protocol and the Framework Convention. Nothing less is acceptable.

### "Fossil of the Day" Award

Saudi Arabia won the top fossil award yesterday for its rude interventions targeted at the Chair and other Parties at Tuesday night's SBSTA meeting, and for putting the entire text within brackets. The second fossil award went to Kuwait for loyally supporting Saudi Arabia and blocking progress by the meeting.

### THANKS

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