Getting on the Right Track for Workstream 1

The Warsaw city bikes are a good choice to explore this place which we call home for the next two weeks. The main task of ADP workstream 1 is to chart the course of work needed to deliver a fair, ambitious and legally binding agreement no later than COP 21 in Paris. So we should not spin our wheels in the same old direction with the same old interventions.

Here are some of the key points for the ADP WS1 outputs that will set the right course:

- **The deadline for tabling commitments: 2014**

  The Paris Protocol must signal the beginning of the end of fossil fuel use, with commitments inscribed that put the world on an emissions reduction pathway consistent with 1.5/2°C. To ensure this happens, Parties cannot wait until they show up in the City of Light to make their commitments, but rather must table them much sooner so that a review for adequacy and equity can be done. This means Parties must begin working on their proposed commitments right away so they can be tabled in 2014. And the 2014 deadline applies equally to mitigation and financial commitments.

  These should not be viewed as ‘initial offers’ in some negotiating game, but real commitments that will add up to an ambitious deal from the beginning. The timeline for tabling in 2014, inscribing in 2015 and the adequacy/equity review are just the safety nets to ensure that goal is reached and there is enough time for ambition to be raised if need be.

- **A basket of indicators to guide commitments and the Equity Review**

  In Warsaw, Parties must agree to common equity indicators to guide the development of their commitments, including: Adequacy, Responsibility, Capacity, Development Need and Adaptation Need. Key milestones for the review also must be agreed and the review must be concluded early enough in 2015 that Parties have time to revise commitments.

- **Information required for commitments**

  Sufficient information about the proposed commitments should be provided to enable the review ex ante for adequacy and equity. Such information should include the gases and sectors covered and the GWPs used. Information is also necessary for the land-use sector and carbon markets, and work needs to begin next year on a common accounting framework for them.

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ECO Stands in Solidarity with the Philippines and All Vulnerable Countries

Yesterday, we heard from the Philippines lead negotiator, Yeb Sano, who addressed the opening session of the UN climate negotiations, calling for an end to the madness and taking urgent action to prevent a repeat of the devastating storm that hit much of his country this past weekend. Super Typhoon Haiyan was nothing the world has ever experienced, taking thousands of lives in just two days. Yeb Sano even declared that he will voluntarily refrain from eating food during this COP until a meaningful outcome is in sight.

Very importantly, he put a lot of faith in civil society. The message is unmistakable: “These last two days, there are moments when I feel that I should rally behind the climate advocates who peacefully confront those historically responsible for the current state of our climate. These selfless people who fight coal, expose themselves to freezing temperatures, or block oil pipelines. In fact, we are seeing increasing frustration and, thus, more increased civil disobedience. The next two weeks, these people, and many around the world who serve as our conscience will again remind us of our enormous responsibility. To the youth here who will constantly remind us that their future is in peril, to the climate heroes who risk their lives, reputation, and personal liberties to stop drilling in the polar regions and to those communities standing up to unsustainable and climate-disrupting conventional sources of energy, we stand with them.”

We respond: your faith in us will not be misplaced. The many voices contributing to ECO will never lose their passion, motivation and determination to achieve a change in light of these and many other events. We firmly stand in solidarity with the Philippines and all other nations vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. We urge the international community to act more strongly than ever before to reduce emissions, and push towards a new, globally-binding agreement at COP19 and beyond.

As Yeb Sano stood with climate activists, we will stand with him. And in keeping with that pledge, a number of CAN members, youth and other civil society are also undertaking a solidarity fast alongside him.
The Open Road for Workstream 2 Ambition

As Parties pave the road towards the 2015 agreement under ADP Workstream 1, a crucial brick seems to have gone missing. According to the UNEP Emission Gap report, pre-2020 mitigation efforts currently fall 8-12 GtCO2e short, which is needed to keep global temperature increases below 1.5°C.

ECO would love to hear how Parties intend to reach a global deal in Paris if they don’t increase their pre-2020 ambition significantly. If global emissions do not peak by 2015, the entire basis for the Paris negotiation will have to be revised to address increased adaptation and finance needs and more loss and damage.

How many more lives will be lost or displaced as a result of climate change? How many more climate activists will have to risk their lives to show the world the lack of political will and the world’s unrelenting dependence on fossil fuels?

ECO is tired of repeating that 2020 is too late to start acting. Without stronger mitigation action by 2020, typhoons like Haiyan will become ordinary climate events. Experts tell us that a 2°C pathway implies an immediate peaking of global emissions and a much faster rate of fossil CO2 decline—less than 3% by 2019 and 4% by 2036 (Stockholm Environment Institute, 2013). Should there be a political decision to choose a less ambitious pathway, who will bear the responsibility of a significant increase in climate risk?

COP 19 is nearly the last opportunity to increase pre-2020 mitigation efforts. It must be decided in Warsaw that all developed countries—including those not participating in the Kyoto Protocol—will take the lead and put forward increased mitigation commitments by the Bonn Ministerial next spring. ECO is deeply concerned by current rumours coming from some Annex I countries that they may fail backwards and actually decrease their already far below the mark pre-2020 ambition. At the Bonn ministerial, developing countries should also announce new NAMAs while clarifying their finance needs.

There is also strong momentum to make progress on complementary initiatives. We must hope that Warsaw sends a signal to the Montreal Protocol process for the rapid phase-out of HFCs. Positive signals are coming from many Parties, so now is the time to seal a decision.

Parties should also engage on concrete proposals for scaling up renewable energy and energy efficiency globally. By COP 20, Parties should adopt a global aspirational target of 25% renewable energy by 2020, and increasing energy efficiency by at least an additional 2.4% above the current penetration rate per year from 2014 until 2020. This alone will help us save 7.5 to 8.5 GtCO2e by 2020, a major contribution to closing the gap. And developed countries should take the lead and submit renewable energy and energy efficiency targets in addition to any existing domestic GHG targets.

Finally, how many billions of taxpayers’ money will developed countries continue to put in the pockets of the big oil, gas and coal industries? Elimination of fossil fuel subsidies primarily in Annex I countries is a crucial step in increasing mitigation ambition in the short term.

Bob Dylan asked: “How many roads must a man walk down before you can call him a man?” ECO takes the view that the open road for increasing pre-2020 ambition is right ahead of us.

Words into Action: The Gender Workshop

Twelve years ago, the deficit of women’s participation at the UNFCCC was raised as a matter urgently needing attention, and Parties decided to improve the participation of women in UNFCCC bodies in decision 36/P.7. A year ago, with a view to the continuing and significant deficit of women’s participation, and with increased recognition of the importance of women’s effective participation and gender equality to all aspects of climate change, a new and more powerful decision was adopted requesting Parties to work toward a goal of gender balance, gender-sensitive climate policy and capacity building on the issue.

This decision also established gender and climate change as a standing agenda item of the COP, and Parties and Observers were requested to submit their views. Today from 15:00 to 18:00 in meeting room 1, the UNFCCC will convene the first in-session gender and climate change workshop to discuss Party submissions as well as the major themes of the gender decision. This is an opportune time to engage on this critical issue and map out concrete next steps on gender in the climate change debate.