

ECO

THE BIG ECO FOR BIG AMBITION ISSUE

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12 Years Left

ECO was deeply impressed by yesterday's SBSTA Special Event on the IPCC Special Report on 1.5 degrees. The world's best climate scientists have compiled an avalanche of new information on the advantages of restricting warming to 1.5 degrees. Up to several hundred million fewer people would be exposed to climate related risks and susceptible to poverty by 2050 if warming is limited at 1.5 instead of 2 degrees. The area of risk of undergoing a transformation of ecosystems from one type to another is 50% lower with 1.5 degrees than with 2 degrees of warming. Every tenth of a degree of warming really matters.

But ECO also felt a bit overwhelmed by all of this – a three hour Special Event one afternoon is just not enough to do justice to the Special Report and all the information contained in it. Therefore, ECO was happy to hear Grenada's proposal to have a deeper analysis of IPCC SR1.5 as an agenda item for the next SBSTA session(s).

There is just one problem with that: We have only 12 years left to reduce global CO2 emissions by almost half if we want to keep the Paris 1.5 degree warming limit in reach without counting on vast amounts of negative emissions. And if we wait until the next SBSTA session for drawing conclusions from the Special Report, we will have 11 years left...

Time is pressing. Parties need to react to the Special Report now, here in Katowice. The next opportunity is today - in the wrap-up meeting of the Talanoa Dialogue's preparatory phase. As a result of today's meeting, ECO would like to see a short-written summary as input for the political phase of the Talanoa Dialogue on December 11. Parties should refer to the new intelligence from IPCC SR1.5 and the extreme urgency we are facing. The scientific message is clear. The response is now in the hands of governments.

Have You Done Your Stretches?

ECO has been running back-and-forth from the negotiations in areas B and D to side events in area G. ECO is getting quite the exercise! However, ECO forgot to stretch before exercising – and now, ECO feels sore. ECO hopes that Parties in the transparency negotiations don't make the same mistake. We all know that stretching is vital to maintaining individual flexibility and improving balance so you don't slide off slippery sidewalks.

Speaking of (back-)sliding, ECO would like to remind Parties that they decided in Paris that they would maintain at least the frequency and quality of reporting as under the Convention. ECO thinks this applies to reviews as well...there's no avoiding a true technical expert review.

Flexibility and support are crucial, so reporting and transparency can improve over time. Luckily, the Paris Agreement clearly provides flexibility for those developing country Parties that need it in light of their capacities. Flexibility and support have to be provided to develop the capacities of those Parties who need it. But you can't keep stretching forever, at some point you need to begin exercising. Flexibility should no longer be provided to Parties once they have the capacity. Improvement plans are a great tool to help Parties to build their capacity over time as well as to track their progress.

ECO believes that discussing an end-date at this time is inappropriate as it is impossible to know how long it will take to develop the requisite capacities, but, hey, certainly Parties can revisit this question at a more appropriate time. ECO also notes that flexibility without limits is essentially just an exemption. The goal of flexibility in the Paris Agreement is the continuous improvement of capacity, so that all Parties are eventually able to fulfill the same requirements, at which point flexibility will no longer be needed. ECO encourages Parties to stretch to find the middle ground: where flexibility is built into specific provisions (as applicable) and is accompanied by the necessary support.

LOSS AND DAMAGE • EXTREME EVENT • DISPLACEMENT • LOSS AND DAMAGE • EXTREME EVENT • DISPLACEMENT • LOSS AND DAMAGE

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EXTREME EVENT • DISPLACEMENT • LOSS AND DAMAGE

Voices From the Front Lines

Hajji Mohamed used to make a living as a rice farmer on the fertile soil of Bhola Island in Southern Bangladesh. He'd saved enough in the 1980s to get to Mecca for the pilgrimage and looked forward to providing for his family in the years to come. But disaster struck in May 1997 when Mohamed and his family were caught in a devastating cyclone. They survived but their home and farm had been swept away.

For Mohamed, cyclones had become part of his life, and he was able to rebuild and start over. But from 2000 onwards, high tides and cyclones became more frequent around the island. Nearly every year, Mohamed's family was forced to relocate as the soil became too salty for growing his crops. Floodwater rushing down from the distant glaciers melting in the Himalayas posed yet another peril. Great swathes of land fell into the river and time and time again Mohamed was forced to move inland. When I met him early last year he was destitute. His community uprooted, his family dispersed to the slums of Dhaka and Chittagong with their own troubles, Mohamed was alone and begging for food from people hardly better off than himself. He had been displaced 18 times in 20 years. How do we account for the loss and damage Mohamed and his community have suffered — materially, emotionally, and in spirit? And who will pay the bill?

A personal account by Jamie Williams, Islamic Relief Worldwide

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Eating Away at the Paris Agreement

"I am so hungry", ECO told itself as it went out of Mazowsze Plenary room. All that talk about transparency reminded ECO of the hole in its stomach. ECO had reached its common time frame for nourishment, having not eaten for more than four hours. ECO was craving some plant-based locally sourced food to silence the growling belly.

ECO spotted the Grab and Go right across the hall. It was salivating for a salad with Polish cabbage, tomatoes and potatoes, and a freshly pressed carrot juice to go with it. And for dessert a banana and an almond milk cappuccino. ECO was happy to know that those plant-based food choices would help mitigate the growing emissions from the agriculture sector, which are projected to reach 52% of global emissions by 2050.

ECO joyfully set itself in the queue to order, but as it arrived to the front, a full platter of baguettes filled with sausage slices occupied half of the shelf. The rest of the menu

was overwhelmingly meat based. The cafeteria cuisine wasn't any better. "Vegetable broth with bulgur groats it is!"

Later that evening, as ECO entered the Spodek arena for the much anticipated COP24 Welcome Party, it noted the same meat-loving theme: Sausages with ribs and sausages with a side of sausage. ECO stayed hungry and grabbed its locally farmed apple that it picked up from the entrance in the morning...

In a world where GHG emissions need to reach net zero by 2050 to stay within 1.5°C, it's clear for ECO that a change of diet can be a significant contribution. Halving meat and dairy consumption by 2050 can decrease global greenhouse gas emissions by 64% from the projected BAU agriculture emissions. ECO wonders if anyone else has noticed how we are all eating away the Paris Agreement. Changing one's diet to reduce meat and dairy consumption is a great way to respond to the SR1.5. Enjoy your rice milk lattes!

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Equity in the Global Stocktake – Good Text. Let's Improve It, Not Lose It

Fortunately, the Saudis aren't in charge of the Global Stocktake. ECO notes this because yesterday Saudi Arabia, speaking for the Arab Group, called for the term "ambition mechanism" to be deleted from the GST text. Why? Because apparently this would pre-judge the outcome of the GST (see also, Fossil of the Day). As if the whole point of the GST wasn't to drive the ambition mechanism.

In any case, this view clearly isn't shared by all developing countries, many of whom are submitting good and useful text. Here are some nice examples:

- "Equity will inform how Parties will consider fairness and ambition;" The explicit statement makes it clear that equity isn't just a matter of process, but rather comes down to how parties perceive that they are making appropriately ambitious contributions to the global transition to climate resilient, low carbon societies.
- The GST will "identify gaps in collective progress and how they could be addressed in the light of equity and the best available science, as well as lessons learned and good practices." This one makes it crystal clear that we're talking

operational text here, and that the GST would result in concrete outputs that Parties take home and apply to increase their ambition over time – the core point of the ambition mechanism.

But the real win, in ECO's view, is that the inputs into the GST "could include qualitative and quantitative information, [for example indicative and non-prescriptive reference benchmarks, relating to equity,] as voluntarily provided by parties in their nationally determined contributions." The text would be even more of a win without the brackets and ECO thinks that Parties shouldn't be afraid of the bracketed text: after all, it's only about information they themselves provide, if they chose to.

All told, the current text includes some solid options, which would give us real room to grow, not only in the first, but also in subsequent GSTs, as we learn how to do meaningful equity assessments. ECO still has hope that, at the end of the day, the GST isn't going to be reduced to another pro-forma exercise. Although, judging by some interventions today, this is still a real possibility. We shall see.

It's Not Sufficient to Avert and Minimise if We Forget to Address

Yesterday we were treated to the draft decision text of the report of the Executive Committee (Ex-Com) of the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts. The report starts off well, highlighting the forthcoming review of the WIM, seeking inputs to the terms of reference for the review, and reminding everyone of the importance of the IPCC special report on 1.5oC. Sadly, that's where the positives cease. But ECO thinks it might have a suggestion on how to improve the text.

But first, a slight detour: At many previous COPs, negotiators have struggled to come to terms with the fact that Loss and Damage is separate from adaptation. Amazingly some WIM Ex Com members attempted to subsume Loss and Damage under Adaptation, despite the fact that it is a separate article in the Paris Agreement. This would ignore the plight of the millions of people already facing the irreversible consequences of climate change; for many of them it is already too late for adaptation. The IPCC 1.5 report has confirmed that loss and damage is a real problem, with substantial evidence of the impacts, causalities and attributions.

Maybe the problem with loss and damage is that negotiators are too focussed on two of the three tasks from the Paris Agreement, namely to avert and to minimize – but somehow forgot the third one, to address? ECO would like to remind negotiators that while the Paris Agreement says Parties should cooperate to avert, minimize and address loss

and damage, the mandate of the WIM is focused on addressing it. Vulnerable countries and their populations suffering from the climate crisis won't be able to address loss and damage without the necessary financial resources.

Now, back to that draft text on the Ex-Com report. First, the draft text only indirectly mentions finance, once. Negotiators, this aspect requires your urgent attention; you will need to respond with more clarity on how you plan to implement workstream (e) in the WIM Ex-Com's five-year rolling work plan. This is the workstream focused on action and support, including finance. Second, ECO notes that paragraphs 38 and 39 of the report of the task force for displacement are mentioned and that these highlight the need for finance. Nevertheless, they lack a clear plan for implementation. Third, we cannot expect the WIM, particularly the developing country members, to participate actively if the mechanism is not adequately resourced. The COP decision must give the Ex-Com a clear mandate and the elements to work on unlocking additional sources of finance, as part of its 2019 work.

WSo, negotiators, the sooner you grasp the thorny issue of providing the financial resources to address loss and damage, the sooner the global community can start to address the loss and damage that is now devastating the poor and vulnerable communities around the world. Communities whose members are unfortunately largely influenced are excluded from these hallowed negotiating rooms.



Saudi Arabia

On Behalf of the Arab Group

It's great to be consistent – reliable is good, right? Seems old habits die hard, especially if your allies keep the door open for you ...

So, given that we are at COP 24, it is no shock that there are some offenders that keep on coming back.

This Fossil award is for the most consistent, insistent and persistent voice undermining ambition in the negotiations so far this week – Saudi Arabia. On Tuesday, an intervention by Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Arab Group, summarized their overall approach.

In the session on the Global Stocktake, Saudi Arabia, called for deletion of the term “ambition mechanism” in the preamble to the Global Stocktake text on the grounds that it pre-judges the outcome of the GST. The IPCC SR 1.5 and the entire Paris Agreement makes it clear that we need much more climate ambition if we are to meet the agreement's long-term objectives.

Saudi efforts to undermine ambition don't stop there. Saudi Arabia (speaking for like-minded developing countries or LMDCs for those not in the know) opposes agreement on any new information for NDCs to promote Clarity, Transparency and Understanding, and supports a “no text” outcome. Saudi Arabia, the LMDC and Arab groups have repeatedly called for ratification of the Doha Amendments, despite Saudi Arabia itself having neglected to ratify.

We could go on, but it is more than clear that Saudi Arabia is up to its old tricks, and inventing some new ones, through building alliances and developing strategies that undermine ambition and keep warming to 1.5C. Welcome back to the leaderboard Saudi Arabia!

Brazil

Just ten days before COP 24, Brazil's president-elect, army captain, Jair Bolsonaro, called off the offer to host COP 25 next year, because he read on WhatsApp that the Paris Agreement is a threat to Brazil's sovereignty. Um, yeah, that seems legit.

And If you think that's a shame, consider for a minute Brazil's appointed chancellor, Ernesto Araújo, a man whose role model is Donald Trump and who wrote that climate change is part of a Marxist plot to transfer power to China. Somebody please warn Angela Merkel!

Bolsonaro's plans for the Amazon rainforest, however, are no laughing matter. He has promised to end deforestation control, open up indigenous lands for big business, kill environmental licensing and even shut down the Environment ministry. Environmental criminals are listening closely: between August and November, deforestation rates went up 32%, and a recent study has estimates that it might reach 25 thousand square kilometers a year, with resulting emissions of 3 BILLION tons of carbon dioxide. That's tchau to 1.5 degrees.

But first and foremost, Bolsonaro's forest madness is endangering his own people. The Amazon exports humidity that feeds rains in the southern parts of the country, where people live, and food is produced. Even recently half of Brazilian cities suffered critical water stress in the last four years.

We're sorry Brazilians, you're being embarrassed, Bolsonaro is endangering your people and threatening the fate of the whole planet – is anything more deserving of a Fossil?

Switzerland Astray: Parliament Decides to Kill the Domestic Reduction Target

ECO still cannot believe what happened in Switzerland earlier this week! While we all listened carefully to President Alain Berset's opening speech on Monday, reminding everyone (in particular his MPs it seems) that *"we can only succeed [...] if all states – really all – reduce their emissions"*, his Parliament back home almost simultaneously decided to abolish the domestic emission reduction target for the period 2020-2030!

Yes, you read correctly: Switzerland may have no target for domestic CO₂-emissions reduction past 2020! ECO wonders what's happening in the small but pristine and wealthy land of milk and honey (ahem.. chocolate) behind the Alps!

Wasn't Switzerland the first country in the world to announce an ambitious INDC well ahead of Paris? And isn't the Swiss delegation known for their persistent push on a robust transparency framework, strict criteria

("same for all!") and a mechanism to continuously increase mitigation ambition?

Perhaps ECO isn't alone having fallen for a slightly distorted picture of a seemingly progressive, clean and (self-proclaimed "recycling champion") country. Time to lift the curtain of cheese and fondue:

Indeed, Switzerland announced in early 2015 its INDC of a reduction by 50% of CO₂ emissions by 2030 (compared to 1990). But what the Swiss government did not mention back then is the intention to achieve almost half of it abroad. In fact, its domestic target was intended to be -30% only. The rest would come from international transfers of mitigation outcomes (ITMOs).

A recent study by Swiss Cleantech (the Swiss association of progressive industries) estimated the amount of needed ITMOs to nearly 60 Million tonnes/certificate. Give it a probable

future price of 100 USD (or more) and you get the picture: The Swiss government intended to spend 6 billion USD (or more) over the coming decade on hot air.

That was then. The newest move by the Parliament this Monday, wanting to allow an unlimited part of the NDC to be achieved through ITMOs, could theoretically add up to 30 million tonnes of CO₂ per year to the shopping list. Not only does this seem ethically skewed, but it undermines the goals and intent of Paris. Spending around 10 billion USD (or more) on hot air rather than on domestic mitigation measures, makes no economic sense either.

There is one last chance. The Council of States can reverse this decision in the further debate of Switzerland's new climate legislation. ECO hopes that the MPs heard what the President was telling the world: "The cost of inaction is far beyond the cost of action"; "first movers will be the winners"...

Top Tips For Delicious Climate Accounting Finance

How would you like your accounting, readers? Consistent, well done, and accurate? (In that case I'd recommend our MDB special.)

Or maybe you'd like a loan soufflé? Or perhaps lots of different methods all mixed together - with sprinkles of figures plucked from the air (for the climate component of aid programmes)?

Seriously though, accounting rules are important, as this is what will incentivise good quality climate finance.

The SCF and the OECD both delivered reports this week. They gave us some figures, which sound very nice, but when we looked a bit closer they seem inflated. And there are worrying trends on adaptation, and on flows to LDCs.

We have some top tips:

- Measure what matters: We need to encourage more spending on adaptation. Both the OECD and the SCF show that this is still underfunded. No more than one quarter of climate finance, which is far

from the Paris Agreement's stating that "provision of resources should also aim to achieve a balance between adaptation and mitigation".

- Furthermore, the need to keep track of how much goes to LDCs. The OECD forgot. Standing Committee on Finance said this was only 24%, and 2% to SIDS.
- Grant-equivalent accounting: We'd also recommend you account for the climate finance that developing countries pay back to donor countries - those South-North flows - because loan repayments are not captured at the moment. The trend is that loans are growing much faster than grants. And at a time when many people predicting a new debt crisis, it's worth keeping an eye on that.
- We know you know this already, but it also needs to be new and additional. So as not to divert from critical health, education and humanitarian needs. For those Parties who are in favour of re-labelling aid budgets, we would happily re-label their COP badges, from pink to orange.

Make Human Rights and the Rulebook a Happy Family for Christmas

As the weather gets colder and Parties work to make a complete rulebook, the spirit of the Paris Agreement -- the eight rights based principles included in the Paris preamble are looking forward to being part of that happy family.

How do their chances look? Advocates argue that effective implementation of the Paris Agreement requires people to be at the centre of all climate decisions-making processes and actions. Parties must include the following fundamental elements throughout their implementation guidelines: **human rights, indigenous peoples' rights, public participation, gender equality, just transition, food security, ecosystem integrity, protection of biodiversity, and intergenerational equity.**

But some feel their presence in the Paris preamble is enough to allow them to thrive in climate action around the world, or that mere reference to the preamble in the Rulebook would be enough or that maybe just one or two of the principles need to be included.

Including human rights language within the Rulebook itself will help Parties develop and implement the effective climate action needed to stay below 1.5°C. Ultimately, this is what the Rulebook is about: giving guidelines to Parties, to help them to put general principles into concrete steps for necessary climate actions.

We were pleased to see many of the rights have a home in the current text in APA agenda item 3 on the planning processes of NDCs, but we are wondering why some elements are still left behind. Why do food security, ecosystem integrity and intergenerational equity not get any love? Show them some love by bringing them into the family.

We know eight "kids" may seem like a lot, but good parenting means loving them all and giving them a home in the Rulebook. And not only is it manageable, but also it is necessary, because the well-being of people and the planet is non-negotiable.

Takeaways for a Successful Talanoa

The purpose of the Talanoa Dialogue is to take stock of the collective efforts of Parties in relation to progress towards the long-term goal of peaking GHG emissions as soon as possible and achieve net zero emissions by mid-century, in order to limit global warming to 1.5C. The outcome of the Dialogue shall also "inform" the preparation of countries' nationally determined contributions.

The IPCC SR1.5 makes clear that the world is not on track to limit warming anywhere near 1.5°C. The only conclusion that can be drawn from this exercise is that the current level of ambition is woefully inadequate. In Katowice, Parties must correct course, by agreeing on six key elements of a COP decision on Ambition.

To help negotiators stay on track, ECO has put together a helpful pocket checklist:

ECO'S POCKET GUIDE TO AMBITION

- Commit to strengthening mitigation efforts (both pre-2020 action and NDCs)
- Agree to adopt a post-2025 finance goal no later than 2020
- Be in line with a 1.5C emissions reduction pathway
- Launch a process to support the strengthening of NDCs
- Decide to initiate domestic processes to strengthen NDCs
- Reaffirm their commitment to develop or revise mid-century net zero development strategies by 2020 at the latest