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The Year of Talanoa

2018 will be the year of the Talanoa dialogue. ECO is encouraged to see the design of the dialogue take shape and thinks the presidencies' design is fit for purpose. But ECO also wants to emphasize a few important points.

Parties made good progress in finding a solution to the question of how to deal with pre-2020 by adding a pre-2020 stocktake to COP24 and COP25. However, they must be mindful of achieving appropriate balance between this proposed new pre-2020 stocktake and the political phase of the Talanoa dialogue process at COP24.

Increased NDC ambition and stronger pre-2020 action and support are needed to fulfill the Paris promise. Pre-2020 is important, especially in the context of "Where are we?" and to make the best of the short time available. But we also need the Talanoa Dialogue to provide relevant forward-looking information and political momentum towards preparing the NDCs that Parties will communicate by 2020 (per paragraphs 23 and 24 of 1/CP.21), in other words those for the 2026 to 2030 period. Those NDCs must be more ambitious/bold than what's currently on the table, lest 1.5°C slips out of our hands.

ECO likes the idea to have both Fijian and Polish presidencies preside

over the Talanoa process from start to finish – this is a great way of ensuring consistency and to allow the process to start early.

Perhaps even as early as today? "As you can perhaps tell, dear reader, ECO is quite eager for the Dialogue to begin and not only to hear about the gap we are still facing — and why it exists – but ECO is also pretty eager to hear ideas and experiences that can help us to answer "*Where do we want to go?*" and especially "*How do we get there?*" Of course, the input of non-party stakeholders is a particularly rich trove of material to draw from for that.

For today, we are looking forward to seeing a strong COP decision endorsing the presidencies' report on the design of the Talanoa dialogue and a renewed mandate from the COP for the Fijian and Polish presidencies to jointly proceed on that basis. The outcome of the Dialogue at COP24 must send a strong signal, through a COP decision, that countries must update and improve their NDCs with commitments that eliminate the emissions gap and get us on track to keeping warming below 1.5°C.

After that starting signal, let's get on and start Talanoa. Bula! To the Talanoa Dialogue!

Where Are We? Where Do We Want To Go? How Do We Get There?

You probably recognise questions from the Fijian COP Presidency's note on the Talanoa Dialogue. But when plotting the world's long-term pathway to 1.5°C, these questions also become particularly relevant for the discussions.

"Where do we want to go?" and, "how do we get there?", are especially key when thinking about long-term strategies. Article 4.1 of the Paris Agreement tells us that we need to achieve a balance of sources and sinks by the second half of the century. So by working backwards from this 2050 horizon, countries can design a sustainable pathway for national development.

ECO has been encouraged to hear countries talking about long-term strategies in the negotiations these past two weeks. They were mentioned within both the common timeframes and the APA global stocktake agenda. The latter of which's outcomes also reflect the three above questions and lists long-term strategies as an 'other source' of input. But it's not enough that parties are making positive statements on long-term strategies. The worth of such strategies depends on their ability to answer the three questions in the title in detail. These strategies need to be more than just 'visions' for the future. They must be meaningful, transparent and developed

inclusively.

Pre-2020 action has roared back into life at COP23, and it's no surprise given 2017's ever-increasing extreme weather events. There is an urgent need to scale-up efforts to reduce emissions. ECO believes that countries are missing an important opportunity to ramp up ambition ahead of 2020 by not utilising the structured nature of long-term strategies.

Such strategies give parties a baseline, and if the strategy and accompanying long-term goal are robust enough, Parties can develop shorter and medium-term goals that trigger a step up in short-term ambition.

Fittingly, the 2050 Pathways Platform was established to provide a space for countries and other actors to share best practices, guidance and support to develop long-term strategies; recognising that one-size doesn't fit all.

The ability of long-term strategies to increase ambition depends on parties actually implementing measures and policies within their strategies. This will provide business and investor confidence and by-extension, feed into ensuring that investments are made in a 100% renewable energy future.

International Expectations for Polish Presidency And COP24

Next year will be the third time COP takes place in Poland — this time in the city of Katowice. Remember the business-driven “Coal Summit” that coincided with COP19 and made international news from Beijing to Paris? It undermined Poland’s presidency and lead to Poland being labeled “Coaland.”

But the forthcoming Polish presidency is also a chance for the government to finally step up and help lead the transition and strengthen global climate action.

First, let’s make a few things clear for “Coaland”. COP is no space for coal organizations and coal lobbyists, as demonstrated by the backlash against the US’s pro-coal side event this week. Events promoting coal around paradoxical concepts such as “clean coal” or “zero waste coal” are, simply put, offensive and their aim is to distract attention from what’s most urgently needed across the globe, including in Poland: phase-out of fossil fuels. In Poland, more than 5800 people die prematurely every year due to air pollution from the country’s coal power plants, and the Polish government continues to play into the pocket of the coal sector. These facts are certainly known outside of just the COP bubble.

Moreover, the label “Coaland” represents only one face of Poland. The Polish coal sector is in fact more and more dependent on the imports of coal, especially from Russia. There is strong public resentment against coal and coal mining. Yet despite this, the steady decline of domestic coal, and a number of regions struggling to go beyond it, the Polish government ceaselessly promotes the corporate interests of the coal status quo rather than the just transition to renewables that the Polish people demand and deserve.

Secondly, there is absolutely no need to bring any special coal events to Katowice as the city is already surrounded by coal mines and power plants.

But ECO is not misled by the “Coaland” label either, as Katowice, like many local communities in Poland, is indeed trying to move

beyond coal and undergo a transition to more sustainable energy sources. They do it despite the efforts by consecutive governments to subsidize the dirty and uneconomic business with public money. Considering the Polish government’s efforts to block EU climate policies and to turn one of Europe’s key climate tools — the Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) — and the currently debated EU energy market reform into giant coal subsidy schemes, as well as its obstruction of the Doha amendment ratification, one might wonder whether a Polish COP is a good idea at all.

ECO believes that the Polish government has a choice here.

“ Of course, it is critical for Poland to ratify the Doha Amendment as soon as possible, unless it wants its presidency to look like a bad joke. In addition, ratifying the amendment will also help build trust by showing that developed countries are serious about their pre-2020 commitments. But the whole Doha thing is just too obvious, let’s not waste too

much negotiation space on that. In fact, irrespective of Poland’s final decision on Doha, it is important that we see ambition being advanced in the climate negotiations from the very beginning of the Polish Presidency.

Polish COP success will also depend on the presidency ensuring that a strong Talanoa Dialogue is successfully run in partnership with Fiji. That partnership should focus on how to enhance the climate ambition via the strong and robust rules for Paris Agreement implementation. ECO expects Poland to take its responsibility towards the Talanoa Dialogue seriously and make sure it leads to enhanced climate ambition, including signals that countries will ramp up their NDCs by 2020.

There are many concerns about the Polish presidency. But there are also a few crucial steps the Polish government could take in order to make sure it brings back the country’s international reputation, rather than strengthens its shameful position as Europe’s number one climate laggard.

Amazon Hydroelectric Dams, Brazil and the Clean Development Mechanism

Why are Brazilian negotiators fighting to resuscitate the CDM that already has one foot in the grave? With aim of plopping it into Article 6 and ICAO’s carbon offsetting scheme?

ECO has been informed that a new report (<http://www.idesam.org.br/mdl/#.WgwEgYfrvDc>) by six Brazilian and international NGOs finds that Brazil’s scandal-plagued national power company, Eletrobrás, and its affiliates could make hundreds of millions of dollars on currently worthless CDM projects for Amazon dams if the Paris Agreement and ICAO incorporate the CDM.

Eletrobrás told the CDM Executive Board that financing from carbon credits was necessary to build the dams. Markets have collapsed and there isn’t any finance, yet the company has built and is operating the dams anyway; it is clear that a CDM revenue stream wasn’t necessary to build the dams and that they would have been built regardless. Selling these fake emissions reductions as offsets will make things even worse, to say nothing of the methane

emissions generated and the many other environmental and social impacts caused by the dams, which are subject to much criticism by civil society.

Furthermore, ECO heard that Eletrobrás and the dams are under investigation in the “Operation Car Wash” corruption investigation that has already imprisoned dozens of politicians and top executives of state oil company Petrobrás and other major companies for bid rigging and kickbacks. The dams incurred billions of dollars of cost overruns — apparently for the bribes and kickbacks to contractors and political parties — causing Eletrobrás’ stock prices to crash. Investors are suing for fraud in US federal court. Meanwhile, the dams are facing dozens of legal actions from federal prosecutors in Brazil for massive, and largely unmitigated, social and environmental impacts. This is yet another example of why the new Sustainable Development Mechanism needs to start with a clean slate and avoid repeating the mistakes of the past.

Japan: No More Coal!

ECO is totally shocked! Despite the strong criticisms over Japan's tremendous overseas coal investments, it seems Japan still cannot hear the chorus of voices. Or maybe it is just ignoring them since we continue to hear very discouraging news that more new coal investments are under development.

Just before this COP, Japanese trading company Marubeni and Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO) signed a concession contract with the Vietnamese government to build the Nghi Son 2, a 1200MW supercritical coal-fired power plant. This is a 25-year power purchase agreement with Vietnam's state-owned Electricity of Vietnam (EVN). The financial agreement to fund this power plant has not yet been finalized, but it is highly concerning that the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) as well as other Japanese commercial banks have agreed to provide the loan to finance this.

On Tuesday, JBIC announced it had disbursed the first loan for the controversial Cirebon 2 coal project, which Marubeni and JERA have invested in. This happened even though the validity of the new environment permit was still in question. JBIC ignored local residents' strong plea not to provide a loan for Cirebon 2, thereby preventing further damage to their livelihoods. This situation put local residents in a very difficult situation. They are already suffering from the loss of livelihoods due to the Cirebon 1 (660 MW), which the JBIC also financed.

It's unfathomable that such a deal could be completed considering the growing consensus on global coal phase-out!

Moreover, the situation in Indonesia is getting more serious. JBIC has recently financed Batang, Tanjung Jati B expansion, and Lontar coal power plants. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is also considering financing the Indramayu coal power plant. These projects are all located in Java Island, and their total capacity is set to be 6455MW if they're all carried out.

But that's not all! JBIC is considering financing at least 8 new coal projects all over the world, including projects in Vietnam and Botswana, as well as Indonesia.

Japan: this is enough. Stop funding dirty energy projects, now!

The COP25 Challenge

ECO always gets excited about a tropical COP! We are itching to pack sun-cream and insect repellent for the next Latin American-hosted COP in 2019.

Brazil made its generous offer to host COP25 on the same day as it won the Fossil of the Day Award for a bill sent to Congress by President Temer that would subsidize new oil development in Brazil by roughly US\$300 billion.

This juxtaposition raises pertinent questions for any country harboring ambitions for a COP Presidency. So far COPs are given to just about any country that volunteers, often regardless of their climate track record.

country that volunteers, etc regardless of their climate track record. ECO would like to set a challenge: from now on any country wishing to host COP must have an NDC compatible with the 1.5 goal. On the road to 2020, each COP presidency must lead by example and encourage all countries to bring their NDCs into line with the 1.5C goal and increase levels of support to developing countries to help get them there.

Most countries are currently found wanting. South America is set to host COP25, but Climate Action Tracker says that the NDCs of Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Peru, among others, are currently incompatible with 1.5C.

While ECO congratulates these countries for being outliers in attracting investment in renewables there remain serious challenges. Proposed investments in oil and gas, troubling rates of deforestation, fossil fuel subsidies and increasing private vehicle ownership threaten the 1.5 goal. As the UN Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) holds discussions about Brazil's COP25 candidacy and possibly other offers, ECO asks delegates to consider what climate leadership looks like. ECO understands that Latin America and the Caribbean is a fragmented continent when it comes to the UN climate talks with its various groups. Yet, the region is also unified by its extreme vulnerability to climate impacts and its vast potential for low emission and climate-resilient development. The UNEP DTU Partnership says that the region could achieve a net zero carbon regional economy by 2050 if it adopts measures such as decarbonizing the power sector and drastically reducing deforestation. To realize Paris and keep the 1.5 goal alive — talk needs to translate to action.

Among the countries willing to host COP25, the one that is the most willing to bring its first NDC into line with the 1.5 goal should be favoured.

No Gap, No Break, No Pause — It's Your Job

ECO is somewhat tired of repeatedly reminding ministers and negotiators of the work ahead before next year's COP. But ECO warns governments that there is no excuse for laziness. You signed and ratified Paris. Well done. But history walks on. ECO is convinced it is high time to put the money where your mouth was two years ago.

ECO recently learned that renewable energy investments have stagnated worldwide with some countries continuing to decrease their investments, notably in Europe and Japan. Although energy efficiency investments in all sectors grew slightly. Both renewables and energy efficiency combined received less than half of all financing that went for fossil fuels mining and infrastructure in 2016 and most likely in 2017, too. What is wrong with the governments? Can't they deal with the fossil fuel industry? Aren't they capable of implementing effective regulations and providing more incentives for the truly clean solutions which by the way, become more cost-effective by the day? These trends need to reverse drastically in next years to maintain a chance to stay on a Paris-compliant pathway. And that is the responsibility of your governments

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is the responsibility of your governments. ECO thinks the recent UN Environment gap report provides an excellent monument of cost-effective options including renewables, energy efficiency standards (note that about 70% of all energy use globally is

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“ effort necessary to return to a trajectory compliant with the Paris objective.

ECO hears that in early December, environment ministers are meeting again at the United Nations Environmental

Assembly in Nairobi. The theme is pollution and several resolutions are being negotiated. About 3-4 million people die prematurely every year from outdoor air pollution, mostly from the use of coal in power generation,

from the use of coal in power generation, industry, and diesel exhausts. When addressing those pollutants it is mandatory to not fiddle at the margins. The best and sustainable solution to drastically decrease outdoor air pollution is to phase out coal as soon as possible and get diesel vehicles off the roads. Yes, this requires boosting renewables, energy efficiency, and more sustainable public transport for replacing both lorries and passenger vehicles while also embarking on renewable-based electrification. It's not rocket science, right? ECO is observing your actions back home, this is about more than just delivering nice words here in Bonn.



Cabbage, clam, milk, dosh, dough, shillings, frogskins, notes, duckets, loot, bones, bar, coin, folding stuff, honk, lolly, moola. Any way you say it, it is always about the money!

This is also true for the Paris Agreement. It clearly states that all funds should be spent and invested in the right technologies, projects, and places that will both solve climate change and foster sustainable development. Aligning all financial flows with the Paris goals is absolutely essential to address climate change.

Island nations have proposed that the GEF and the GCF ask their trustee, the World Bank, to report what it is doing to ensure that their money is being invested in good, rather than harmful projects. Not private revenues; this is public money, our taxes.

Unfortunately, the Arab Group and India are not fans. Surprisingly, they seem to prefer that the World Bank continues funding fossil fuels, fueling destruction of the same people the climate funds are supposed to help.

The Island States in the Caribbean were devastated when two category 5++ hurricanes - Irma and Maria - struck. In Dominica, the damages in economic terms are upwards of 100% of GDP.

Today AOSIS lost this battle. At this Pacific COP, it is a shame to see that the Arab Group and India were unable to show solidarity on this key Issue for all the Island States. Let's see if at the next GCF Board Meeting countries will step up to the challenge and ask their trustee to phase out funding to fossil fuels? It's time for India and the Arab Group to forget oil revenues and do better for the climate

While we have had some strong contenders, there seems to be only one clear choice.

Only one who has been the absolute, hands-down, uncontested worst – the current US administration. Not really that much of a surprise, is it?

When Donald Trump announced on June 1st that he intended to pull the US out of the Paris Agreement, he isolated himself on the global stage, turning his back on the rest of the world.

There is no doubt about the administration's position on climate action. They're attacking domestic climate policies such as the Clean Power Plan and fuel efficiency standards. They're propping up dirty energy by proposing a bailout for coal. They're attempting to censor science, deleting any mention of climate change from documents and websites and issuing gag orders to government scientists.

Last but not least, they sent fossil fuel cronies to represent the US at COP. The US administration's only official side event was to promote fossil fuels. But the world was there to show: You can't sell coal at a conference to stop climate change!

There is a ray of light. US mayors, governors, business leaders, university presidents, and committed individuals from all fifty states and every walk of life are standing by the Paris Agreement and with the World, against the climate crisis. More than 100 of them came to Bonn to showcase their commitments. Many others mobilized for a Day of Action across the US to send the message that they are still in, too. They all give us hope. Ameri

Unfortunately, this ray of hope does not replace the need for action from the U.S. federal government. They are truly deserving the Colossal Fossil – the undisputed best of the worst.

Celebrating Successes On Gender Equality, Indigenous Peoples Participation And Traditional Knowledge

Among slow progress, missed opportunities and half-hearted commitments we witness all too often in the climate talks, it is about time for some good news: this week saw the adoption of the first-ever UNFCCC Gender Action Plan (GAP) and the operationalization of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform!

The GAP contains a set of specific activities for the upcoming 2 years, including workshops on how to develop gender-responsive climate policies, plans and programmes, as well as travel funds to support the participation of indigenous, grassroots women from developing countries. These activities are meant to advance the implementation of the multiple gender-related decisions adopted under the UNFCCC. While it acknowledges that little progress has been made so far towards women's equal participation and developing and implementing gender-just climate policies and actions, the GAP is a significant step forward in the efforts to bring gender equality into the international climate process. Thanks to the strong stand taken by Mexico (supported by Switzerland), the GAP also stresses the linkages between gender equality, human rights and just transition. As always, the real test, will, however be implementation. Under no circumstances can the GAP turn into yet another hard-won, but vastly ignored gender-related UNFCCC decision. In order for it to live up to its promises, Parties now have to come forward with generous voluntary contributions to supply the necessary funds for each activity. On the same day they adopted the GAP, Parties also initiated the operationalisation of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform. The platform is only a first step towards adequate recognition of and respect for perspectives and knowledge of indigenous peoples, but, the decisions contain some key elements. It builds directly on

principles defined by indigenous peoples' organisations, including the need for equal footing with Parties in the platform. It also refers to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and is mandated to perform three critical functions focused on knowledge, effective engagement and climate actions and policies. Parties also agreed to consider institutional arrangements to support the platform. Whether in Marrakesh, Brussels, Ottawa or Bula/Bonn, these negotiations have also built on a remarkable spirit of inclusiveness – confirming that transparency is key to strengthening trust and building mutual understanding. And as for the GAP, now that the foundations of the platform have been laid out, some parties must come forward with voluntary financial contributions to enable its work.

ECO welcomes these two positive developments, as they demonstrate that Parties have come to recognize that gender equality, effective participation of indigenous peoples and respect for traditional knowledge are essential to effective climate action. But these principles are too valuable to be confined within COP circles; on the contrary, they must, be guiding the implementation of climate policies.

As recognized on the very first page of the Paris Agreement, governments must integrate gender equality and the rights of indigenous peoples in all their climate actions. To promote transformational change and fully deliver on Paris, Parties should work with civil society to ensure that these principles -and the others mentioned alongside them- shape the work of the APA next year and are effectively reflected in the Implementation Guidelines. ECO is willing and able to help and looks forward to actively engaging throughout the year in Bonn, Katowice, and in all negotiating spaces.