

# eco

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issue

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## The Premature Death of the UNFCCC?

Today you will be hearing the results of the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC. If you have not already heard of the AR4 then you and the current US President would be amongst the few on the Earth not to have heard and reacted to the messages of the last months. Yet, there has been no sign of a real response this last week.

The IPCC AR4 assessment of future impacts is staggering. Climate change is set to induce a mass extinction in the coming century. Massive human impacts are projected in the poorest regions of the earth. Climate change is projected to change the face of the planet.

Failure to do something serious with the AR4 would be a disaster. The IPCC is important. Its first Assessment Report, adopted in Sundsvall, Sweden in August of 1990 triggered and drove the UNFCCC negotiations. Its Supplementary report of 1992 clinched the climate negotiations. The Second Assessment Report drove the Kyoto Negotiations. The Third Assessment Report nailed down the ratification of Kyoto in the face of Bush denialism and rejection of Kyoto. Failure to respond the AR4 would effectively spell the end of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol.

Today, you are hearing officially from the authors the results of the Fourth Assessment Report. So far the robotic and repetitive arguments of Saudi Arabia that this not be discussed are the same as were first used so long ago and on every occasion since this process began, and must be set aside. So far also the EU's response has lacked passion and conviction.

We can all read the Council Conclusions of March but where is the real response from the heart and the brains of the EU to the AR4 assessment? Does the AR4 not change the equation?

Fifteen years ago, in the Bunker at UNHQ in New York, the UNFCCC was adopted. Nearly 18 months of intense negotiations, in which many countries laid out ambitions to cut emissions by 20% by 2005, culminated in the adoption of a frame work convention with the lowest common denominator of a non binding commitment to return emission to 1990 levels in 2000. Ten years ago we adopted the Kyoto Protocol with the ambition of reducing emission by only 5% by 2010. Not even this will be met. Yet the AR4 tells us that emissions must peak within the next 10-15 years in order to have a chance at limiting warming to close to 2oC, a level which if exceeded is very likely to lead to dangerous consequences.

Delegates, if you listen to the IPCC today and do not respond appropriately in the next week in terms of strong draft decisions for Bali you are in effect declaring the UNFCCC dead and efforts to limit climate change as having failed. The feeling around the Maritim the last week is just that: there is a massive lack of energy and there is an unwarranted mood of failure, notwithstanding the EU's high ambitions. Is this what your Ministers want and, more importantly, what the world needs? The IPCC has given us the tools we need and what stands in the way is the political will for action.

## The AWG: Time for Critical Decisions

It is the responsibility of the COP and COP/MOP in Bali to make the urgently needed decisions to set a timetable and specific work plan for negotiations to conclude by 2009 with a legally binding framework building on the Kyoto Protocol that will shift investments towards clean energy. Negotiators and political leaders should be aware they cannot afford to ignore the fundamental shift in thinking and growing public alarm that has been informed by wave after wave of science washing over us.

### Be Prepared!

The current lack of demonstrable progress by some countries appears to have undermined the faith of some non-Annex 1 Parties in this process. Concrete indications by Annex 1 Parties as to the possible range of their future commitments are a welcome contribution to the work of the AWG. The EU and Norway have done as much with their targets of 30% reductions by 2020 targets. Others need to follow suit.

The work of the Ad Hoc Working Group is key to success in Bali. At this COP/MOP a broad agreement on the scope of commitments adequate to address the enormity of the climate challenge is needed. To signal their

- continued back page, Column 1

## Adaptation: It's the Poor and Vulnerable, Stupid!

The current draft text of the Adaptation Fund is flawed for two principal reasons. First, it fails to recognize the LDCs and SIDS' extreme vulnerability to impacts of climate change. Second, the text on priority areas makes no mention of the projected impacts of human induced climate change.

The IPCC WGII Summary for Policymakers highlights the extreme vulnerability of LDCs and SIDS, and identifies sub-Saharan Africa, small islands, Asian mega deltas

and regions with low adaptive capacity as regions particularly vulnerable to climate change. If the fund is created without specific reference to these countries and the projected effects of human induced climate change, it runs the risk of replicating the structural disadvantage African countries have experienced with the CDM.

Meeting the needs of those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change should be front and center in the minds of those creating the Adaptation Fund.



*Prince Charles inspects mitigation opportunities in the former colonies*

- AWG, from page 1

serious intent before Bali, industrialized countries must adopt the target of reducing their total emissions by at least 30% below 1990 levels by 2020. AWG should prepare a work program for further work in 2007 as well as 2008 and identify the expert input required to be delivered through a combination of inter-sessionals, workshops, technical papers, and submissions that enable and enhance the negotiations in order for these to conclude in 2009.

Specifically, AWG should prepare a request to the IPCC to conduct the necessary analysis of emissions pathways and the scale and differentiation of reductions required, with reference to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the issue of cumulative emissions that are essential to the de-

liberations on commitments beyond 2012. AWG should undertake a review of different types of action and their qualitative implications that will provide the basis for a transparent process for determining the actions to be undertaken by Parties. These will need to include consideration of an expansion of the carbon market into new and expanded flexible mechanisms and the transfer of technology and finance.

Finally, AWG should include in the work plan for 2008 the question of how new mechanisms may be added to the Protocol, the implications of doing so for Articles 5, 7 and 8, the Annex B amendment process, and review of entry into force issues.

CAN will happily make further specific recommendations available to delegates.

PS: Mind the Gap, eh!

## Russia underlines commitment to binding and absolute limits

Eco is pleased that Russia has joined the emerging group of first-movers on post-2012 ideas, with its proposal for procedures allowing countries to take on "voluntary commitments". We need more creative and substantive proposals like this to move us toward a strong mandate by Bali and an adequate post-2012 package by 2009.

Eco was particularly glad to find itself in full agreement with the Russian delegation's unequivocal confirmation that Russia does not intend to step back from its rightful place among the group of countries with binding commitments to absolute emission limitations (*thereby setting a good example for a certain other so-called superpower*). Russia is thus in line with the findings of the IPCC AR4, which clearly stated that voluntary approaches do not get the world beyond business as usual. Consistent with this, the Russian proposal strongly supports continuation of the Kyoto cap and trade system, moving beyond the kinds of bottom-up approaches favored by the usual suspects.

Sadly missing, however, were any considerations of adaptation, the third essential track to a post-2012 agreement.

Russia has raised the bar for post-2012 proposals, and it is up to other Parties to take up the challenge, move key elements of the proposal forward, and match Russia's willingness to consider new ideas with a resolve to achieve the task that the IPCC has laid out so well for us.

**CAN PARTY  
TODAY**

***EVERYONE IS WELCOME***

LOCATION: Maritim, Piano Bar

TIME: 8 PM