

ECO



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ECO email: administration@climatenetwork.org - ECO website: <http://climatenetwork.org/eco-newsletters> - Editorial/Production: Kyle Gracey

Qatar: Still Time To Lead

As Qatar comes closer to assuming the Conference of the Parties Presidency and leading the global negotiations for the next year, some are wondering whether having a COP in the Middle East was a big mistake. They are afraid that Qatar would be overly influenced by their neighbours the Saudis, who have been constantly labelled as obstructionist since the start of this process.

Though some governments in the region have long played a less than positive role in the international climate talks, ECO believes that as President of the COP, Qatar can be a champ and lead a more progressive bloc of Arab nations within the climate talks - not only at COP18, but well beyond.

In recent years, the Qatari government has successfully positioned itself as a key player in many high profile international arenas. As a state which has become actively involved in everything from the political situation in Afghanistan, to the various demo-

cratic movements across the Middle East and North Africa, as well as successfully securing the right to host various major international events, the government is playing a significant global role, particularly relative to Qatar's comparatively small size.

Climate change is both a threat and opportunity for Qatar. It is a low-lying, small, semi-island state, with all its developments along the coast. This makes it extremely vulnerable to climate change impacts. However, since its main export is natural gas, this makes Qatar's economy more resilient to a transition to cleaner fuels.

Despite these facts, climate change has not been a top public political priority for the Qatari Government. But since they will now be thrust into the spotlight in their role as COP18 hosts, ECO has maintained the hope that Qatar would become a progressive climate leader. Unfortunately, up until now, Qatar has not shown the leadership expected, and the Qatari government is run-

ning out of time to prove ECO right and those with concerns about a Qatari COP wrong.

This is the last negotiation session before everyone comes to Doha, and there is very limited time for Qatar to show its strong political leadership, and make sure that Parties come to COP18 with the political mandate needed to ensure a successful outcome.

There are many ways that Qatar can send a message to the international community that it is serious about climate change. One way to demonstrate leadership is to have the direct involvement of the Qatari Royal Family in climate change. This has happened on other issues; for example, H.H. Sheikha Moza, the second wife of the Emir of Qatar, has been a champion of education at home and abroad. She is the Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, which has

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Banking On Bunkers

Today, Parties will meet under the LCA Sectoral Approaches spin-off group for the last time before Doha to discuss how to address the fast-growing emissions from international transport. Parties must make sure Doha provides a signal to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on how to reconcile the UNFCCC principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDRRC) of Parties, with the practices and principles of these sectoral bodies, which have a long history of regulating ships and aircraft on the basis of equal treatment of all.

Negotiating positions of many parties have remained frozen in time for the past decade or so – sadly unlike the Arctic. For those who

haven't been hunkered down in bunkers, ECO will explain. At one end of the range there's the US and Japan, who want the IMO and ICAO to proceed with no input from the UNFCCC. At the other end, a group of developing countries who want the UNFCCC principles to override those of the sectoral bodies, which are independent and autonomous bodies under the UNFCCC, thereby treating these inherently global sectors in the same way as nationally based emission sources. This could mean for example that ships owned or operated by companies based anywhere in the world could easily escape regulation simply by reflagging to another country to avoid compliance.

Singapore has presented a helpful compromise, saying that emissions from international aviation and shipping should be addressed through global measures under ICAO and

IMO, while taking into account the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC. This is sensible and appropriate as far as it goes, but even more helpful would be to give an indication of how CBDRRC might be taken into account. It seems risky to leave the interpretation of UNFCCC principles entirely up to other bodies – after all, even seasoned climate negotiators find it tricky! The most promising way to address CBDRRC could be through provisions involving revenues and/or handling of allowances from a global multilateral approach. Differentiation in terms of revenues could allow, for example, support to improve energy efficiency and technology transfer and cooperation within the shipping sector. This can ensure any burden on developing



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established the education city in Qatar. It would be ideal if a member of the Qatari Royal Family would become the first Arab champion of climate change. But with less than three months to go before COP18 opens in Doha, the Qatari Royal Family still has not been involved in the issue or even made any statement in relation to the upcoming COP.

Another way to prove leadership is for Qatar to put a meaningful mitigation pledge into the international process, as many other developing countries around the world have already done. This would make Qatar the first Arab country to do so. Although Qatar has the highest per capita greenhouse gas emissions, what matters is not where the country's emissions stand at the moment, but what it intends to do to constrain them in the future. If Qatar could help persuade other Arab countries to inscribe their own pledges in Doha, that would further demon-

strate Qatar's leadership on the issue. Many Arab countries already have national goals and policies. They only need to take the simple step of submitting these measures to the international process as pledges of action.

Finally, Qatar can ramp up its outreach to other governments in the months remaining before COP18, becoming more familiar with both the substantive and political issues that will play a role in the success or failure of COP18. As it has done with previous COP presidencies, Climate Action Network stands ready to provide support and advice to the Qatari government as it prepares itself to lead the negotiations in Doha.

The world needs significant progress to be made at COP18:

- adoption of a second commitment amendment to the Kyoto Protocol
- successful completion of the unresolved

issues in the Bali Action Plan, including ramped-up support for enhanced action by developing countries

- agreement of a robust work plan for the new round of negotiations under the Durban Platform

Success on these fronts depends on skillful leadership by Qatar, which ECO knows it possesses, as well as the willingness of countries to make the compromises needed to reach agreement on all these fronts.

If COP18 is a success, Qatar's reputation will be further enhanced on the international stage. Conversely, without Qatar's full leadership, COP18 risks being viewed as a "do-nothing COP," or worse, a COP where the gains of Cancun and Durban were rolled back. The world can't afford this – we all have a stake in the success of the Qatari presidency. That's why ECO maintains its hope that Qatar will fully step up to its responsibilities as the incoming Presidency, and get the job done in Doha.

Where There's a Gap, There's a Way

ECO was pleasantly surprised by the tenor of interventions at the ADP roundtable on ambition Saturday. There was widespread acknowledgement that, as things currently stand, we are not on track for limiting global temperature rise to 2 degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels. Many Parties lamented the lack of pre-2020 ambition, with one bright spark noting that failure to take decisive action in the short term has ominous implications for the post-2020 process.

In the words of one delegation "there is a serious gap". This echoes what scientists have been telling us for some time now. In its "Bridging the Emissions Gap" report published at the end of 2011, UNEP undertook a systematic assessment of the size of what we should by rights be calling the Multi-Gigatonne Gap, concluding that it is in the range of 6-11 Gt.

So even under the most conservative assessment, which assumes perfect implementation of countries' current pledges, the world is on a pathway to emit 50 gigatonnes of CO2-equivalent per year by 2020, instead of the needed 44 gigatonnes or less. This

analysis is backed up by a whole host of studies, so it seems the science is pretty solid. We think the sheer scale of the gap should have countries setting up Emergency Emissions Reductions Crisis Centres (ECO would abbreviate them EEKs! if it were in charge).

One reason for optimism is that as huge as the Multi-Gigatonne Gap is, UNEP estimates that emission reductions of between 14 to 20 Gt of CO2-equivalent are possible by 2020 and without any significant technical or financial breakthroughs needed. What is more, the costs incurred by these reductions would not be prohibitive. That sounds like a win-win situation to us.

So what exactly can countries do to stave off impending global meltdown (unfortunately, we are not talking figuratively here)? As it turns out, there's rather a large menu of options to choose from. Many actions could be implemented with immediate effect, using existing frameworks outside the UNFCCC. The phase out of HFCs is an excellent case in point. Agreeing to a consumption and production phase-out of these

super greenhouse gases under the Montreal Protocol, with cost-effective alternatives made available to developing countries, would avoid a whopping 88-140 gigatonnes/CO2e emissions by 2050 at a very reasonable price – the near-term emissions savings would also be sizeable. This approach was recently endorsed by the nations of the world at the Rio+20 Conference – all it would take now is for Parties to the UNFCCC to do the same, thereby freeing themselves up to tackle other challenges.

Other, equally crucial initiatives countries should undertake include addressing international emissions from aviation and shipping, which together account for a massive 5% of global CO2 emissions, abolishing fossil fuel subsidies and closing the huge loopholes in the current commitments (did you know that up to 13 billion surplus AAUs could make their way into the Kyoto Protocol's next commitment period?) to name but a non-exhaustive few.

With such a long shopping list of potential measures to chose from, there really is no excuse for inaction.

Bunkers continued

countries is addressed appropriately, with the use of remaining revenues from developed countries for climate finance through the Green Climate Fund.

So there you have it, Parties. This should give you something to think about. But don't take too long; remember, this is your last day before COP18 and the ice is melting...



"Saturday's 1st Place and only Fossil was awarded to the European Commission for attempting to show leadership in the wrong direction, away from the Durban decision to increase ambition - a decision which the EU actually claims to be champions of.

Keeping in mind that EU, if they implement the plans they already have on the table, will end up reducing around 24% of their 1990 emissions by 2020, it seems absurd that the European Commission suddenly argues that even an EU target of 25% is 'wishful thinking' and 'not reality'. Dear EU, 25% IS reality. Our wishful thinking is that you would get yourself together and increase you target to 40%, of which 30% should be domestic reductions."

And ECO wonders if the mere rumour that the EC had been awarded a Fossil was behind the EU showing slightly better behaviour in the developed countries workshop. So maybe the Fossil itself will have an even bigger impact - or is that more wishful thinking?