

African Springboard

What is the significance of an 'African COP'? Should we be thinking a 'beach COP', where we decide to agree almost as much as was agreed in Bali? Could there instead be an outcome from Durban that would actually implement, rather than at best recycle, the Bali Action Plan?

The resolve of the Africa Group that "Kyoto will not die on African soil" could pay off, but at what cost – and would this be enough? Will we be given a strong prospect of mobilising public funds with sources agreed at COP 18? Will the overall ambition of mitigation actions give us half a chance of keeping warming well below 2°C?

While the form is important, it must come with substance. Just as a new fund would be an empty shell without predictable long-term finance, so must continuation of the Kyoto Protocol include targets that are consistent with equitable access to the limited carbon budget remaining available this century, mindful of how our total atmospheric space has been used to date.

This concept and imperative of fairness has also been articulated as equitable access to sustainable development. This will not be provided just by a proliferation of institutions. Providing empty vessels is no way to support low carbon development strategies. No more hollow promises, please, from anyone.

If we seem to be getting a reasonable-looking package of institutions, including the Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Committee, Technology Centre, etc., but with little content, particularly for resourcing and implementation of long-stated intentions, will the Africa Group hang tough? If we get commitment to decisions on predictable sources of public finance at COP 18, will Africa also insist on more ambitious mitigation pledges in this timeframe?

An annual conundrum, not just for Africans, is how to provide a frank assessment of COP outcomes without appearing to be a merchant of doom or fueling the narrative of defeatists. The defeatist position, that the world will for many years fail to move to low carbon development, is a core assumption underlying the recent arguments of many South African business lobbyists opposing a national carbon tax.

We would prefer to envisage success than compromise, and to progress a full set of processes sufficiently defined and time-bound to peak global emissions in time and to mobilise the public finance needed to support a global and just transition to a low carbon economy.

It must be possible for countries to stop clinging to their fear of losing influence, and to move beyond withholding what is needed

and instead seek the leverage offered by leadership and action.

The credibility at stake here is not just that of the UNFCCC, but of any government that portrays backsliding from Bali to be a stepping-stone to a multilateral rules-based system. As faith leaders keep telling the Conference, this is a moral issue. Low carbon and climate-friendly development is an ethical imperative testing the morality of our leaders and our institutions. If nation states cannot act collectively in the common interest, what is their purpose or legitimacy?

We need an African Spring in economic and social systems, and we can't afford to wait for Qatar. Is equity too high an ideal? Even if it takes us all day Saturday, we must secure content as well as form and not settle for merely avoiding the demise of Kyoto.

Let's deliver an African springboard for effective multilateral action.

On Sources of Finance

As we write, the media are quoting excited ministers who report advances, even breakthroughs. An air of possibility is seeping back from the press conferences into the negotiating rooms. The storm clouds over the Green Climate Fund are moving away, and on Thursday, the first welcome announcements of funding came in.

Ministers need to ensure the Green Climate Fund is not just an empty shell. They need to give developing countries confidence that the commitment of \$100 billion by 2020 made in Copenhagen was indeed serious.

In that spirit, progress must now be made on the central finance issue: mobilizing and scaling up innovative financing.

As proposed by the Africa Group and AOSIS, a work program is needed on sources of finance leading to a decision at COP 18. This will facilitate convergence around options that can best generate the needed financing for adaptation and mitigation.

A credible work programme must deliver the following at a minimum: arrangements for revenues from measures to reduce emissions from maritime transport and aviation (bunkers); a short list of other potential sources to be agreed later; a way forward on a needs assessment; principles for burden sharing among developed countries in meeting existing financing commitments; and parameters for scaling up financing from fast-start levels to hitting at least the

\$100 billion mark by 2020.

A second area that is ripe for a breakthrough is putting a price on emissions from shipping and aviation globally, to meet financing and emissions reduction goals while ensuring that developing countries are net beneficiaries. There is a convergence of labour, industry, environmental organizations, finance ministers and a growing number of countries around a solution that uses this revenue to deal with the incidence on developing countries, as well as generate money for the Green Climate Fund.

After a decade of circling around, the issue of international transport has been forwarded to Ministers under the Cooperative Sectoral Approaches agenda item. In rising to this challenge, Durban can make a historic contribution to climate protection and finance. Progress should be made on shipping, where ambitious proposals are already under consideration. Agreement at COP 17 could result in a global deal on maritime emissions at the IMO Assembly in 2013. A further extension would delay curbing these fast-growing emissions for at least another three years.

Ministers, please do not leave a shipwreck on the shoals of Durban. You have the wind in your sails. Getting us into the harbour today should be easy.



RAY OF THE DAY

The Africa Group
Constructive, progressive proposals for ambition and environmental integrity



#1 UNITED STATES

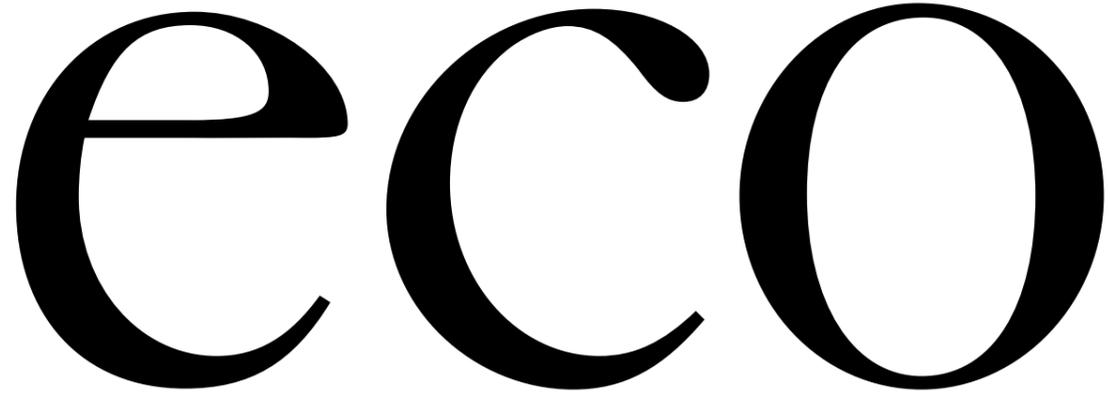
ASPIRATIONS OVER ACTIONS

#2 JAPAN, CANADA, RUSSIA

STANDING DOWN ON THE KP

#3 NEW ZEALAND

NON-NEGOTIABLE CONDITIONS



ECO has been published by Non-Governmental Environmental Groups at major international conferences since the Stockholm Environment Conference in 1972. This issue is produced cooperatively by the Climate Action Network at the UNFCCC meetings in Durban in Nov-Dec 2011. ECO email: eco@sunlightdata.com – ECO website: <http://www.climateactionnetwork.org/eco-newsletters> – Editorial/Production: Fred Heutte

It Always Seems Impossible Until It's Done

Ministers and Delegates:

The youth streaming through the halls of the ICC yesterday were looking for their future . . . the future of a rules-based, fair, multilateral system that will adequately deal with climate change. That future can start today.

The momentum finally seems to be shifting in favour of the ambition coalition. The voices of progressive countries have been amplified. The calls from AOSIS and LDCs that 2020 is too late and that we need ambition now are being heard.

The Bali roadmap was intended to get us to a fair, ambitious and binding agreement, but we got lost along the way. A 'new roadmap' risks repeating that history. With the science we have today, that would be disastrous. Parties, you must leave Durban with a mandate for negotiations for a legally binding instrument to be completed by 2015.

The Africa Group's progressive proposals have had an impact. The EU's increasing alignment with vulnerable countries was evident in yesterday's joint call for action. There are signals that the BASIC countries are engaging in the discussion about shape, timing and form. And the US is increasingly isolated with their own roadmap to nowhere.

The pathway we are on has us hurtling toward 3.5°C of warming – which means 50 or more for Africa. Ministers and delegates, you must not continue us on this pathway that will condemn our African brothers and sisters to more droughts, food shortages, health problems and increasing instability.

As extreme weather events in recent months across the entire globe have demon-

strated, Africa will not be alone in its suffering. The costs of acting now will be far less than the costs for the economy, for environmental integrity and for human suffering, if you refuse to act.

Ministers, you must not posture in your public statements with a view to deflecting blame once the reckoning is taken. It is up to you to advance the demand of global society for effective action *now* in your final deliberations behind closed doors in the negotiations. And do not allow the US or others to block progress here.

Durban must not result in another papered-over compromise that fails to deliver the ambition, ramped up finance and equitable long-term legal framework that we need to stay as far under 2° as possible.

The ambition coalition can win and ensure that Durban produces not only a roadmap but also a Kyoto Protocol second commitment period with environmental integrity – and that means ensuring that LULUCF and AAU loopholes don't undermine targets, and that offsets aren't double counted.

It is also essential to launch a one year mitigation ambition work programme, including an 'ambition intersessional' and dedicated high level segment, to agree targets of more than 40% below 1990 by 2020 and ambitious NAMAs next year.

It is self-evident that the African COP must deliver a positive outcome in finance. That must include adoption of the governing instrument of the Green Climate Fund; commitment for initial contributions to the fund; identification of bunkers as a particularly promising source; and a work plan on

long term finance specifying further work on bunkers, financial transaction taxes in developed countries and innovative use of Special Drawing Rights.

Today, many of us are sporting the words of the great Nelson Mandela: "It always seems impossible until it's done."

Ministers and delegates: The good news is that it no longer seems impossible, but much work remains to be done here in Durban. And now you must decide.

THANK YOU SOUTH AFRICA!

ECO would like to commend South Africa for the high standard of hosting for COP 17. Here in Durban, we have experienced a venue that is centrally located, minimizing travel costs and carbon footprint, with efficient transport and no traffic jams. Within the venue the Secretariat and local staff have been friendly and efficient.

There have been enough meeting rooms, enough computers and – a big help for reinvigorating us when sessions go on for too long – plenty of outdoor spaces. And African music at the opening reception and around the premises has lifted our spirits.

There were a few heavy-handed engagements beyond the venue as local politics intersected with the conference, but this will not inhibit the effort to pull together the outcomes we need in these last hours.

It is a large effort for any host country to make proper arrangements. South Africa has done so and provided its own truly distinctive stamp on COP 17.