

eco



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YES you can! 40% or bust

On the day the AWG-KP discusses the mitigation potential and emissions reduction ranges for Annex I countries, ECO reminds readers of the shared vision of staying below scientifically determined safe limits of climate change – well below 2°C global temperature rise. As stressed by Tuvalu on behalf of AOSIS, new scientific evidence since the IPCC's FAR (e.g. melting ice sheets) underlines the need for even greater urgency. Barbados was right to ask the EU whether its reluctance to go beyond 30% cuts was, in effect, condemning the vulnerable countries to extinction.

To achieve this, CAN calls on Annex I countries to demonstrate their leadership by aiming high, and pushing targets to the top of the IPCC range of 40% cuts from 1990 levels by 2020. The majority of these cuts must happen domestically in Annex I countries to accelerate their transition to a low carbon economy and create incentives for and investment in clean technologies. A high level of ambition on mitigation by Annex I countries, along with a clear offer on finance and technology, might facilitate a substantial deviation below business-as-usual by developing countries.

"What?" I hear you say in Annex I, "but our

country cannot possibly do 40% at home!"

Yes you can!

The current crisis offers a tremendous opportunity. A "climate-smart" rescue package in response to the financial crisis will create many green jobs, produce greener energy, and would avoid the dangerous lock-in of emissions from coal. Put simply it will make our economies more efficient, at a time when every penny counts and private investment flows are dwindling. A 'climate-smart' package that focuses on economic innovation and jobs will be appealing to voters who are disenchanted with the hand-outs given to the banks.

Last month the IEA predicted future oil prices in the range of US\$100-120 and we have seen a doubling of coal prices since the beginning of 2007. Investing now in energy efficiency and renewable energy can ensure a sustainable recovery from the current economic crisis. In short, the economic case for mitigation is stronger than ever.

Each of the wealthy countries has massive capacity to mitigate emissions and move to a low-carbon economy, now. The technologies exist, the resources exist, now the political will must exist.

40% – How you can

USA

By investing in energy efficiency and clean energy the US could cut its CO₂ emissions from power plants almost 50% below 1990 levels by 2020 and save \$350/year on average household energy bills (UCS et al "Clean Energy Blueprint").

One study suggests that a 20-30% energy improvement in the US economy would increase the nation's GDP by 0.1% by 2030 and deliver a net gain of 0.5 to 1.5 million jobs by 2030.

Russia

Russia's energy intensity is twice that of China and the US and almost four times that of Japan and the EU. By improving energy efficiency it could reduce its CO₂ emissions by about 50% from 2005 levels.

EU

The Netherlands has achieved more than 5% per year improvements in energy efficiency resulting from a progressive standard on newly built dwellings. Other Member States have introduced national standards but there is no mandatory EU-wide building efficiency target included in the package due to be agreed this month. A 2005 WWF report suggests that rolling such measures out across the whole of the EU could achieve energy efficiency savings of up to 7% per year.

Australia

Energy efficiency measures alone in Australia could reduce electricity demand by 40% by 2020. One study shows a net economic benefit of around \$710 million over the period 2010 to 2020. In addition, Australia has huge potential to utilize the full range of renewable energy technologies.

Canada

According to a 2007 study, Ontario could reduce its projected electricity emissions in the next 20 years by 50% by matching the energy efficiency standards of leading EU and US jurisdictions and investing in renewable energy.



Conflicted Distorted Muddle

The CDM was established under the Kyoto Protocol with the stated dual aims of achieving greenhouse gas emission reductions and promoting sustainable development in developing countries. Unfortunately, the mechanism has failed to meet either of its goals and is thus undermining the effectiveness of the Kyoto Protocol. The CDM will be discussed today under the second review of Article 9, and ECO thinks that there are certain issues to which delegates should pay particular attention.

Extensive analysis clearly shows that a substantial proportion of CDM projects are non-additional. This non-additionality, combined with the reliance of many industrialized countries on the CDM to meet their Kyoto targets, causes the CDM to significantly undermine efforts to cut global GHG emissions. ECO is convinced that reliably proving additionality of individual projects is simply impossible since it requires knowledge about a hypothetical future. Furthermore, it is illusory to believe that private sector validators are able to bear the main responsibility for ensuring the environmental integrity of the mechanism. In addition, the CDM also has had little or no effect in achieving sustainable development in developing countries and, despite the adoption of the Nairobi framework, thus far fails to implement project activities in least developed countries.

ECO believes that the only solution to these problems is to completely replace or substantially restructure the CDM in the post-2012 regime. In our view, such a replacement or reform should follow these basic principles:

First, the CDM should not be a mechanism that allows Annex I countries to offset their emission reduction obligations. Instead, industrialized countries must provide financial and technological support to developing countries in a way that is independent from and additional to their domestic emission reduction targets. Secondly, a restructured CDM also must cease to rely on the ability to test the additionality of each individual project, which is simply not feasible to do accurately.

In the interim, it will be important to avoid the negative aspects of the CDM, such as lack of a requirement for projects to meet internationally accepted sustainable development criteria; the distorted geographical spread of project activities; the conflict of interest of project validators and EB members; and perverse incentives associated with HFC-23 and N₂O destruction projects.

Australia – GET REAL

A month or so ago, the Australian Treasury released the results of the most comprehensive economic modelling exercise ever undertaken in Australia. It concluded that, as the Treasurer said at the time, there is only a whisker of economic difference between Australia reducing emissions by 15% and 25% by 2020 as part of a global effort. However, in the words of Treasury the -15% is a “realistic” scenario of stabilizing atmospheric concentrations at 510 ppm-e and with global warming of 2.6°C. Yet the -25% was an “optimal” scenario.

ECO would like to remind the Australian delegation that the Garnaut Climate Change Review concluded, as its first recommendation, that it is in Australia’s national interest to stabilize concentrations below 450 ppm-e and that Australia should

signal its preparedness to reduce emissions by 25% below 2000/1990 levels by 2020 as part of a global effort to achieve these reductions.

ECO would also like to stress to the Australian delegation that a 2.6°C increase is well above what Australia’s top climate experts suggest would be dangerous. They have stated that the “prime goal of this new [post-2012] regime must be to limit global warming to no more than 2°C above the pre-industrial temperature ... Failure of the world to act now will leave Australians with a legacy of economic, environmental, social and health costs that will dwarf the scale of national investment required to address this fundamental problem.”

Australia you need to redefine what is realistic.

Dog ate EU’s homework!

ECO is unsurprised that the EU won the Fossil of the Day Award yesterday, since they seem to have arrived in Poznan without a serious and credible position or mandate on financing the Bali roadmap.

Let’s rephrase that:

With twelve months left to achieve a comprehensive post-2012 agreement on avoiding dangerous climate change, a crucial negotiator has failed to come up with a substantial proposal.

ECO wonders how this could have happened?

Were EU heads of delegation too busy with the Obama campaign?

Was Sarkozy too focused on promoting his wife’s new record album?

Perhaps they were left on a London commuter train...

There might, however, be a more sobering explanation. ECO thinks EU member states are just not ready and willing to commit to financing mitigation and adaptation in the South.

The reports from the ongoing negotiations on the EU post-2012 climate legislation, known as the “package,” clearly point in that

direction.

It could be so easy. Proposals on new emission reductions targets for 2020 in the “package” can have a separate, additional quantitative target on finances - the European Parliament has suggested as much. Auctioning off permits in the Emissions Trading Scheme could generate tens of billions of Euros in revenues and would also make Europe’s industry actually pay for their pollution of the atmosphere.

Again, the European Parliament voted to set aside half of those revenues for adaptation and assisting in mitigation in developing countries. Sadly, many EU member states so far refuse to commit a single cent of those revenues.

In addition, in terms of the UN negotiations, the EU could simply start throwing their weight behind existing proposals, such as that of Norway.

A year ago, Europe’s leadership was one of the contributing factors to having a roadmap agreed in Bali. ECO hopes they will not ruin the fruits of their efforts, and instead come back with clear proposals and sincere support of the “package”.

Mieszko

In search of light entertainment yesterday, Mieszko wandered into the LCA working group – and he was not disappointed. A highly distinguished representative from Japan was holding forth on lifestyle changes necessary to save the planet post-2012. In a

fit of insane generosity, he offered to reduce his daily shower to a mere 15 minutes. At this point, a Chinese delegate had the impertinence to suggest that there might be a few people without the affluence for a daily shower of any length. Unfazed, our man ignored this interruption, and expounded on his love of bathing, sometimes up to seven or eight times in a weekend. He would, he said, for the sake of us all, be prepared to cut down to as little as three.

Give the man a medal!