

eco



Eco has been published by Non-Governmental Environmental Groups at major international conferences since the Stockholm Environment Conference in 1972. This issue is produced co-operatively by CAN groups attending the climate negotiations in Bangkok, September-October 2009.

Some Progress: More Action Needed

ECO was excited to see streamlined adaptation text emerging over the weekend, with content on almost all fundamental points. In addition, the Co-Chairs expect to have a shorter text by the end of the week.

Based on the contact group discussions, there is convergence between Parties on “practical delivery” but divergence on some vital areas. These include scale of finance for adaptation, additionality of finance to existing overseas development assistance (ODA) targets, a rights-based approach, and vulnerability and prioritisation for support.

ECO however is troubled by response

measures. These cannot be part of the adaptation component as response measures are not about adapting to climate change but about the spillover effects of measures to mitigate climate change.

It is also worrying that the focus of Annex I countries is on planning and delivery for adaptation. Non-Annex I countries have clearly articulated in session after session that the greater focus should be on action on adaptation.

The text on adaptation for Copenhagen must incorporate six key points. Firstly, the fundamental principles: prioritise support to
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Show us the Emissions

As ever in the arcane world of LULUCF negotiations, progress towards a shorter text this week has not necessarily made it easier to understand. ECO has even caught whiff of some positive changes, though it is hard to get more than a whiff when everything is behind closed doors.

There is still something smelly in the draft text and it is hiding behind a bland name – projected baselines for forest management. Here is how it works: A Party tells you what its emissions from forest management will be during the commitment period and then will only be given LULUCF credits or debits if actual emissions are different from this projection.

ECO is confused (this is LULUCF after all). Depending on what level these “projected baselines” are set at, this could mean Parties might never have to account for their logging emissions. A country can pretend that its emissions from forest management are going to increase and not incur any debits, as long as this increase was predicted ahead of time. ECO shudders to think what this type of approach would mean if applied to all sectors.

Luckily, not everyone is behind this ruse. Past submissions from Norway and Switzerland have expressed a preference for accounting for changes in emissions from a historical level. Other countries may be out there that support such an approach, but they are hard to see; hidden inside the EU bloc on this issue. ECO calls those Parties to step out and identify themselves.

Is it any wonder, with ideas like this still on the table, that the G77 and China are considering how to cap credits from the entire LULUCF sector?



Nearly 100 youth from more than 10 Asian countries joined the 350.org Asian Youth Climate Workshop on Sunday to learn about the climate crisis, the UNFCCC and prepare for a massive International Day of Climate Action on October 24 with thousands of events at iconic places around the world.

Emission Reductions vs. Offsets

Developing countries yesterday posed a question that ECO found intriguing. How much of the emissions cuts promised by Annex I Parties could be met by offsets? ECO undertook investigated and produced the table below.

There is no longer time for industrialised countries to avoid domestic emission reductions by buying their way to a politically palatable target. They must start NOW to reduce their domestic emissions.

Party	Proposed 2020 target relative to 1990 (%)	Proportion of contribution that can be met through offsets	Potential hot air (carry over from 2012)
Australia	-2 to -22	Unlimited	
Canada	-3	None	
EU	-20 to -30	~50%	1.6 Gt from over-allocation and banking of unused CERs*
Japan	-25	Unknown	
New Zealand	-10 to -20	Unlimited	
Norway	-30	Limited to 1/3 of target	
Russian Federation	-10 to -15	Not needed; see next box	≥3.33 Gt under Kyoto: ~874 Mt CO ₂ in 2020 with current target and BAU# emissions growth
Ukraine	-20	Not needed; see next box	≥2.17 Gt under Kyoto; ~323 Mt CO ₂ in 2020 with current targets and BAU# emissions growth
USA	-1 to -8	Potentially 1.5 Gt CO ₂ e per year. (~30% of US 2005 emissions)	

* Certified emission reduction units. # Business as usual

– Some Progress: More Action Needed
the most vulnerable people and countries; promote a rights and community based approach to adaptation; and incorporate transparent, participatory and inclusive decision making at all levels. Crucially, adaptation must also recognise the value and importance of healthy ecosystems.

Secondly, financial support must be both predictable and reliable, and result in regular and adequate flows. ECO believes reference to finance delivery must remain in the adaptation section, and supports strong references to adaptation in the main finance section.

Thirdly, the subsidiarity principle should apply. Countries and communities should decide what is needed to enable them to adapt, not developed countries or multilateral agencies.

Fourthly, the agreement must include a comprehensive approach to building resilience. There should be a stronger focus on addressing underlying risk factors for vulnerability, such as poverty and marginalisation.

Fifthly, a climate risk insurance mecha-

nism should be initiated with two components. A fund for high-level, climate-related shocks financed by developed countries (to cope with disasters as just seen unfold in the Philippines and India), and technical and financial support for setting up and operating pro-poor micro insurance schemes.

Finally, there must be provisions to address loss and damage from irreversible large-scale impacts of climate change. To address this issue, Parties need first to recognise that such impacts are likely, especially if strong, science-based emission reductions targets are not achieved.

ECO is pleased to see reference to action on adaptation starting “now, up to and beyond 2012.” Parties must actively negotiate on these areas over the coming week. But the right words alone are not enough; brackets in the text highlight differences of attitude. Annex I Parties must recognise that financing for adaptation is not ODA. It is reparation for damage done - the adaptation deficit caused by their combined lack of mitigation action so far.

Fossil of the Day

1st Place

Saudi Arabia

For stating there is no need to include figures under the Shared Vision text.

2nd Place

Poland

For comments by its Finance Minister that it is “totally unacceptable that the poor countries of Europe should help the rich countries of Europe to help the poor countries in the rest of the world.”

3rd Place

New Zealand

See “Kiwi Trickery” below.

Full details on Fossil of the Day is available at:

www.climatenetwork.org/fossil

Kiwi Trickery

New Zealand received a Fossil yesterday for threatening that unless it has access to unlimited offsets, it will reduce its target to zero. In doublespeak: unless New Zealand is allowed to avoid having to reduce its emissions, it will refuse to reduce its emissions. This prompted ECO to find out more about New Zealand’s “special” national circumstances that have led to such an irresponsible point of view.

At a time when the rest of the world is working out how to reduce emissions, New Zealand seems to be working out the fastest way possible to go in the opposite direction. It has increased fossil fuel subsidies, raided the public transport budget to build new roads, abandoned its Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy, removed a partial ban on coal fired power stations and is even considering drilling for oil in the Southwest New Zealand World Heritage Area.

In fact, while negotiators meet in Bangkok, New Zealand’s Parliament is considering plans to convert its emissions trading scheme into an intensity-based scheme with no cap.

So there you have it. New Zealand’s “special” national circumstance is a thorough commitment to raising emissions. ECO borrows from New Zealand’s national tourism branding to have the last word. New Zealand’s national circumstances are 100% pure ...