

eco



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The Copenhagen Countdown

We are in the final countdown to a Copenhagen agreement that puts the world on track to avoiding dangerous climate change.

Millions of people are facing the fact that the impacts of climate change are here to stay – and will intensify, threatening their lives and livelihoods.

At the end of our two weeks in Poznan, there has to be a clear understanding of the core elements of this agreement and a work-plan for how it will come together within a year. There is no longer any excuse for countries not jumping in and making real decisions on how they will contribute their fair share to solving this global predicament.

The present economic turmoil cannot be used as a reason for delay or lack of ambition. It is an opportunity to strengthen the global community's commitment to strong climate action, an opportunity to make necessary changes in the way the world's economies are energized and financed. The incredible resources that have been marshaled to forestall further economic impacts show all too clearly that, when the issue is seen as important enough, all barriers can be overcome.

If global temperatures rise more than 2°C over pre-industrial levels, the climate impact on water resources, food production, sea levels and ecosystems is predicted to be catastrophic. Two billion people will be affected by water shortages and most of Southern Africa will have to cope with year-round droughts. Global agriculture will be undermined and hunger and malnutrition is likely to kill up to three million more people every year. As Sir Nicholas Stern and others

have observed, this economic emergency will pale in comparison to the one unleashed by unmitigated climate change.

Poznan needs to deliver a clear political signal that 2009 will be the decisive year, that Copenhagen will produce a ratifiable outcome, and address climate change with the urgency required.

To do that, the chairs of both AWGs must be directed to produce negotiating text for the next session in March.

Specific outcomes needed from Poznan be on track to produce a comprehensive package that can be agreed to in Copenhagen include:

#1) Annex 1 countries must reaffirm their commitment to deep emission reductions by 2020. With changes in the climate proceeding more quickly than predicted, industrialized countries must be aiming for an aggregate target that has the highest level of ambition within the indicative range (25-40% below 1990) to provide some prospect of staying below 2 degrees of average warming.

#2) In addition to mitigation commitments, Annex 1 countries need to show support for strong financial mechanisms that can deliver the substantial sums of money to developing countries for adaptation, technology and REDD. The Norwegian proposal in particular is promising, and if industrialized countries want developing countries to take on enhanced actions, they had better show they are serious about delivering the financing required. However, approaches outside the UNFCCC, such as through the World Bank, are not the way forward.

—continued on page 2, col. 2

Do Widzenia President Bush; Dzień dobry President Obama

Goodbye President Bush; Hello President Obama

The U.S. elections are over. President elect Obama has pledged that the U.S. will 'once again engage vigorously in these negotiations.' Eco welcomes these encouraging words by President-elect Obama and bids adieu to the Bush team who will be here keeping the seats warm.

President-elect Obama, in a video message to an international summit convened by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, gave a shout-out to the 'delegates from around the world who will gather at Poland.' Very simply, he said, "your work is vital to the planet." With only a year until the Copenhagen deadline, truer words were never spoken. Parties should not use the transition in the U.S. as an excuse to do nothing at these talks.

Rather take encouragement from the words of the new president whose team will join you in March. "When I am president... any nation that's willing to join the cause of combating climate change will have an ally in the United States of America." And not a moment too soon.

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REDDy for a Decision in Poznań

This afternoon SBSTA will hear reports from its workshops on methodologies and policies for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. Many countries are already preparing for REDD and several are signing partnership agreements on support for REDD. The time is right for the UNFCCC to give direction and catalyze the next stage of international cooperation on REDD.

A strong decision in Poznan on REDD should guide and accelerate the next stage of capacity building, research, and ensure that national emission reports immediately account for emissions from logging, forest management and conversion of natural forests to timber plantations. As Sir Nicholas Stern has pointed out,

reducing these emissions can be one of the most rapid and effective mitigation measures. A REDD solution must be demonstrably consistent with the 2 degrees C goal, complementing the necessary deep emissions reductions in the global energy and industry sectors.

A properly designed REDD mechanism will have significant co-benefits for biodiversity and the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. A COP decision on REDD must support the equitable sharing of benefits among and within countries, including through the explicit recognition of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. Without consideration of these issues the

long-term effectiveness of REDD would be critically undermined.

REDD shares with other mitigation measures a range of difficult policy issues, which must be resolved in Copenhagen, most notably additionality and fungibility. However, a decision on REDD without prejudice to these issues can be made in Poznan to make the way forward less cluttered and more achievable. By contrast, failure to achieve a decision on REDD in Poznan will risk a weak decision, or none at all, in the pressure of last minute deals at Copenhagen. CAN calls for parties to adopt an enabling Decision on REDD in Poznan as early cornerstone of the post-2012 climate regime and set an example for cooperation on other building blocks.



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A Green New Deal – Yes We CAN!

The next 100 months represent a unique period for humanity. On numerous fronts, the consequences of the past 150 years of rapid industrialisation are all simultaneously coming home to roost.

Our relentless fossil fuelled economies are now being halted by the immovable facts of geology. Although no one is talking about oil and gas “running out”, we now realise that just as energy demand is exploding across the globe, our ability to annually increase production is peaking, and must inevitably decline, with what remains being dirtier, harder to extract and much more expensive.

In addition, our fossil fuel emissions are approaching the point where they trigger very much larger, un-stoppable runaway climate feedbacks – a global catastrophe that would dwarf recent hurricanes or floods and run for tens of thousands of years.

Business as usual no longer works from the climate’s point of view; it doesn’t offer energy security, and it is certainly not delivering global economic security. Humanity faces a complex mix of climate, energy and economic challenges. Left unchecked they will synergise, resulting in collapse & dislocation unseen in modern times.

But by investing in the transition out of fossil fuels, we can stay ahead of events. Through re-thinking our attitudes, we find can deliver wellbeing on a lot less energy,

and can extract the energy we do need from renewable sources. So rather than residing at the end of a peaking pipeline of polluting fossil fuels, every country can head its own indigenous renewable energy supply chain. Every field, forest, island, river, coastline, barn or building can be a power station, with different technologies appropriate to every scale or region. By their very nature renewable reserves will not peak, in fact as the technology matures and becomes economic in a wider range of applications, the available reserve increases year upon year.

By taking visionary action now, we not only tackle climate and energy security, but also invest billions in the global economy, not through the banks, but right where it’s needed - at ground level, with a secure and tangible dividend from the energy saved or generated. This gets global labour back to work, so tackling recession whilst also future-proofing our economies to spiralling energy costs.

Reports such as ‘Zero Carbon Britain’ and the ‘Green New Deal’ highlight how the actions needed to mitigate climate change can be exactly the actions which can deliver energy security, and are exactly the actions that create a new kinds of energy economy; locally resilient, but still active in an equitable global context, rich in quality jobs, with a new sense of purpose and reliant on in-exhaustible, renewable energy.

European Member States warming up for +4°C package

With the UN climate talks resuming in Poznan today, the world is also watching the parallel set of negotiations on the future EU climate and energy policies in Brussels, because their outcome will have a strong impact on the road to Copenhagen. A final agreement on the “package” is expected at the EU heads of state and government meeting on 11 and 12 December in Brussels, headed by France as the current EU Presidency. Sadly, at the moment it seems that the EU climate package could become an international embarrassment for president Sarkozy, package initiator Angela Merkel, and Co.

Two key tests determine how credible the EU’s leadership really is. First of all, is the EU’s 2020 domestic reduction target consistent with the challenge to keep global warming well below 2°C? Secondly, is the EU committed to honor the Bali roadmap by providing sufficient, predictable and binding financial support for developing countries with regard to mitigation and adaptation? As the negotiations stand, the EU package fails both tests.

According to the IPCC AR4, to stay well

below 2°C, industrialised nations must reduce their emissions within the range of 25-40% by 2020 compared to 1990 levels. In March 2007 EU leaders committed themselves to a 30% reduction by 2020 in the framework of an international agreement. twenty months later, most of the European Member States only want to go as far as a 20% reduction by 2020. The automatic commitment to a 30% reduction, if a Copenhagen deal is struck, seems to be no longer on the table. Only five out of 27 Member States are still holding on to this automatic commitment.

What is more, as texts currently stand, much of even this 20% target will be reduced outside the EU. It will be offset by external credits, making domestic reductions even lower. With the EU’s emission levels right now at c. -9% compared to 1990, the domestic 2020 target could be met with the help of a few warm winters. At this point EU member states, with Sweden as a gang-leader, are heavily resisting the efforts of the European Parliament, the only directly democratically elected EU institution, to increase these domestic reduction efforts.

The EU therefore is clearly failing the first test, with a climate package that is well on track for a +3.2 to +4°C temperature trajectory, which would mean 4-6°C in Europe itself. This is not leading, this is preparing for disaster.

The second test, financing adaptation and mitigation in the South, hardly delivers a better result. So far, EU member states have strongly resisted any concrete commitment, within the climate package, to deliver the necessary finance for both issues. Availability of money should certainly not be an issue. By auctioning off allowances, the EU emissions trading system could generate tens of billions of Euros per year as from 2013, right into finance ministers pockets. While the European Parliament is committed to earmark half of those revenues for adaptation and assisting in mitigation efforts (such as REDD) in developing countries, many EU member states, with the UK being a notorious example, refuse to commit a single penny of those revenues. This is not leading, this is institutionalised greed.

Beyond this, the EU negotiations are being threatened by the protectionist behaviour of member states such as Italy, Poland and self-proclaimed climate champion, Germany. Prime ministers Berlusconi and Tusk have both publicly threatened to block any progress in order to get a preferential treatment for their national industries. Similar instincts lurk in many other capitals, with Germany being particularly outspoken on free pollution permits for its manufacturing sector, and possibly even for coal-fired power stations.

With the summits in Poznan and Copenhagen, the EU is in the spotlight on climate change. As a responsible partner and good host it must live up to its historical and current responsibility as a major polluter. European leaders have less than two weeks to regain their climate leadership and make up for broken promises. ECO expects nothing less than <2°C consistent climate legislation in the EU and specific and strong commitment to financing of the Bali roadmap.

Europe, the time to lead is now! Go to www.timetolead.eu and tell them yourself.



You make me 4 degrees warmer...

Will the EU climate package be mentioned today?

The Prime Ministers of both this and next year’s COPs are speaking today. ECO will be listening closely.

Urgency of Adaptation

Climate change is happening now, and faster than IPCC AR4 indicated. Scientists at the U.S. National Snow and Ice Data Center believe the Arctic is approaching a “tipping point” that could see the region ice-free by summer 2030 or sooner. Previous estimates put the disappearance of Arctic ice between 2050 and 2100.

As the impact of the African food crisis, in part induced by the prolonged dry weather in the region, is being felt by millions. The possibility is emerging that life could soon become intolerable in some parts of some countries. The issue will then arise of compensation to these countries for the costs arising – such as from internal migration, feeding programmes, development foregone. The new President of the Maldives announced that the country is looking to buy land in India or Sri Lanka, to relocate people from atolls where sea level rise is already making life impossible.

The international community must increase efforts to support the most vulnerable people in developing countries to adapt, where possible, to the now unavoidable levels of climate change. Already the Bali Action Plan made clear the need for new instruments and scales of funding and laid out the principles that these should match. The additionality of adaptation resources to the 0.7% GNI commitments of developed countries is key to building enough adaptive capacity and building trust.

People around the world are already losing their lives and livelihoods as a result of climate change. Poznan climate talks must result in concrete steps to scale up adaptation

efforts under the UNFCCC in the near term. Negotiations under the SBI and SBSTA provide opportunities to take these steps.

The Adaptation Fund Board has made remarkable progress since Bali. This work represents an important step towards the kind of inclusive and transparent decision-making processes which must operationalize the Adaptation Fund.

The science tells us that we need to prepare for scenarios where damages exceed adaptation capacity. Parties should use the workshop on risk management and insurance to deepen their understanding of mechanisms to address these scenarios, so that parties agree on such mechanisms in Copenhagen.

Success in Poznan would require a consolidated work programme to scale up implementation of adaptation before 2013. This work programme should result in accelerated and effective implementation of NAPAs, and should address gaps in the existing mechanisms. The work of regional centres for knowledge sharing and cooperation should be strengthened to develop capacity to act on adaptation. The work programme should be designed to assist developing countries and their populations in enhancing their capacity in order to prepare for significant scale-up of adaptation actions under a future climate change regime post-2012.

Action on adaptation is an urgent priority and an opportunity to foster trust and consensus on a post-2012 agreement. For the most vulnerable people, the urgency is beyond the political rhetoric. Lives and livelihoods are at stake.



Following the IPCC predictions, floods such as those seen in Brazil last week, are on the increase.

– Copenhagen Countdown from page 1
#3) The Poznan meeting needs to deliver a decision that the Adaptation Fund Board will become operational in 2009. We also need an ambitious 3-year adaptation work program that focuses on implementation and capacity building.

#4) There needs to be progress made on technology. A new mechanism under the UNFCCC is needed for both R&D and diffusion of clean low-carbon technologies. The G-77 and China’s proposal for a technology mechanism is a very useful starting point for the negotiations. Some work on addressing IPR barriers is hoped for here as well.

#5) A strong decision on REDD in Poznan is needed. The final REDD decisions have to include biodiversity safeguards and ensure engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

#6) The CDM should not remain an offsetting mechanism that allows industrialized countries to trade-off their dual obligations to reduce their own emissions and to support mitigation in developing countries. Also, the CDM must not continue to rely on the ability to test the additionality of each individual project, which is simply not feasible to do accurately.

#7) Significant progress has to be made on the LULUCF rules that need to be understood when targets are discussed. The revised LULUCF framework must deliver mandatory emission reductions from forest management and peatland degradation.

Neither Poznan nor Copenhagen in 2009 can be allowed to fail. Delaying action by only a few years might result in impossibly steep emissions-reduction pathways needed to keep millions of vulnerable people safe.

Poznan proceedings and outcomes must clearly signal that climate change continues to be the most significant and urgent problem that the global community is facing.

Delegates will have noticed by now that the conference centre is draped in a gigantic advert for a luxury car – not the best choice for decorating the climate change talks. What’s more, this ad appears to be flouting the European law that says car ads also have to advertise how much CO₂ the thing emits. Maybe it’s a new green supercar that runs on air, so it has no emissions to advertise? Or maybe the motor industry, whose lobbying over the last few months has shredded Europe’s proposals to limit CO₂ from cars, now believes it’s above the law?