

# 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 the Climate Action Network at the UNFCCC meetings in Bonn in August 2010. ECO email: [eco@sunlightdata.com](mailto:eco@sunlightdata.com) – ECO website: <http://www.climateactionnetwork.org/eco> – Editorial/Production: Fred Heutte*

## Open Your Eyes to Success in Cancún

Astute readers of ECO over the past few days may have seen an irony emerge from some of the articles here. On the one hand, we're seeing 'Naked (un)Ambition' from many parties here in Bonn, while on the other hand 'the roof seems to be on fire' everywhere else.

All over the world, calamities consistent with climate change are affecting both poor and rich countries, with consequences ranging from ruined crops and destroyed homes to injuries and death for thousands. In Pakistan, historic floods swamp the country, while Russia and India have both suffered from extreme heat waves in recent weeks. And Washington DC, where bold climate action seems the furthest away in the halls of Congress, has experienced one of its hottest summers in history.

It's as clear as ever that a fair, ambitious and binding (FAB) deal on climate change is needed as soon as possible. And yet some parties seem to be pulling down expectations for COP 16 in Cancun. They aren't even allowing themselves a chance to strive for important steps towards an eventual robust agreement. In the face of ever more serious threats, this lowering of ambition is simply not tolerable.

Dear delegates, despite the tragedies across our globe, and deep frustration in the halls of the Maritim, ECO is here to

tell you that Cancún can still be a success and achieve substantial progress towards a FAB deal. But you must open your eyes to see what's possible, and then take action to make it happen.

Many areas of negotiation are well on the way toward a substantive outcome in Cancún. REDD, adaptation, and technology transfer, to name a few, could be the subject of solid agreement in Cancun – if Parties are willing to make the final steps.

After all, there is strong consensus that it is crucial to agree a framework as quickly as possible to protect the world's forests. And everyone should be in support of ensuring, now, that our world's most vulnerable get the support they need to adapt.

Even complex issues such as mitigation, MRV, and finance could see important steps forward in Cancún, as long as the political will is there.

The negotiations in Cancún must achieve success, to bolster confidence in the UNFCCC and move us solidly down the road towards a full FAB deal. We need a realistic, ambitious and balanced package, including a mandate for moving the talks forward from Cancun to South Africa. Even with just nine more negotiating days in the remaining months ahead of COP 16, we can surely get there.

## **REDD+ Partnership: No Foot in the Door for Stakeholders?**

Pressure to admit stakeholders to the meeting last night on the REDD+ Partnership was rebuffed. However, this decision was made after significant internal discussion throughout the day and support expressed by many Parties for opening the meeting.

The development of the work plan for the Partnership is a vital matter. Given the chance, indigenous groups and civil society can make important contributions, instead of merely commenting on a done deal.

ECO again calls for an immediate end to the REDD+ Partnership's closed-door policy and an opportunity to engage stakeholders constructively in formulating the priorities of the work plan.

## **Getting On With It: A Balanced, Ambitious & Achievable Cancun Package**

**Climate Action Network-  
International  
Side Event**

**Wednesday, August 4  
13:00 - 14:30  
Room SOLAR**

## The Russian BAU Riddle

In this week's 'Numbers' workshop considering pledges from Annex I Parties for the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol, the delegate from Micronesia had the good sense to ask for some additional clarity on Russia's business as usual (BAU) scenario. To some, it appeared to show that the Russian target was higher than BAU. So the question arose: does the Russian pledge imply real reductions, or is there a risk of yet another overallocation of emission units?

The Russian delegate replied that Russia's pledge does indeed require real reductions and effort. And yet, two of the three emissions projections from Russia's most recent national communication imply that Russia's emissions will be less than the most stringent pledge offered by Russia.

Moreover, even Russia's most drastic emission increase projection (designated as the 'moderate' scenario) implies a further overallocation of permits, even assuming the most stringent quantified emission limitation and reduction objective (QELRO) currently under discussion. ECO considers this a situation often called, 'Heads I win, tails you lose'.

The range of independent emissions scenarios found in the literature, such as a recent study by Climate Strategies, implies an overallocation of 104 to 360 Mt/yr for the period 2013-2020. Russia seems to want to pile up a vast hoard of dubious emissions permits: more than 7 Gt from the first commitment period; potentially several hundred Mt per yr from overallocation during the second commitment period; and more than likely, a further several hundred Mt from LULUCF.

The irony is that none of the delegation's mathematical and procedural gymnastics here at the climate talks fits with President Medvedev's top-line goal of improving efficiency and modernizing the Russian economy, and doing it regardless of the outcome of the international talks.

How on earth would it be possible to achieve 2.81% per yr growth in emissions during 2013-2020, as shown in the moderate scenario, and still achieve Medvedev's decreed 40% improvement in energy efficiency? ECO, along with many other interested observers, still awaits clarification on this key point.



– Image courtesy of Adopt a Negotiator

### Remembering Dr. Stephen H. Schneider (1945-2010)

'Speaking truth to power' is something scientists are not trained to do. The facts, we are often told, should speak for themselves. It is the rare scientist who manages to speak for the facts and do it in a way that makes people listen. Steve Schneider was just such a rare bird.

In his storied career that stretched almost as far as our modern understanding of climate change, he would often tell others working on the issue that getting to the solution was a 'marathon, not a sprint'. He was not saying this to dilute the urgency. In fact, he thought a related statement was so obvious that it did not need saying: 'You can't win the race if you don't start moving.'

In tribute to Dr. Schneider, let's make something happen at these negotiations – not just for him, but for the generations that will come after him, whom he always remembered.

*'So what I'm trying to do is get media and the political world to stop framing climate change in "either/or" terms, when we're really looking at a bell curve of possibilities. It's like buying insurance. How much of your family income do you want to spend on insurance? The more insurance you have, the safer you are if the house burns down or you get sick. But if the premium is more than you earn, you can't pay it. I keep using these metaphors to try to make people understand this is just like managing risk in our personal lives. But climate risks occur at the level of the planet, where there is no management other than agreements among willing countries.'*

– Stephen Schneider,  
Stanford Magazine, July/August 2010

Dr. Stephen H. Schneider was Melvin & Joan Lane Professor for Interdisciplinary Environmental Studies and other appointments at Stanford University. A longtime leading researcher in climate science, in 1975 he founded the interdisciplinary journal *Climatic Change*. He was honored in 1992 with a MacArthur Fellowship for his ability to integrate and interpret the results of global climate research, and was elected to the US National Academy of Sciences in 2002. He was an author for all four assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); a coordinating lead author in IPCC Working Group II for the last two reports; and also served on the synthesis writing teams. His recent work centered on the importance of risk management in climate policy decision making, given the uncertainties in future projections of global climate change.