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Shuffling Deck Chairs on Iceberg-free Waters

ECO is concerned to see that the L.6 adopted ADP text leaves open the option of continuing to generate and trade offset credits. To keep global average temperature increase to 1.5°C or less—and ECO is excited to see support from new quarters on this imperative—we should phase out all fossil fuel emissions no later than 2050.

Using offsets is like ‘shuffling deck chairs on the Titanic’. Delaying action might be OK for ships sailing in iceberg-free waters. But iceberg-free waters are what we’re in Paris to avoid. And offsets effectively reduce the ambition of the cap they are applied to. The INDCs already place us on track for a world that’s 3°C

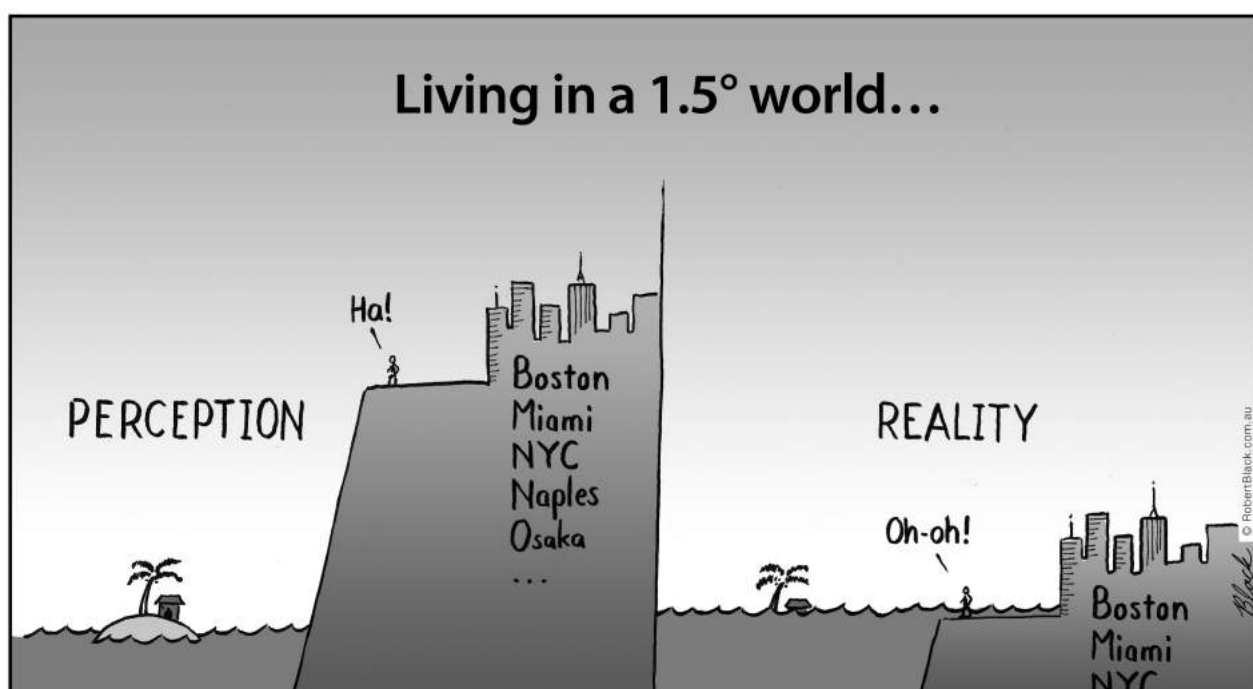
warmer (hence icebergs unlikely). Weakening their already woeful ambition would put us at even greater risk of climate catastrophe.

If markets are to be used for mitigation purposes, ensuring environmental integrity and contributions to sustainable development are imperative. Trading should be under ambitious caps, expressed as multi-year national carbon budgets. Credits should be real, permanent, supplemental, verified and ensure no double counting. Shares of proceeds would help to create needed new and additional climate finance.

The Clean Development Mechanism created structures that could

transform it from an offset mechanism to one that acts as a channel for climate finance. This would give wealthier countries an MRV-able channel to contribute to their climate finance obligations and help countries in need of support achieve mitigation outcomes. It would also reduce some risks of double counting. The private sector could still contribute in a spirit of corporate social responsibility, but, again, as climate finance instead of offsets.

We need real emissions reductions brought about through transformative change. There is just not enough room in the remaining global carbon budget to waste time shuffling offset credits.



New Zealand's Shell Game

New Zealand will devote NZ\$20 million to research methods for reducing its agricultural emissions over the next four years. Prime Minister John Key announced this news last Monday at COP21. Agriculture accounts for half of the country's total emissions.

What the Prime Minister failed to mention was that, earlier this year, AgResearch cut a net 56 jobs, including researchers in the area of greenhouse gas emissions. AgResearch is the agricultural research institute owned and funded by the government. This funding shortfall was approximately NZD\$5 million in 2015. Over four years this would – wait for it – add up to NZD\$20 million.

At the time those cuts were made, the Science and Innovation Minister was quoted as saying, 'AgResearch has seen significant change in its areas of research that people value,

and what I mean by people I mean the sector that pays for their research...So some areas that were perhaps very important 10 or 15 years ago have less support these days'. Here's hoping the money is applied in time to reemploy New Zealand's researchers before the country falls even further behind in mitigating its greenhouse gases.

John Key wants to look like a climate champ, but simply moving money around isn't going to cut it. The climate isn't a shell game. Perhaps you could try again by supporting the Pacific Islands, New Zealand's neighbours, in their push for a 1.5°C long-term target. Or by upping New Zealand's pitifully low 2030 emissions reductions target. Or, at the very least, by implementing a plan to reduce the 50% of New Zealand's emissions that do **not** come from agriculture. So many options!

Rising Ambition Must Lift All Boats!

And planes, too! ECO is thrilled that Parties are coming around to a target of 1.5°C. But how would we all feel if we got back home and realized — oops! — we left out two huge emitters? International aviation and shipping emissions are equivalent to the carbon emissions of the UK and Germany, are not included in national targets. These emissions are expected to grow up to 270% by 2050. Leaving them out of the agreement would be letting efforts to keep temperature rise under 1.5°C just float on by.

ICAO and IMO are the right UN agencies to regulate these sectors. But, they need to step up their ambition quickly. They can, and must, tackle bunker emissions in a way that accommodates equally both differentiation and the principles of non-discrimination under which these agencies operate.

All aboard for 1.5°C!



**We'll Be Back
Soon...**



Norway's Human Rights Record: Not a Fjordgone Conclusion

As the president of the Sami parliament of Norway, Aili Keskitalo, spoke at the High Level Segment of COP, ECO was dismayed to learn that the Norwegian Environmental Agency just doomed a world famous fjord by approving the annual dumping of two million tons of waste from a planned copper mine in the Repparfjord. This mine will open in Sapmi, the region of Norway's indigenous people. Both the Sami parliament and environmental organisations are fighting the plans, as the mining waste will be deposited in spawning waters of cod and other fish stocks crucial to coastal fisheries.

Much ink has already been spilled in ECO about Norway and its lack of support for human rights in the text. ECO notices an unsettling echo of Norway's harmful attitude on the international stage in its domestic treatment of indigenous communities.

Yet more harm may be done from the waste dumping at Repparfjord. Pollution from the copper mine will breach allowed limits for heavy metals and constitute a toxic cocktail of various contaminants. Microscopic particles

spreading through the water will also harm the threatened Atlantic salmon in what is classified as a 'National Salmon Fjord'.

Many now argue that the Norwegian Environment Agency has abandoned its role as an environmental regulator. The Agency is giving the green light to one of the most environmentally harmful industrial projects in Norwegian history, despite professional objections and warnings, on the grounds that the social benefits outweigh the negative consequences.

Unfortunately, Norway is doing more to damage its own natural heritage. In April, the Norwegian government gave permission to dump millions of tons of mining waste in the Fjørdefjord, on the west coast of Norway. Today Norway is the only European country—and one of only five countries in the world—that still allows sea dumping of tailings.

Norway continues to position itself as a leader on climate, but its environmental and human rights record leaves much room for improvement.