A Cover Decision is Not Teenage Dating

After a first date, some advise waiting at least three days before you make your second move. ECO wonders if the presidency is as nervous as a love-dovey teenager about their cover decision text, and has confused dating and negotiation practice… This seems the most plausible explanation as to why there is still no actual draft cover decision text yet. ECO doesn't recommend the three-day rule for dating, or the cover decision. Since we have all booked our travel back, this adventure equals more the timeframe of a holiday dalliance — so don't play games and let's get going. ECO wishes the Egyptian presidency courage to make the next move. And as you make that move, dear Presidency, you want to be among the cool kids on the block: smoking fossil fuels is so 20th century, so urgently include some language on the much-needed equitable phase-out of ALL fossil fuels. You can do it!

And if you are reading this and the text has come out, Presidency, please follow up faster next time.

ECO Reviews Article 6 Texts

ECO has found many problems in the Article 6 texts, and wants to flag four in particular: (1) the risk of absence of any consequences from the 6.2 review, (2) the open door to mark all information as confidential, (3) troubling CDM carryover loopholes, and (4) the unhelpful ‘other A6.4ERs’ terminology.

First, the Article 6 review must have some teeth. It should review the cooperative approaches (not just the consistency of information), and should not be guided by vague principles like non-intrusive, non-punitive, non-political judgments; etc. The review must have consequences. Recurring and/or unaddressed inconsistencies cannot simply be ignored. No Internationally Transferred Mitigation Options (ITMO) transfers should be allowed until the review is completed and inconsistencies are satisfactorily addressed.

ECO was somewhat reassured to see that Parties want to mandate further work to define how confidential information should be reviewed. This is an opportunity to limit the current ‘free for all’ approach that allows Parties to designate any information as confidential. ECO welcomes the proposal that Parties should justify why they deem information to be confidential, but is concerned that some language remains too loose. The section on confidentiality throws the door wide-open for countries to designate any information as confidential and, given the uncertainty about what will be discussed in the future work programme, this is a risk that ECO advises against taking.

Finally, after so many discussions about the ‘non-authorised’ A6.4ERs and the good start in Glasgow, when useful names were proposed, ECO was disappointed to see the proposition for ‘other’ A6.4ERs’ in the Article 6.4 text. This language does not clearly convey the idea that emission reductions embedded in these carbon credits are already being counted by the host country. The proposed text also does not restrict the use of these units at all and opens the door for companies to count emission reductions that have already been counted by the host country to reach an NDC. Call it what you will, but when it comes down to it, this is plain and simple double counting, and unless clarified, it will undermine the host country’s increase in ambition. ECO proposes alternative names, like ‘contribution A6.4ERs’ or ‘Paris Agreement Support Units’, and to limit the use of these ERs to results-based climate finance and domestic carbon pricing, without the open-ended loopholes.
WTF? This is the question that ECO has been asking for the past 50 years since it was born - where is the finance! While it started with asks for more development aid, these days it’s about financing efforts of vulnerable countries on mitigation and adaptation. And if you think it will get better, tell us - where is the US$100 billion that was committed in Copenhagen 2009 and Cancun 2010?

Guess what the latest excuse for this failure is? Rising inflation resulting from Russian aggression. Oh, please! Do you remember your past excuses? That you had budgeted already; or there are no bankable projects; or there is corruption; lack of governance, etc. But the honest and brutal truth is that they just do not want to collectively pay. At best, they propose to ‘rob from Peter to pay Paul’. Who said this money has to come from existing taxes or existing budgets from the rich nations?

ECO is not as shy as our finance ministers. And because ECO is also generous, here are our 4 novel finance options that the ministers can think about as they leave the COP in the next few days.

First, tax the super profits of the ~50 largest multilateral coal, oil, and gas companies. It is estimated that this years profits, not turnover, of these planetary super-destroyers might be up to $250 bn. A 20% tax would provide $50bn (Well, given their environmental crimes, ECO would not mind a tax rate of 50% and more. But let’s stay moderate for the start).

Second, implement an annually rising energy content (rather than on carbon) levy at the point of upstream mining of fossil fuels. To give you a flavour: with present oil prices hovering around $90-$100 per barrel and the world producing about 100bn barrels per day, one could generate ~$35bn per year if a 1% levy is raised. Such a levy would be far below the erratically occurring oil price roller coaster over the year. Next, add a 1% levy on coal and gas (per barrel of energy content)

Third, allocate a recovered tax to climate finance. The UN estimated in July that countries were losing about $483bn annually through tax evasion into tax havens. If only 10% of that recovered cash is earmarked for climate finance, it will generate almost $50bn per year.

Fourth, domestic wealth taxes. Global billionaires have a combined wealth estimated at more than $9tn (and this is not accounting for millionaires’ wealth). A 1% wealth tax rate would generate about $85bn annually. Do you remember the French movie titled “Eat the rich”? Well, here we go!

One could also add a Robin Hood tax on financial transactions.

Governments, do your job; for social healing, equity, international climate justice and solidarity!

Hey Shy Finance Ministers! Here Are Some Novel Ideas…

ECO is happy to share this part of our publication with the Indigenous Peoples Caucus (IPO) to help amplify their voice. This article reflects the views of the IPO.


These words are often the end of Diné (Navajo) prayers with a loose English translation to “all is beautiful again”. This definition of beauty is one of balance, harmony, spirit, and hope. In the fight for climate justice, hózhó nahasdlii is not just a destination. It’s a map for how we get there.

These climate negotiations are spiritually and physically taxing and always fall drastically short, painting a picture of hopelessness. However, we know hope is rooted in those people and communities outside of this venue who understand that we need (re) connection to our land and our teachings. As we work towards harmony and beauty, we must remember that it is okay to hold both hope and frustration in our bodies and spirit. It’s okay to make time for both pain and joy with our international relatives! Dance together. Cry together. Sing together. Hold each other. We are hope. We are medicine.

Similarly, the work of our climate justice movement needs balance as well. While some are focused on negotiating every word and bracket of text, others are here to bring attention to the injustices and crises of their communities through organizing nonviolent direct actions. Through all these efforts, Indigenous Peoples are advocating for the acknowledgements of our rights, the protection of our lands and communities, accessibility for our voices in these critical spaces, and the development of direct avenues between resources and our communities. This is so that our peoples can continue to do the work that feels hopeful, back home in our communities. Being at COP is a balance of representing our Indigenous identities (individually and collectively), while carving out meaningful ways to participate in these problematic, colonial systems.

Holding all these considerations, including regional and gender representation, is not an easy task. We will stumble and it will be hard. However, our communities are built on accountability, forgiveness, and constant pursuit of hózhó. We must try and when we are discouraged, we must dream. There is beauty in the world and that’s why we’re all here, right? To fight for it. Dream of a world full of abundance, happiness, and love. Dream of a world where we don’t have to show up to a COP to fight. As we keep the destination in mind, we must be willing to continuously learn, heal, fight, and forgive as we pursue a world where we all understand and experience hózhó, where all is beautiful again.


Baking Strong Guidance for the Article 6.4 Supervisory Body

ECO wants to start by congratulating Parties on recognizing the flaws in the recommendations on removals and sending it back to the Supervisory Body. And ECO was pleased to see additional guidance, including related to human rights, but ECO doesn’t think you have the formula quite right for what the Supervisory Body will need. So here is a recipe to help it have more robust guidance to protect human rights, including the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and ecosystem integrity.

Add:

2. Make sure recommendations are in line with International Law
3. Make sure recommendations are in line with the latest science
4. Task them with operationalizing the Independent Grievance Mechanism as part of their work in 2023