

Resolution on the EU strategy for the Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change (COP 15)

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The Environment Council adopted Conclusions setting out the EU position for the Copenhagen Climate Conference (7-18 December 2009). These conclusions provide the EU with a basis for negotiating an international agreement on climate protection that is to enter into force when the Kyoto Protocol expires.

In its conclusions, the Council underlines that preventing dangerous climate change requires **sustainable economic growth and social development** with a minimum of greenhouse gas emissions. It insists on the fact that such a low-emission development path is possible but that it requires a **concerted global cooperative effort** enabled and supported by a comprehensive international regulatory framework under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Acknowledging that climate change is seriously undermining efforts to reduce poverty and hunger and is a major threat to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the Council **intends to strengthen its alliances and partnerships with developing countries**, in particular with Africa, the Latin American countries, the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the small island developing states (SIDS) in this regard.

The Council reaffirms its **commitment to reaching a global, ambitious and comprehensive climate agreement** in Copenhagen in December 2009 building on the Bali Roadmap whilst underlining the mutual co-benefits for developed and developing countries of reaching such an agreement.

The main points raised in the Council conclusions are the follows:

1) MITIGATION: the Council reiterates that that a Copenhagen agreement must be based on the best available scientific evidence as presented by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). It recognises that **the 2°C objective sets the level of ambition for global mitigation action** and underlines that, in accordance with the IPCC findings:

- developed countries as a group should reduce their GHG emissions below 1990 levels through domestic and complementary international efforts **by 25 to 40% by 2020 and by 80 to 95% by 2050;**
- while **developing countries as a group should achieve a substantial deviation below the currently predicted emissions growth rate**, in the order of 15-30% by 2020.

In this context, the Council calls upon all Parties, as part of a Copenhagen agreement, to embrace the 2°C objective and to **agree to global emission reductions of at least 50%**, and aggregate developed country emission reductions of at least 80-95%, as part of such global emission reductions, by 2050 compared to 1990 levels. Such objectives should provide both the aspiration and the yardstick to establish mid-term goals, subject to regular scientific review.

The Council reaffirms its **commitment to move to a 30% reduction** compared to 1990 levels as its contribution to a global and comprehensive agreement for the period beyond 2012, provided that other developed countries commit themselves to comparable emission reductions and that developing countries contribute adequately according to their responsibilities and respective capabilities. **Developed countries**

should take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof. The Council urges developed country Parties to announce more ambitious proposals for emission reductions ahead of Copenhagen.

According to the Council :

- at least all Parties listed in Annex I to the UNFCCC and all current EU Member States, EU candidate countries and potential candidate countries that are not included in Annex I to the UNFCCC should **commit to ambitious binding quantified emission limitation or reduction commitments**;
- other non-Annex I Parties that are at levels of development and GDP/capita comparable to those of the group of developed countries, notably OECD member countries and candidates for membership thereof, to consider making similar commitments commensurate with their responsibilities, capabilities and national circumstances;
- advanced **developing countries** should come forward, already before Copenhagen, with proposals for ambitious mitigation actions as part of their contributions to the global effort and to include in their low-carbon growth plans ambitious mitigation actions, including through the adoption of sectoral thresholds and targets, and to indicate how emission growth will be decoupled from economic growth and make these actions, thresholds and targets part of the international agreement in Copenhagen.

The Council considers that **global emission reduction targets for international aviation and maritime transport**, consistent with a global reduction path towards meeting the 2°C objective, should be incorporated into a Copenhagen agreement and that Parties should commit to work through ICAO and IMO to enable an agreement that does not lead to competitive distortions or carbon leakage, that is agreed in 2010 and approved by 2011.

Global reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions from international aviation and maritime transport should be set by UNFCCC to **-10 per cent for the aviation sector and to -20 per cent for the maritime sector** below 2005 levels by 2020 to be implemented globally in a manner that ensures a level playing field.

The Council that, in this context, the EU supports the use of global market-based instruments to reduce emissions from these sectors and that such instruments should be developed within ICAO and IMO, respectively.

Lastly, the Council reiterates its proposal to include an **HFC emissions reduction arrangement in the Copenhagen agreement**, whereby HFCs remain in the basket of gases covered by the Kyoto Protocol or its successor.

2) ADAPTATION: the Council states that climate change is already occurring, that many vulnerable countries are already experiencing the impact of climate change and that the ability to cope with adverse climate change effects varies considerably among countries. Adaptation is a necessary complement to mitigation. This issue must be comprehensively addressed by all Parties in a Copenhagen agreement.

The Council stresses the **need to effectively integrate adaptation** into national and sectoral planning, sustainable development policies and strategies at all levels and into development cooperation.

The Council recognises the potential impacts of climate change on, inter alia, water resources and management, sustainable forest management, land management, health, soil conditions, biodiversity, agricultural production, food security and efforts on disaster risk reduction. It therefore urges **all**

international stakeholders, bodies and institutions involved in adaptation, risk assessment and management and related activities, to cooperate and integrate effects of climate change in their work in line with a Copenhagen agreement.

In this context, the Council stresses the need to **continue to cooperate to improve research** and systematic observation and to strengthen capacities in vulnerable developing countries, and to develop and transfer technology and knowledge on adaptation, including climate systematic observation and development of regional climate scenarios; and to enable the provision of high quality climate services.

The Council recognises that **adaptation needs and responses are context-specific and should be addressed in line with specific circumstances and priorities**. It recalls the Bali Action Plan, in particular on enhanced action on the provisions of new and additional financial resources.

It recognises that further financing will be needed to support adaptation in developing countries and therefore underlines the need to **scale up support for adaptation in developing countries**, until and beyond 2012, focusing on countries and regions that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change, especially SIDS, LDCs and African countries prone to drought, desertification and floods.

3) **DEFORESTATION, LAND USE**: the Council:

- reaffirms the importance of action to **reduce deforestation and forest degradation (REDD)** and also of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+), as well as the EU's objectives of **reducing gross tropical deforestation by at least 50% by 2020** compared to current levels and to halt global forest cover loss by 2030 at the latest. It underlines that, in general, assistance to developing countries will be necessary in order to produce accurate data and build capacity to establish and implement an effective and reliable framework for including REDD+ in their low carbon growth plans;
- reiterates that the **accounting rules for the treatment of land use, land-use change and forestry** in developed countries in future commitments should stimulate mitigation actions in these sectors and ensure permanence and environmental integrity, while ensuring that early action is recognised. It underlines in this context the role of sustainably produced wood products as a climate friendly material and therefore proposes to include harvested wood products in the accounting modalities of a Copenhagen agreement, while stressing the need for robust, transparent and consistent data and methodologies;
- **underlines the importance of Assigned Amount Units (AAUs)** in the common accounting framework under the current commitment period within the Kyoto Protocol (2008-2012). It notes that, during the current commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol a significant amount of unused AAUs are likely to accrue as a consequence of emissions lower than the assigned amount. The AAU surplus could affect the environmental integrity of a Copenhagen agreement if it is not addressed appropriately. The Council clarifies that the EU will further consider options in view of discussions with other Parties.

4) LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES/GROWTH PLANS AND NATIONALLY APPROPRIATE MITIGATION ACTIONS: the Council clarifies that, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, all countries, except LDCs, should commit themselves to preparing ambitious, credible and country-owned low-carbon development strategies/growth plans. It underlines that the EC and its Member States will develop such strategies / plans, building on the energy and climate package.

The strategies/plans should include Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions which provide the information for identifying the needs for financial, capacity-building and technology support to developing countries. They should provide a basis for independent analysis of the adequacy of the global level of ambition of actions.

The Council underlines the need for **capacity building in developing countries** to assist them in preparing LCDS/LCGP and national inventories.

5) CARBON MARKET: recalling the crucial importance of carbon markets, the Council reiterates that **putting a price on GHG emissions through cap-and-trade systems** and other market-based mechanisms is imperative for driving low-carbon investments and for achieving global mitigation objectives in a cost-efficient manner. It also calls for an **OECD-wide carbon market through the linking of cap-and-trade systems comparable in ambition and compatible in design as soon as practicable and preferably by no later than 2015** and the extension of this market to more advanced developing countries by 2020 as important steps towards achieving a fully integrated global carbon market which at the same time will promote a level-playing field.

According to the Council, maintaining a continuing strong role for the project-based mechanisms Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM) and Joint Implementation (JI), including programmatic approaches, is important for broadening carbon markets and maintaining the trust of carbon market investors.

The Council reiterates its proposal that the **more advanced developing countries** should identify, as part of their low carbon development strategies/growth plans, **ambitious thresholds and targets for specific sectors**, subject to agreed international governance procedures, with a view to participating in sectoral crediting and sectoral trading mechanisms, obtaining financing and promoting large-scale emissions reductions as well as facilitating their progressive participation in internationally linked carbon markets based on cap-and-trade systems by 2020.

The Council takes the view that, in light of the importance of the creation of sector-specific mechanisms, an orderly transition to such mechanisms should be initiated in a Copenhagen agreement to provide clarity to investors and ensure the continuing stability of the market.

6) CLIMATE FINANCE, GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY: the Council recognises that a Copenhagen agreement will require a gradual but significant scaling up of both public and private financial flows to developing countries. It underlines that **adequate, predictable and timely financial support for implementation of a Copenhagen agreement is crucial** and that the EU is prepared to take on its fair share, in the framework of a global and comprehensive Copenhagen agreement which entails appropriate and adequate contributions by Parties.

The Council supports the establishment of a **high-level forum or body to inter alia provide a consolidated overview of international sources for financing climate-related investments in developing countries**, review the balanced distribution of international public finance across priorities, involve all relevant actors, and encourage synergies with other environmental agreements. This forum or body should be created under the guidance of the UNFCCC and involve all relevant actors, including International Financial Institutions (IFIs). It stresses that that the overall governance structure should be decentralised, country-driven, transparent, allowing effective monitoring, and should fulfil standards for aid effectiveness.

7) TECHNOLOGY: the Council reiterates the importance of development, deployment and diffusion, including **transfer of safe and sustainable technologies**, for mitigation and adaptation. It proposes that developing countries perform national assessments of their needs and barriers related to technology and use those assessments in order to make strategic choices in their low carbon development strategies /growth plans. These strategies should set out what support is needed to implement actions and policy frameworks that lead to enhanced technology development and deployment. The Council recalls that the design and implementation of national policy frameworks are essential to provide enabling environments with a view to re-directing and scaling up private investments as well as playing a major role in driving research, development, demonstration, deployment and diffusion, including transfer of technologies at the

scale needed. It stresses the importance of creating in all countries, developed as well as developing, **incentives and mechanisms to engage the private sector in technology cooperation.**

Furthermore, the Council reaffirms the importance of **increasing private and public energy-related RD&D** compared to current levels, working towards at least a doubling of global energy related RD&D by 2012 and increasing it to four times its current level by 2020 with a significant shift in emphasis towards safe and sustainable low greenhouse-gas-emitting technologies, especially renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The Council supports **further initiatives for international cooperation on demonstration and deployment of energy efficiency**, safe and sustainable technologies and renewable energy sources inside or outside a Copenhagen Agreement. It recognises the importance of public-private partnerships. The European Commission is invited to continue the cooperation together with Member States, stakeholders and financial institutions with a view to the further development of environmentally safe climate change mitigation technologies and finding ways for financing demonstration.

Lastly, the Council emphasises the **need for a legally binding agreement for the period starting 1 January 2013** that builds on the Kyoto Protocol and incorporates all its essentials, as an outcome from Copenhagen in December 2009.