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

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The Council held an orientation debate and adopted conclusions that underline the importance of a medium- to long-term perspective in addressing climate change and development. Strengthening coherence between the two is essential to successfully achieve internationally agreed climate and development objectives, while ensuring that the fight against poverty and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals are not jeopardized.

The conclusions invite the Commission and member states to engage in more dialogue with partner countries and to support the integration of climate change concerns into their development strategies and budget processes.

Adaptation: the Council recalls the Bali Action Plan, in particular on enhanced action on the provision of new and additional financial resources; it recognizes that development cooperation has an important role to play in supporting developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impact of climate change, especially the least developed countries (LDCs), the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and countries in Africa affected by drought, desertification and floods as is stated in the Bali Action Plan, and that such cooperation should build on support currently provided through bilateral and multilateral channels (including UNFCCC funds).

The Council also emphasizes the following points:

- the need for a shift towards a long-term strategic approach to integrating climate resilience into national policies, supported by public finance where necessary;
- that adaptation is both about undertaking technical adaptive measures and about initiatives that strengthen the capacity of individuals, ecosystems and societies to adapt to a changing climate. In this context, the Council underlines the human dimension of climate change, including a gender perspective;
- that effective adaptation can be achieved by, for instance, investments in health and education; improved access to water and energy; sustainable land, forests, and water management; enhancement of carbon stocks; combating desertification; protection of ecosystems and biodiversity; investments in flood protection infrastructure; sufficient water supply (including drinking water); and crop insurance schemes. The Council underlines that development assistance targeting adaptation efforts in the agriculture sector, including through agricultural research, will be decisive for food security and the livelihood of poor people;
- the role of the local level and local institutions in effective adaptation, is highlighted, within the framework of national institutions and planning;
- that climate change adaptation and disaster risk management are closely linked and that reducing disaster risk is critical to managing and adapting to the impacts of climate change and minimising the impacts on social and economic welfare. A close coordination is needed with the UN Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR).

Mitigation: recalling the 2 degree objective, the Council underlines the following points:

- in accordance with the findings by IPCC, developed countries as a group have to take the lead by reducing their emissions below 1990 levels through domestic and complementary international efforts by 25 to 40 % by 2020 and by 80-95 % by 2050 and that 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;
- development cooperation in support of mitigation in the least developed and most vulnerable countries should be oriented towards promoting win-win strategies for adaptation and mitigation and sustainable development, and should inter alia support access to efficient low carbon energy systems, transition to energy-efficient technology, renewable energy, increased energy security as well as sustainable management of land and marine ecosystems and wetlands, sustainable agriculture including food production, green growth and capacity building related to sustainable forest management.

Financing, Governance and Institutions: reiterating that a deal on financing will be a central part of an agreement in Copenhagen, the Council recalls that:

- a gradual but significant increase in additional public and private financial flows is needed to help developing countries implement ambitious mitigation and adaptation strategies;
- all countries, except the least developed, should contribute to international public financing, through a comprehensive global distribution key based on emission levels and on GDP to reflect both responsibility for global emissions and ability to pay, with a considerable weight on emission levels. The EU and its Member States are ready to take on their resulting fair share of total international public finance;
- while support to mitigation and adaptation in developing countries will require additional resource mobilization from a wide range of financial sources, ODA will continue to play a role, particularly for support to adaptation, including disaster risk reduction, in the most vulnerable and least developed countries. In this respect, the Council underlines that developed countries should honour their respective commitments of ODA contributions;
- in parallel with deliveries of climate financing all international parties should commit that such financing would not undermine or jeopardize the fight against poverty and continued progress towards the MDGs;
- innovative financing can play a role in ensuring predictable flows of financing for sustainable development, especially towards the poorest and most vulnerable countries;
- the overall governance structure and implementation of international climate change financing should, to the extent possible, build on existing and reformed mechanisms, channels and national and international institutions of the international financial architecture, and be decentralised, country-driven, transparent, allowing effective monitoring, and should fulfil standards for aid effectiveness;
- addressing climate change is a multi-level governance issue that requires involvement and responsibility from all levels: individual, local, national, regional, and global, with a special focus on support to the local level. Collaboration between different levels is needed;
- 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;
- there is a need to reform the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) including through enhancing its effectiveness, efficiency, environmental integrity and governance as well as the importance of strengthening the participation of Less Developed Countries in CDM;
- climate change also poses challenges that most effectively can be dealt with regionally, and underlines that regional institutions should play a more prominent role in the challenge of climate change, including areas such as exchange of experience and lessons learned, dissemination of know-how, and diffusion of information via early warning systems.

The Council calls on EU Member States and the Commission to further integrate adaptation, risk reduction, mitigation efforts, into development cooperation policies, strategies and activities, building on dialogue with partner countries. It invites the Commission in cooperation with Member States in an appropriate framework, to report to the Council by the end of 2010, on progress in taking forward the recommendations as set out in these Conclusions.