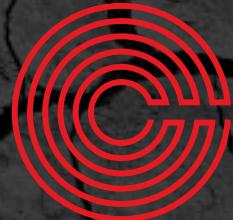


SUPPORTING EUROPE'S
PARLIAMENTARIANS



COMBATING
CLIMATE CHANGE
MAINTAINING
MOMENTUM

4 / AN EQUITABLE INTERNATIONAL DEAL – EUROPE'S POSITION AND RESPONSE

'In 1997 the EU went to Kyoto with an offer, without which the Protocol would never have been signed. Our leadership is equally needed on the road to Copenhagen'.

Satu Hassi, MEP

Climate change is a global phenomenon; while individual nations can show leadership by reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, ultimately a global solution is needed.

From 7-18 December 2009 Copenhagen will host COP15 of the UNFCCC, negotiations vital to future international efforts on combating climate change. COP15 is the forum in which a future global deal for emission reductions beyond 2012 (following on from the Kyoto Protocol) must be determined. Given the need to turn around emission profiles between 2015 and 2020, a deal is crucial if we are to prevent catastrophic climate change.

European leadership will be judged on the negotiating position the EU brings to the Copenhagen table, but also the speed and adequacy of the EU's response following an agreement.



UNITED AND RESPONSIBLE EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP

Despite the changed US position since President Obama's election and positive momentum within the G8 and G20, the EU remains the only group of countries with binding emission reduction targets for 2020 and 2050. Sweden – which will lead Europe's Copenhagen negotiating team as President of the Council of the European Union – has commented that 'EU unity and responsibility' are vital for the EU to operate as a positive climate force.

Unity between Member States is central to the integrity of any negotiating position. The Commission adopted a Communication in January 2009 on a comprehensive climate agreement in Copenhagen, and a formal Parliamentary resolution is expected in October. The EU has also made formal submissions to the UNFCCC on the legal form of a future global agreement. Nevertheless, EU Governments are yet to agree a formal position for Copenhagen.

This lack of consensus has been the subject of considerable criticism, suggesting Europe's failure to reassert its commitment in a post economic-downturn world. The 29-30 October European Council will be central to the agreement of an ambitious EU Copenhagen position.

An EU position will be vital to promote ambitious submissions from others. The absence of European leadership in the international negotiations leaves a void. Whilst many may look to the US expectantly, it is unlikely that a final compromise will be reached on their

American Clean Energy and Security Act (setting a non binding economy wide GHG reduction goal and establishing emissions trading) before December. It will be difficult for them to pursue an ambitious target at Copenhagen in the absence of this domestic mandate. Waiting to see what moves other parties will make is unlikely to drive an ambitious deal.

Responsibility consists of three pillars – credibility, acceptability and equity – all of which must be clearly expressed within an EU negotiating position and any post 2012 international agreement reached in Copenhagen. Any deal must deliver:

- commitments to reduction commensurate with limiting temperature change to 2°C;
- a deal acceptable to industrialised and newly industrialised countries, obtaining commitments from key players including the EU, US, Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRICs); and
- future support for developing nations both to mitigate and adapt to climate change. €175bn globally per year for mitigation by 2020 and €23-54bn per year for adaptation in developing countries by 2030 are estimates set out by Environment Ministers. MEPs have called for the EU to contribute at least €30bn annually by 2020 towards mitigation and adaptation in developing countries. As commented by Stavros Dimas, Environment Commissioner: 'No money, no deal'.

ENSURING A RAPID, ROBUST EU RESPONSE TO AN INTERNATIONAL DEAL

European climate legislation is currently focused on delivering a 20% reduction in GHG emissions by 2020, based on 1990 levels. The 20% commitment was, however, only intended as a marker to demonstrate that, despite a lack of international agreement, the EU would lead in reducing emissions beyond 2012. The goal was always to achieve a 30% reduction by 2020, once other nations had made comparable commitments.

In March 2008 Heads of State and Government endorsed an EU target of 30% by 2020 provided 'other developed countries commit themselves to comparable emission reductions and economically more advanced developing countries to contributing adequately according to their responsibilities and respective capabilities'. This commitment was reaffirmed in December 2008 when the European Council confirmed the EU's commitment to 30% within the framework of an ambitious and comprehensive global agreement in Copenhagen – assuming it meets the criteria of comparability and responsibility.

The integrity of the EU's 30% negotiating position will depend largely on the speed with which the EU adopts a 30% target and establishes clear mechanisms for its delivery following a Copenhagen agreement. The method for realising a shift to 30% should be clarified by the end of 2010.

There is a risk that the final wording of an international agreement may be ambiguous. For example, interim targets – i.e. before 2050 – may not be set at Copenhagen. The question then arises as to whether efforts of other nations are comparable and sufficient to trigger the 30% response.

Once the shift to 30% is agreed, the coverage of this commitment must be defined. This must address the proportion of offsetting of emission reductions allowed – to retain Europe's leadership role a high proportion of reductions should be domestic. It must also be established whether land use, land use change and forestry are incorporated. The official Commission response to the Copenhagen agreement will be published in March 2010 – timed for the Council's Spring Summit.

There is the danger of a highly politicised and divisive debate over the triggering of the 30% reduction target and the approaches to mitigation this should cover. Ensuring that the EU honours the original ambition of a 30% commitment will be a key test of the new Parliament's ability to drive climate action.

A RESPONSIBLE EU POSITION FOR COPENHAGEN – KEY FEATURES

Credibility

Securing ambition commensurate with need:

Secure ambitious emission reduction targets globally analogous to limiting the risk of catastrophic climate change. As a minimum this should correspond with IPCC estimates of 25-40% reductions by 2020 (based on 1990 levels) and 50-80% reductions by 2050.

Ensure reductions in the short as well as longer term, given the need to limit total emission loads.

Design credible mechanisms to deliver change – clarity over domestic action in response to a deal will support the integrity of a position. For the EU this means clarity over the path to 30% emission reductions and a commitment to domestic action.

Reform the flexible mechanisms (JI and CDM) to ensure that any offsetting of emission reductions actually delivers additional reductions.

Commit to workable future mechanisms on 'Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation' (REDD), defining a robust but non-onerous system to reward developing nations for emissions averted – up to 17% of global GHG emissions are attributed to these processes.

Acceptability

Delivering comparable commitments from industrialised countries:

Set binding emission targets for industrialised countries, including clarity over base years, interim targets and final outcomes. Effort post 2012 should be additional to that already delivered.

Set targets for the strongest emerging economies i.e. BRICs, recognising that there are efficiencies possible; growth in emissions may be permitted but must be below business as usual levels to promote low carbon development.

Design a rigorous and equitable formula for distribution of effort to deliver emission reductions globally. All countries will not receive the same target but the level of effort must be comparable.

Equity

A fair and credible agreement for developing nations:

Any deal must ensure that developing nations can continue to grow with associated increases in emissions, but increases should be capped below business as usual levels to promote low carbon development.

Assist the most vulnerable by committing new, additional and reliable funding sources for developing nations, supporting adaptation and the transition to a low carbon development path.

Ensure clarity over the mechanisms and funders for new mitigation and adaptation assistance.

INSTITUTE FOR EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

IEEP is an independent not for profit institute dedicated to advancing an environmentally sustainable Europe.

IEEP's diverse research team are expert in climate policy, focusing both on mitigation and adaptation challenges. Since 2003 IEEP has worked for the European Parliament offering independent support to MEPs sitting on the ENVI Committee. In addition IEEP conducts independent research into Europe's efforts to promote climate action, helping to define future policy and best practice approaches to implementation.

Visit www.ieep.eu/briefingsonclimate for:

- Briefing materials translated into Bulgarian, Czech, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Romanian and Spanish.
- A full bibliography, lists of the key organisations engaged in the development of EU climate policy and further analysis including a timetable for EU and international action on climate between 2009 and 2014.

London Office
15 Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9BU, UK
+44 (0)20 7799 2244

Brussels Office
Quai au Foin, 55 / Hooikaai 55
1000 Brussels, Belgium
+32 (0) 2738 7482

Institute for European
Environmental Policy, London
is a Company Limited by
Guarantee No. 2458951
Charity No. 802956

Registered in Belgium
No. 475 922 382

VAT Reg No. GB 648 7001 33

IEEP is an independent
non-profit research institute

Design: Aloof Design

Printed with vegetable
based inks on FSC 100%
recycled paper.