



Climate Action Network Europe briefing

Environment Council Conclusions on Paris COP21 Climate Summit (September 18 2015)

URGENCY AND NEED FOR GLOBAL ACTION

- **The 2-4°C degrees warmer world**, where the current emissions trajectories are taking us, will result in drastic impacts to our societies' basic support systems such as food production, water resources and ecosystems. Advanced climate change results in large draughts, water and food scarcity, an increase in refugees, wars, terrorism and collapses of ecosystems, countries and economies.
- **The world's governments need to agree on a global emissions phase-out goal in Paris to operationalise the 2°C limit.** In order to direct the world towards a below 1.5°C and 2°C pathway the EU should support a global goal to phase-out fossil fuel emissions and phase-in 100% renewables globally by 2050. An international agreement on a 2050 global phase-out goal would provide a clear direction of travel while also cementing action from others. This provides investor certainty to drive investment clean infrastructure and align broad financial flows to be consistent with staying below 1.5°C and 2°C. An appropriate long-term goal also provides a level playing field for policymakers, proving that the world is taking action jointly as well and building confidence for countries to go further and faster in reducing emissions.
- **The cumulative carbon budget determines global warming.** In order to be consistent with the 2°C target, it is paramount to consider the cumulative emissions budget - the total amount of tonnes of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere. The IPCC's 5th Assessment Reports provides numbers for different global carbon budgets allowing for different levels of warming. A 2050 decarbonisation target must always be considered together with annual cumulative carbon budgets. A two in three probability of holding warming below 2°C will require a budget that limits future carbon dioxide emissions to about 900 billion tons, roughly 20 times annual emissions in 2014.
- **All countries should produce zero emission development strategies that are both visionary and pragmatic, and outline the pathway to phasing-out emissions by 2050.** For poorer countries this should be enabled through appropriate financial and technical support and should be part of the country's overall development planning. Establishing emission pathways consistent with staying below 1.5°C or 2°C requires the steady transformation of economies away from a high carbon economic growth model. Such plans would provide a visionary roadmap and outline a pathway to a zero-carbon and climate resilient economy. The plans would also build upon and be integrated into existing national development plans or planning processes in many countries. The zero emission strategies should detail an emissions reduction trajectory through 2020, 2025 2030, and 2040 consistent with the IPCC's defined carbon budgets, respecting the principles of CBDRRC. Such policies and measures should include early and urgent domestic action to avoid lock-in of carbon intensive investments and infrastructure and short and medium term energy efficiency and renewable energy targets. This framework would allow countries to think beyond the commitment periods and to think strategically to avoid sub-optimal emissions reduction pathways and lock-in of unsuitable infrastructure. All solutions such community owned renewable energy and effective energy efficiency measures exist, the missing element is the political will to implement them at sufficient scale.



INTENDED NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (INDCs)

- **The current EU 40% reduction target by 2030 falls far from representing the EU's fair share of the global effort for keeping warming below 2°C, let alone 1,5°C.** To maintain its commitment to prevent dangerous climate change, the EU should elaborate before Paris what the "at least" part of the EU 2030 commitment looks. The EU was among the very first countries to submit its INDC to the UNFCCC. Unfortunately in its current form, the EU's INDC is not quantifiable, and leaves many questions about the EU's real reductions for post-2020 period. In order to be able to quantify the aggregate adequacy of INDCs ahead of Paris, the EU needs to provide further details about its INDC, including the EU's intended carbon budgets for 2025 and 2030 with and without LULUCF. The EU must provide answers to these questions ahead of Paris, at the very latest by the October INDC conference the EU is organising in Morocco.

MITIGATION

- **Increasing the EU 2030 targets.** The EU's domestic 2030 targets and policies need to be sufficient to drive transformational change in the EU's energy sector as well as meeting the EU's commitment to avoid dangerous climate change. In order to do that the EU needs to reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55%, increase the share of renewable energy to at least 45%, and reduce projected energy consumption by at least 40%.
- **International shipping and aviation** now account for around 5% of global CO₂ emissions, and emissions anticipated have massive growth rates (50-250% by 2050 for shipping, and 270% for aviation). As these sectors' emissions are not counted under national inventories, the Paris protocol must contain an explicit reference requiring the ICAO and the IMO to act promptly and introduce targets and measures to reduce emissions from these sectors that are in-line with the IPCC's carbon budget compatible of staying below 2°C. Measures developed by the ICAO and the IMO should set aside a share of proceeds for adaptation and loss and damage.
- **The best tool to regularly increase ambition is the implementation of five year commitment periods, mandated as an integral part of the Paris protocol.** As current INDCs submitted to date will not keep average global temperature rise below 2°C, a credible 'dynamic five-yearly mitigation ambition mechanism' applicable to all countries' commitments is essential for the Paris protocol to be able to fulfil the 2°C commitment countries have committed to at the UNFCCC. The best tool for regular increasing of ambition is implementation of five year commitment periods. Short commitment periods help prevent locking into a low level of ambition, they increase political accountability, and serve as a tool for later revising targets to match scientific adequacy.
- **For a robust forward regime, all countries' commitments must have the same end date, and every party must negotiate each new target at the same time.** If countries intend to move forward at different paces, comparability, as well as the political pressure created by successive negotiating rounds within the UNFCCC process, will be lost. Without synchronised target setting, any review in the Paris protocol will be an ineffective way to increase ambition – as the experience of previous reviews in the UNFCCC shows. Five year cycles (as currently supported by the EU) that are not synchronised with five year target-lengths offer no assurance of increasing ambition to get the world on track to meet the below 2°C obligation that the EU has championed internationally. This could result in a weak review which fails to increase ambition to prevent catastrophic climate change.



- **Many of the EU's potential allies such as the Small Island States are calling for five-year commitment periods** which can better take into account the latest science in a strong review with IPCC involvement. If the EU aligns with this approach, this will prevent major and emerging emitters (such as Australia, Japan, Canada, China) locking-in unambitious targets 15 years in advance, where they are unable to account for future technological advances and falling costs. For domestic political reasons, the US INDC submitted to the UNFCCC also has 2025 as an end date; if the EU provides its support for five-year targets and submits its projected 2025 level this provides an opportunity to get the US to support the EU's priorities.
- **Revision of targets must start swiftly after Paris.** The INDCs submitted so far give very clear indication that the reduction targets agreed in Paris will not add up to the adequacy required for limiting warming below 1.5°C or 2°C. Therefore the upward revision process should start immediately after and be finalised before 2019, in order for countries to be able to implement more ambitious new commitments for the period of 2021-2025. The following revision should take place again soon after and be finalised by 2024 to be implemented for the commitment period of 2026-2030.

USE OF MARKETS

- **The use of market mechanisms require that they fulfil high environmental sustainability standards.** Parties that have indicated an intention to use market mechanisms in their INDC must adhere to the following quality principles, which should be in the Paris protocol and the details of the implementation of which will need to be elaborated in future COP decisions. The principles include: standards that deliver real, additional, internationally verifiable, permanent emissions reductions, that avoid any double counting off effort (including for mitigation and finance), result in a net mitigation benefit and which contribute to the highest standards of sustainable development. Only countries with commitments expressed as carbon budget should be allowed to use markets for compliance.

ADAPTATION

- **Support developing countries to increase action on adaptation.** Even with the existing and future measures to mitigate climate change, the adaptation needs of all countries will continue to grow. The EU should advocate for a global adaptation goal which explicitly links emerging mitigation trajectories to levels of adaptation action. In recognition of a core demand from potential allies, the EU should also highlight that adaptation is an iterative process that will need to respond to emerging climate realities technological change and national priorities.
- **To operationalise adaptation,** the EU should support a specific goal to publicly finance adaptation actions and push for more global efforts to close the adaptation finance gap in poorer countries. At present, the majority of support is directed to mitigation actions, neglecting the adaptation needs of many vulnerable countries. An even balance of 50% of support is necessary to help guarantee further support for adaptation plans and actions.
- **Loss and damage beyond adaptation.** Surface air temperatures and sea levels are projected to continue rising for another century or more even after global greenhouse gases have been stabilised, resulting further impacts on people and ecosystems for decades if not centuries to come. Parts of the world, such as the small developing island nations that have not contributed to climate change, are already experiencing permanent loss of habitat and livelihoods. Paris protocol must address the open questions on loss and damage and acknowledge that the



upcoming review of Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage results in concrete solutions.

FINANCE

- **Pre-2020 climate finance.** The adoption of a climate finance roadmap towards the 100 billion US dollar by 2020 target will be essential achieving an agreement in Paris. The climate finance roadmap must demonstrate a credible plan to scale up funding between now and 2020, and not just an accounting exercise for existing financial flows.
- **Post-2020 climate finance.** The Paris protocol needs to guarantee the provision of consistent, predictable and adequate climate finance post-2020. The protocol should therefore include a commitment to periodically set collective and dedicated targets for the provision of new and additional finance with separate targets for mitigation and adaptation. This would allow for developing countries to further identify their specific needs and action plans throughout the cycles of support.
- **Innovative sources of finance.** The current review of the EU ETS provides a key opportunity to showcase the EU leadership on climate finance, committing to direct a portion of the revenues from auctioning directly to the Green Climate Fund. Setting up an EU ETS International Climate Action Reserve would give a clear signal to developing countries in Paris that the EU is committed to continue to provide additional finance for climate needs in predictable and transparent ways. The Financial Transaction Tax should be operationalised as soon as possible, committing at least half of all funds collected to international climate action. Fuel levies on international transport should be advanced, using the Paris protocol as an impetus for progress in the ICAO and IMO, and an extraction levy for the operations of the fossil fuel industry should be further explored.
- **Shifting the trillions and phasing out fossil fuel subsidies.** Although, many financial flows and investments fall outside of the remit of the UNFCCC, there is growing recognition that such flows both impact and are impacted by climate change. It is time to make a concrete link between our financial investments and the climate crisis. The Paris protocol should include a commitment by all Parties to speedily shift all public financial flows towards zero-carbon and climate resilient development. In line with this the EU should work to ensure that all of our international finance is consistent with the 1.5°C and 2°C pathways, and is resilient to the impacts of climate change we cannot avoid. The Paris protocol should also call on governments and public financial institutions to immediately phase out fossil fuel subsidies and ensure that a fair amount of tax is placed on the production and consumption of fossil fuels.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- **The internationally legally binding protocol now under negotiation must include common and accurate accounting, MRV, strong compliance and enforcement, all respecting the principles of equity, including CBDRRRC.** It should build on, develop and improve the rules already agreed under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. In order to avoid the repetition of a gap between the required efforts and how much countries seem willing to engage in the post-2020 era, it is necessary to give countries more explicit and quantitative guidance. This guidance should be based on the Convention's equity principles, regarding a fair allocation of both mitigation action as well as the provision of financial and technological support.



OTHER ISSUES

- **Respecting human rights.** It is well recognised—by the UN Human Rights Council and others—that climate change and certain actions being taken to address climate change interfere with the enjoyment of human rights protected under international law. For this reason, in 2010, the Parties to the UNFCCC agreed that “Parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect human rights.” As the EU plays an important role in the UNFCCC process, it is therefore important that the EU firmly supports a human rights based approach in the Paris climate treaty that requires that all Parties shall, in all climate change related actions, respect, protect, promote, and fulfil human rights for all, including the rights of indigenous peoples; ensure gender equality and full and effective and gender-responsive participation; ensure food security and the protection and resilience of natural ecosystems; and ensure a just transition of the workforce that creates decent work and quality jobs.

ENHANCING GLOBAL PRE-2020 MITIGATION AMBITION

- **The next 5 to 10 years are critical in bringing down global emissions and transforming our economies.** Current global annual CO₂ emissions are approximately 36 Gt CO₂ and consuming the remaining 900 Gt CO₂ carbon budget, as defined by the IPCC, at an alarming rate. Unless global annual emissions are brought drastically down well before 2020, staying below the 2°C or 1.5°C becomes close to impossible.
- **UNFCCC ADP workstream 2 - increasing action now.** Workstream 2 is central to ensuring that the window to keep warming below 1.5°C and 2°C will not be closed. This requires action by all, and requires focusing on action that has the best potential to bring down emissions fast. Action in Workstream 2 includes countries committing to deeper reductions by 2020, mobilising finance to enhance action in developing countries, maintaining existing forests and enhancing sinks. Near term action can be aided by encouraging action from non-state actors, regions, cities and businesses.
- **There are several ways the EU can initiate action now.** The EU’s 20% target for 2020 has been achieved already, almost eight years in advance, and the EU is on a pathway close to 30% domestic reductions by 2020. In recognition of this reality and to build credibility for revising targets upwards, the EU should commit to a higher target for 2020 in Paris and accelerate policies and implementation on energy efficiency, renewable energy and on pollution standards. The EU’s inappropriately weak level of ambition in the 2020 target has led to large surpluses accumulating in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme which can be banked forward to dilute effort in the 2030 package. These surpluses have been further exacerbated by the financial crisis and by poorly regulated offsets entering the scheme.

OTHER PROCESSES

- **There are clear synergies between the UNFCCC and SDGs.** It is impossible to achieve sustainable development without developing in a climate-resilient and low carbon manner. Similarly, climate change cannot be tackled unless humankind chooses to develop sustainably. Climate change already threatens some of the development advances that have been made. The risks continue to rise from temperature increases larger than those already observed. These include the risks of opening feedback loops in the climate system that pose the risk of runaway climate change. Following agreement in the SDG and climate talks, governments will need to implement



whatever they have signed up to. It makes sense that they do so in an integrated and strategic manner. In 2010, Parties to the UNFCCC agreed that developed countries “should” and developing countries “should be encouraged” to develop low carbon development strategies, and while there has been some progress, this idea has not been universally implemented.

- **Non-CO2 emissions with very high global warming potential such as hydrofluorocarbons, HFCs, should be immediately mitigated through international efforts.** The Montreal Protocol is making good progress towards establishing a contact group to begin formal negotiations for an amendment to phase-down the production and consumption of HFCs. The EU should be at the forefront of the Montreal Protocol negotiations towards an ambitious global agreement on HFCs in Dubai in November at the Meeting of Parties. An amendment to the Montreal Protocol to phase-down the production and consumption of HFCs can deliver 100 billion tonnes CO₂e emission reductions by 2050, a very important mitigation contribution to the current efforts to curb global climate change. Accounting and reporting of HFC emissions should be maintained under the UNFCCC. Agreeing to a global phase-down of consumption and production of HFCs would build leadership and trust among parties and pave the way for an ambitious outcome in Paris in December.