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UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE TALKS IN POZNAN, POLAND, 1 – 12 DECEMBER 2008

WHAT ARE THE TALKS ABOUT?

The climate talks in Poznan are an important milestone towards a vital new international climate deal, due to be agreed in December 2009 in Copenhagen. The Copenhagen agreement will set out how to scale up global efforts to reduce greenhouse gases up to and after 2012 - when the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol ends.

WHAT WILL BE DISCUSSED?

Last year at the UN climate talks in Indonesia a process towards a new agreement was launched. This process - the 'Bali Roadmap' - sets out the issues that must be decided by December 2009. The five broad areas are:

- **Shared vision:** setting a long-term global goal for emissions reductions.
- **Mitigation:** how greenhouse gas emissions will be cut, who needs to do what, and by when?
- **Adaptation:** how will richer countries support poorer countries to cope with the storms, droughts, floods and famine caused by climate change?
- **Technology:** how will we enable all countries to access existing green technology and support development of clean technologies, especially in developing countries?
- **Finance:** will developed countries provide financial resources for adaptation and mitigation in developing countries and how will these funds will be managed?

A parallel discussion alongside the 'Bali Roadmap' will be a review to strengthen the Kyoto Protocol, in light of the latest science.

WHAT DECISIONS WILL BE MADE?

- **BALI ROADMAP**
The final agreement will be reached in Copenhagen 2009, but these talks in Poznan will crucially shape the Copenhagen deal. Specific progress in the areas of finance and forests is expected at the Poznan talks.
- **KYOTO PROTOCOL REVIEW**
Decisions will be taken in Poznan about whether offsetting schemes are working; whether to tax all of the Kyoto carbon trading mechanisms to provide funds for adaptation in developing countries; and how to reduce carbon emissions from specific economic sectors, such as aviation and shipping.

WHAT WOULD FRIENDS OF THE EARTH LIKE TO SEE FROM THE TALKS?

Friends of the Earth will consider the Poznan climate talks a success if:

1. **Industrialised countries commit to deep cuts in emissions of at least 40 per cent by 2020 – made at home by using green energy and cutting energy demand - not through buying credits from abroad**

- The latest climate science says rich countries need to cut our greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40 percent by 2020 based on 1990 levels, and this needs to be achieved domestically
- Reports by WWF and International Rivers show that current carbon offsetting schemes like the Clean Development Mechanism distract from real cuts in emissions – and can even lead to an increase in global emissions.
- China's carbon emissions per person are around one fifth of a US citizen - any agreement to reduce emissions globally must take these inequalities into account, ensuring those countries responsible for climate change take the lead in solving it.

2. Industrialised countries invest at least 200 billion dollars a year to support poorer countries to develop low carbon economies, and help them cope with the storms, droughts, famine and floods caused by climate change

- An average person in Africa emits less than 1 tonne of carbon a year – one twentieth of an American's emissions.
- Industrialised countries have so far failed to fulfil even existing obligations to finance climate change actions in developing countries.
- Sorting out the issue of finance in Poznan will be key to getting a strong global deal in Copenhagen. Developing countries will not commit to action to reduce their emissions until developed countries provide significant financial and technical support. If this doesn't progress in Poznan, the talks could remain deadlocked - making it extremely difficult to reach agreement in Copenhagen next year.
- Leading economists including Sir Nicholas Stern argue that investment of this scale is worth it - investing up to two percent of global GDP per year is required to avoid the worst effects of climate change and failure to do so will have much higher costs.
- Some countries including the US, UK and Japan are pushing for the World Bank to take control of international climate financing, which could create conflicts of interest as it is the largest multilateral lender for fossil fuel projects. Friends of the Earth wants climate funds to be democratically managed through the United Nations' climate change convention: industrialised countries would pay into a central pot and funds would be administered to developing countries according to need. The recent financial meltdown has highlighted the need for fully accountable, regulated financial institutions.

3. A proposal to include forests in carbon markets is rejected – as it will allow rich countries to buy chunks of forest while still pumping out carbon emissions

- The UK Government is supporting a scheme - Reducing Emissions from Deforestation in Developing countries (REDD) - that would allow industrialised countries to offset their emissions by purchasing forest carbon credits from developing countries.
- The latest analysis by the Tyndall Centre shows that we won't cut emissions fast enough if we allow rich countries to offset their emissions by buying forests – we need to keep forests standing and reduce emissions from industry at the same time.
- Deforestation could be prevented instead through the funding of community-based forestry projects that support the land rights of forest communities. Grassroots movements support this solution instead of including forests in carbon markets.
- Deforestation is responsible for 18 per cent of carbon emissions annually
- 1.6 billion people rely on forests, including 60 million indigenous people who are entirely dependent upon forests for their livelihoods, food, medicines and building materials.

Including forests in carbon markets is likely to trigger a land grab - leaving these communities struggling to survive.

- Because the proposal defines plantations as forests, REDD funding could be used to replace forests with large monoculture plantations. Plantations only store 20 per cent of the carbon of intact forests, so this would reduce REDD's impact on cutting carbon emissions. And replacing forests with plantations can have devastating social and economic impacts on forest-communities.

WHERE DO KEY COUNTRIES STAND ON THESE ISSUES?

UNITED KINGDOM

Targets: The UK has just passed the world's first Climate Change Law as a result of Friends of the Earth's Big Ask campaign, supported by 200,000 people. The law commits the Government to cutting emissions by 80 per cent by 2050 (based on 1990 levels). On 1 December the UK climate change committee will make a recommendation about how the UK gets to this target - what the annual reduction, or carbon budget – should be. The UK is sticking to the EU line to commit to a 20 per cent cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 – or 30 per cent in the context of an international deal.

Finance: The UK wants the World Bank to control international climate financing. The UK has committed to a one-off payment of £800 million for adaptation funding through the World Bank instead of the UN's adaptation fund. Much of this money would be loans rather than grants.

Forests: The UK is a strong supporter of proposals to put forests in the carbon market. The UK government hopes to offset a significant amount of its domestic emissions reductions commitment through buying overseas forest credits.

EUROPEAN UNION

Targets: The European Union has agreed to cut its emissions by 20 per cent by 2020 – or by 30 per cent in the context of an international deal.

In parallel to the UN climate talks this month, the EU is deciding on its "Energy Package" – the biggest legislative process on climate change anywhere in the world to date. It will be discussed on 4-5 December by Ministers in Brussels and by Heads of State on 11-12 December, with an EU Parliament vote likely on 17 December. The 'Energy Package' will lay down the rules for how EU member states will cooperate to achieve the overall target of 20 per cent cuts by 2020. The EU could also increase its 2020 target for cutting emissions through the Energy Package negotiations.

Finance: The EU has yet to agree a position on financing adaptation and mitigation in developing countries. As part of its 'Energy Package', the EU is discussing a proposal to ring fence proceeds from the auctioning of emissions allowances under the EU's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), to provide large scale funding for international climate financing. The UK is currently blocking this.

Forests: The EU does not have a common position on including forests in carbon markets.

UNITED STATES:

Targets: New President-elect Obama won't attend the talks, but his administration is already sending strong signals that US climate policy will be more progressive. Obama supports a long-term 80 per cent cut in emissions by 2050, but has indicated much less ambitious short-term targets - only signalling a return to 1990 levels by 2020.

Finance: The US shares the UK's view that new financial mechanisms are managed by World Bank, instead of the UN climate change convention. The US also wants the private sector to undertake the majority of global climate financing.

Forests: The US supports the proposal to include forests in carbon markets.

G77 + CHINA (NEGOTIATING BLOC OF MORE THAN 130 DEVELOPING COUNTRIES):

Targets: Developing countries insist that industrialised countries should lead by delivering much more ambitious reductions before they are expected to do the same. Current agreements require developing countries to take mitigation 'actions', rather than sign up to binding commitments.

In the case of big developing countries like China and India, both countries have progressive domestic climate change policies – India already generates a higher percentage of its electricity from clean renewables than the UK (9 per cent compared to 6 per cent), while 25 per cent of China's electricity capacity in the past 5 years has come from renewable sources, and two thirds of the world's solar hot water heaters are in Chinese homes.

Finance: The G77 + China has put forward detailed proposals on finance: for industrialised countries to commit to 0.5 – 1 per cent of GDP to finance mitigation and adaptation in developing countries, to be governed under the UN climate convention. The G77 + China has stated that it will not count World Bank funds towards these financial commitments.

Forests: Countries within the G77 + China bloc have different positions on forests. The Coalition of Rainforest Nations led by Papua New Guinea wants forests to be included in carbon markets, while others including Brazil want a fund-based mechanism through the UN.

POLAND

Poland relies on coal for 90 per cent of its energy. It has recently demanded that its industries are exempt from buying emissions allowances during discussions on the EU Energy Package. This issue is expected to be resolved when Heads of States meet in Brussels on 11-12 December.

ENDS