

Brussels, 12 October 2009

## The Copenhagen climate agreement: EU positions and state of play

International negotiations were launched in December 2007 to draw up a United Nations agreement on tackling climate change for the period after 2012, when key provisions of the Kyoto Protocol will expire. The negotiations are due to be concluded at the Copenhagen climate conference on 7-18 December 2009. Three negotiating sessions at official level have been held so far this year, all in Bonn, Germany. The second last preparatory sessions for Copenhagen has taken place in Bangkok from 28 September to 9 October and the last one will be held in Barcelona from 2 to 6 November.

### EU position

The EU is pressing for an ambitious and comprehensive agreement that will prevent global warming from reaching the dangerous levels – more than 2°C above the pre-industrial temperature – that are projected by the scientific community if the world continues with business as usual.

Scientific evidence shows that, to put global emissions on a trajectory that is compatible with respecting this temperature ceiling, industrialised countries need to cut their greenhouse gas emissions to 25-40% below 1990 levels by 2020 while developing countries should limit their rapid emissions growth to around 15-30% below projected business as usual levels in 2020. Global emissions need to peak before 2020 and then be cut by at least 50% of 1990 levels by 2050.

The EU has shown leadership by committing unconditionally to cut its emissions to at least 20% below 1990 levels by 2020 and is implementing the climate and energy package (see [IP/09/628](#)) as well as a programme of energy efficiency measures to achieve this. Moreover, it has committed to scale up its emission cut to 30% on condition that other industrialised countries agree to make comparable reductions and economically more advanced developing countries contribute adequately to a global deal.

However, emission targets put forward by industrialised countries so far add up to a reduction of only 9-16.5% below 1990 levels by 2020 (see Annex), while the big emerging economies have offered little in terms of concrete action to control their emissions.

On 10 September the Commission proposed a global blueprint for increasing international finance to help developing countries mitigate their emissions and adapt to climate change (see [IP/09/1297](#)). This gives a basis for the European Council to take an EU position on financing at the end of October.

## **State of play**

Despite consensus at the U.N. climate change conference in Poznań, Poland, last December that the international negotiations should be shifted into higher gear, progress at the three negotiating sessions this year has been slow.

The negotiations are being conducted on two parallel 'tracks'. On one track the 192 Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which include the U.S., are discussing long-term cooperative action to combat climate change. On the other track the 184 Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, which do not include the U.S., are discussing post-2012 emission reduction commitments for industrialised countries.

This division of the negotiations into two tracks is a complicating factor and it would be desirable for the tracks to be merged sooner rather than later to prepare the way for a single agreement in Copenhagen. Indeed, there are already clear signs of the Convention track emerging as the main focus, while negotiations under the Kyoto track are practically stalemated. The EU wants to ensure, however, that all of the substance of the Kyoto track discussions - on further emission reductions by industrialised countries and on other key issues, such as reform of the international carbon market and emission accounting rules for the forestry sector - is kept on the table as the two tracks come together.

## **Bangkok meeting**

The informal negotiating session held in Bonn in August finished with a negotiating text under the Convention track of more than 250 pages, poorly structured and full of brackets. At the last meeting in Bangkok, Parties achieved a streamlining, rationalisation and restructuring of large parts of the negotiating text and have increased understanding of various proposals on the table. However, negotiations have not led to any major substantive compromises nor convergence of views. Looking beyond Bangkok, the amount of substantive technical and political work in the 8 weeks ahead of the start of the Copenhagen conference presents a formidable political challenge.

### **For the EU the essential elements are:**

- Binding emission reductions by all industrialised countries based on comparable efforts;
- Appropriate action by developing countries to limit emissions;
- A framework for action on adaptation to climate change;
- Action to reduce deforestation and forest degradation and promote sustainable forest management in tropical regions;
- Updated accounting rules for emissions from land-use, land-use change and forestry;
- An expanded international carbon market to generate financial support for developing countries and promote cost-effective emission cuts;
- Provision of international public finance to developing countries to supplement financial flows from the carbon market and domestic investment;
- A comprehensive package on technology cooperation and funding to accelerate development of a low-carbon global economy.

The EU wants the Copenhagen agreement to be a single legally binding instrument that builds on and takes forward the Kyoto Protocol. The agreement needs to be ratified by governments in time for it to enter force on 1 January 2013. Needless to say, the EU will honor all its commitments and obligations under Kyoto, independently of the outcome of Copenhagen.

## **The importance of Copenhagen**

The window of opportunity to prevent global warming from reaching dangerous levels of 2°C or more above the pre-industrial temperature, which could trigger irreversible and catastrophic changes in the global environment, is closing fast. The average global temperature is already almost 0.8°C higher than in pre-industrial times and some research indicates that past and present emissions may have already made a further rise of as much as 1°C inevitable.

This means that Copenhagen is almost certainly the last chance to get global emissions onto a progressively lower-carbon track that can prevent climate change from reaching 2°C or more. It is 12 years since the Kyoto Protocol was agreed, so Copenhagen is a rare opportunity for global action. With world emissions still rising steadily, waiting another decade or more to act will be too late to prevent dangerous climate change.

### **Further information:**

DG Environment pages on future climate action

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/future\\_action.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/future_action.htm)

## Pledges of Annex I countries as of 7 September 2009

	emissions in t CO <sub>2</sub> eq		low end		high end	
	1990	2005	rel 1990	rel 2005	rel 1990	rel 2005
Australia	416155	529524	13%	-11%	-11%	-30%
Belarus	127361	75594	-5%	60%	-10%	52%
Canada	592281	734491	-3%	-20%	-3%	-20%
Croatia	32527	30561	-20%	-15%	-30%	-25%
<b>EU 27</b>	<b>5572021</b>	<b>5153699</b>	<b>-20%</b>	<b>-14%</b>	<b>-30%</b>	<b>-24%</b>
Iceland	3409	3709	-15%	-22%	-15%	-22%
Japan	1272056	1358065	-9%	-15%	-25%	-30%
New Zealand	61948	77354	-10%	-28%	-20%	-28%
Norway	49698	53800	-30%	-35%	-30%	-35%
Russian Federation	3326404	2123359	-10%	41%	-15%	33%
Switzerland	52800	53790	-20%	-21%	-30%	-31%
Turkey	170059	312420	84%	0%	84%	0%
Ukraine	922013	425666	-20%	73%	-20%	73%
United States	6135243	7106638	0%	-14%	-7%	-20%
Annex I total	18734206	18038941	<b>-9%</b>	-5%	<b>-16.5%</b>	-13%

**Shaded countries did not make formal pledges!** The following assumptions are made for illustration:

**Croatia:** Targets similar to the EU27 are assumed

**Turkey:** For both the low and the high end, a return of emissions to 2005 levels by 2020 is assumed.

**United States:** The low end reflects objective mentioned by President Obama, the high end taken from the indicative economy-wide reduction target as contained in the Waxman/Markey bill endorsed by the House of Representatives on 26 June 2009. Depending on the further development of that bill in the Senate the implied reductions compared to 1990 could be higher or lower than indicated.

**Pledges differ in scope and conditionality.** The following qualifications apply:

**Australia:** High end is conditional on CPH agreement (450ppm, comparable efforts), including LULUCF and carbon market use (data in the table does not include LULUCF)

**Canada:** Target relates to **domestic** emission reductions only, unconditional to CPH agreement, 2006 reference year

**EU:** High end is conditional on CPH agreement (comparable Annex I efforts, adequate DC contributions)

**Japan:** High end is recent announcement of new Japanese Government and conditional on CPH agreement

**New Zealand:** Target conditional on CPH agreement (450ppm, comparable efforts), including LULUCF and carbon market use

**Russian Federation:** Using range indicated by President Medvedev on 19 June 2009, unconditional to CPH agreement