

eco



Outrageous Behaviour

Open letter to the Japanese delegation

To the Japanese delegation at COP7
cc: Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi, Minister of the Environment, Japan

November 2, 2001

Dear Members,

We, the Japanese environmental NGOs present at COP7, are seriously concerned about the Japanese delegation's interventions made at the mechanisms negotiating group on November 1, asking for deletion of the text of the Bonn Agreement on the eligibility requirement accepting the agreement on procedures and mechanisms on compliance under the Kyoto Protocol.

This is a clear attempt to rewrite the Bonn Agreement finalised by ministers in July and is against the statement made by the Japanese government at the plenary that it would not renegotiate the Bonn Agreement.

Furthermore, we are disturbed that the Japanese delegation is trying to weaken the Bonn Agreement together with Russia, Australia and Canada.

For example, in the compliance negotiating group, the Japanese delegation together with Russia, Australia, and Canada proposed a text that only "recommends" to adopt instead of adopting procedures and mechanisms relating to compliance as was originally agreed in Bonn.

It has also asked for deletion of the compliance action plan relating to non-compliance to Articles 5 and 7.

In addition, the Japanese delegation supported the Australian proposal to deny the possibility of a Party bringing questions of implementation with respect to another country, and Russia's negative approach of framing everything as ratification matters.

Such actions would only weaken the Bonn Agreement and be obstructive to making progress in the negotiations towards a final deal.

At COP7, the adoption of the legal text of the Bonn Agreement is expected. Rewriting what was agreed under the Bonn Agreement would jeopardise the entire process.

Bringing the Kyoto Protocol into force by 2002 is of utmost importance to prevent global warming. To that effect, the adoption of the legal text at COP7 is crucial.

We strongly request the Japanese delegation to keep its government's word and come to an agreement on the legal text without reopening the landmark agreement made in Bonn.

Yours sincerely,
Kiko Network

World Wide Fund for Nature, Japan
Citizens' Alliance for Saving the Atmosphere and the Earth
Friends of the Earth, Japan

Oh, those Russians!

Some members of the Russian delegation have been making controversial statements here on many issues. Yet, it is obvious they are not taking directives from Moscow (see Eco, Issue No. 3).

So who is calling the shots? Investigations revealed interesting details relevant to the progress of negotiations next week when ministers show up. On paper, Russia has three deputy heads of delegation – but none is here yet. Head of delegation, vice prime minister, Victor Khristenko, is unlikely to travel to Marrakesh as informed by insiders.

The three deputies are well-known: A Bedritsky, head of the Hydrometeorological Service (known as the "Weatherman"), M Tsikanov, deputy minister of Economic Development and Trade, and Y Fedotov, head of department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The latter two, while far from being "green", are at least supportive of the Kyoto Protocol – in stark contrast to the Weatherman.

What is bizarre is that Fedotov actually travelled to Marrakesh last Tuesday, gave an interview to ITAR TASS and left a few hours later. Despite the unusual travel plan, Fedotov said useful things: "Russia will ratify the protocol if mechanisms of their implementation meet national interests...(and) it is necessary to create a judicial framework with consideration for a pragmatic approach based on economic possibilities".

It was a shame he had to leave. Or was he scared off by O Shamanov, the Russian delegate negotiating compliance? Shamanov has been hyperactive in attempting to dilute the compliance system.

The absence of a head and deputies has cast doubts on whether his hyperactive behaviour

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The removal unit (RMU) is here

After years of talking about it, delegates are going to begin negotiations on Article 7.4. Three major new texts were tabled, just in time, on this crucial article that pulls the various pieces of the Protocol together and hopefully makes sense of them.

Our initial reactions to some of their key elements are as follows.

Firstly, we embrace a new unit in the Kyoto discussions – the “removal unit” (RMU). We find this a helpful addition to the discussion and urge Parties to immediately introduce it to their vocabulary and hence the decision and annex.

One helpful concept is to fix the assigned amount at the beginning of the commitment period as the G77&China have proposed. This will provide a clearer picture of how countries use the mix-and-match options to achieve compliance. It could avoid any confusion over the setting of targets for the second commitment period.

With regard to the various proposals on issuance and cancellation of Article 3.3 and 3.4 units, we support waiting until the end of the commitment period to simultaneously issue and cancel RMUs. This process would be cleaner and more transparent than other methods. Both the EU and G77&China include this in their proposals. In contrast, the Umbrella Group proposes issuing and cancelling credits whenever they like throughout the commitment period.

The point of issuance is also the time to implement the caps on 3.3, 3.4 and 6. This would prevent Parties issuing units in excess of

their sinks limits and transferring them to other parties; in effect circumventing caps set in the Bonn Agreement. While all three proposals operationalise caps at the point of issuance (although the Umbrella Group seems to have forgotten the cap on Article 6 activities), the EU places them in a comprehensible package in one paragraph. The cap on CDM is in the transfer and acquisition section – noting that “each” party can use its sinks CER limit – but it is unclear whether Parties can transfer un-used allowance between themselves.

Last of the major issues to contend with is carry-over, formally known as banking. While the G77&China proposal prohibits the banks of any type of unit, we wanted to focus on the banking of RMUs and CDM sinks credits. The principles in the LULUCF section in the Bonn Agreement states “there shall be no transfer of commitments to a future commitment period”. This implies RMUs and sinks CERs should not be carried over.

So, no banking is not a new issue but just another element of the Bonn Agreement that needs to be operationalised in Marrakesh.

So if the necessary limits on carry over are to work, RMUs have to stay RMUs. Rules have to be included to prevent Parties recycling or laundering RMUs into units to carry over.

The challenge for negotiators today is to get from four texts to one and incorporate the best bits of all of them. Listen to the advice above and we could make that 7pm deadline after all.

– *Oh, those Russians, from front page* was based on instructions from Russia or on personal ideas. The EU and other parties are well advised to hold any concession to Russia until the real decision maker shows up.

But even if the Weatherman takes command and negotiates with ministers next week, Parties should note that the Russian parliament (Duma) is keen to take away the Hydrometeorological Service’s climate budget next year and transfer it to the Ministry of Natural Resources. Bedritsky’s personal attempt to reopen the Bonn Agreement by asking for more sinks tonnes for Russia under forest manage-

ment should not be forgotten. It was not backed by the Ministries of Energy and Economy.

Even the Russian Forest Service is heavily opposed to Bedritsky’s proposal for more sink tonnes. Its arguments are that its budget remains the same, more work is required, and sound forest and soil carbon monitoring is hardly developed. It is imperative ministers get in contact with high-level representatives in Moscow as soon as possible to discipline their representatives – if the Kyoto Protocol is to be saved. One delegate is a loose canon, no one knows how the second one will react and the third has already left.

NGO Party!

The NGO Party will take place today, from 8.00pm. It will be held at La Dorade restaurant on Moulay Lhassan street, about 200 metres from the Congress centre. All are welcome.

“Fossil of the Day” Award

The Umbrella Group was the winner of the Fossil of the Day award yesterday. The EU and Japan came in second and third respectively.

Action on aviation required

The lack of immediate and appropriate decisions on the growing impact of aviation on the atmosphere from the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) or UNFCCC is of concern to CAN and the International Coalition for Sustainable Aviation.

Parties to the Climate Convention are urged to recommend the following to ICAO, and take action within SBSTA and COP 8:

- Establish an Annex I greenhouse gas reduction target consistent with the Kyoto Protocol – at least five per cent in the first commitment period – with emissions allocated to the Parties based where the fuel is sold.
- Establish an Annex I international aviation emissions charge at COP8 and realise the full five per cent target, either through a continuation of the charge and/or the introduction of an open emission trading programme consistent with the Kyoto Protocol. This should cover all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to account for radiative forcing.
- Develop a NOx reduction target and technology standard through ICAO.

Refrain from introducing new civil supersonic aircraft as their GHG effects are several-fold higher than those of subsonic aircraft and they endanger the ozone layer to a greater extent.

Abraham

Freud may have had his faults, but he seems to be vindicated as regards the revealing nature of apparent slips of the tongue. Witness yesterday’s summary by a member of the US delegation of his government’s definition of sustainable development: “economic growth, social development and economic protection.” Indeed.

THANKS

The Climate Action Network (CAN) would like to thank Climate Network Europe, David Suzuki Foundation, Environmental Defense, FoE International, Greenpeace International, RAC-France, Swedish NGO Secretariat on Acid Rain, WWF/EPO and WWF International. ECO can be contacted at ecopaper@hotmail.com ECO website : <http://www.climatenetwork.org/eco>