 **EU: Stand and Deliver!**

Where does Connie Hedegaard, and where does the EU, really stand?

ECO has learned that in a hidden room in the parking garage of the ICC, the European Commission is now pushing the 27 member states towards an 8-year second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. What is going on? Why would the Commission so blatantly cater to corporate interests and delay action?

If it prefers an 8-year commitment period, the EU will imply a starting date no earlier than 2021 for the much needed comprehensive, legally binding agreement.

So EU, whose side are you on? Are you with those who want to delay legally binding global action to beyond 2020? What about your desired peaking year?

The vulnerable countries have rightly insisted that a 5-year commitment period is needed. The negotiating process must reflect a sense of urgency matching the climate’s fast-changing reality. ECO suggests that 2020 is an easy date to remember. But it also pushes political responsibility for hard choices far enough into the future that it will hardly matter... well, except to those millions for whom climate change, failing harvests or havoc-wreaking storms and floods are already a daily disaster. EU, whose side are you on?

Just in case it needs repeating: ECO fully supports the EU’s aim of launching negotiations on a legally binding treaty between all parties, to be concluded in 2015 at the latest. That agreement should become operational in 2018. A 5-year commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol would make the EU’s demand for a mandate more credible and send a persuasive message. And we can all hope it will allow for some others at the table to come round to understanding how highly dangerous their current low level of ambition is.

Europe must stand with the most vulnerable countries in challenging those that want to freeze mitigation for this decade. Freezing mitigation does not counter global warming, delaying ambition does not generate ambition. Last but not least, don’t repeat old mistakes by slowing down negotiations because of a lack of action by the USA. That’s an excuse the world won’t buy ever again.

**Brazil: Protect Your Forests!**

As the world tries to find ways to reduce global emissions, Brazil is on the verge of igniting a real carbon bomb. A bill to change the country’s Forest Law is about to be approved, resulting in the increase of deforestation by reducing protected areas, removing the obligations for the restoration of cleared areas, and pardoning loggers. The proposed bill will be sent to President Dilma Roussef for final consideration in coming weeks.

This proposed change will compromise the National Policy on Climate Change and the emission reduction actions announced by Brazil in 2009 during COP 15. Moreover, Brazil has used the reduction of deforestation rates to justify a position of leadership on environmental issues. Yet the mere anticipation of approval of the bill has already caused an increase of deforestation. One of the foreseeable consequences is that an area almost the size of France and Great Britain combined (790,000 km2), will lose legal protection, according to estimates presented by the Brazilian government itself.

The negative impacts to the planet’s climate — Brazil Forest Law, continued on page 2

**US: No More Denial!**

Many hoped President Obama would be a breath of fresh air on American willingness to respond to the consensus of global climate science. The science says climate change is happening due to human activity, and it’s urgent. Yesterday, the US confirmed its denial on the second proposition.

The US received a Fossil of the Day for statements about the science of climate change by Jonathan Pershing, the US Deputy Special Envoy, in his first press briefing here in Durban. Pershing is a scientist himself, and was involved with the IPCC, but he implausibly said current collective mitigation targets are sufficient to avoid going over 2 degrees. His overall message was that the US stands on its position that avoiding runaway global warming is not urgent enough to expend much political capital on commitments in the UNFCCC.

The lowered prioritization by the US for global climate commitments started with its weak mitigation target, which the US also will not agree to make legally binding. The US target of 17% below 2005 levels by 2020 is so weak that momentum to achieve it may already have been met even without comprehensive climate policies, due to the recession and rising relative cost of coal-fired electricity.

By saying the US is only really concerned with post-2020 commitments, the Obama Administration’s negotiators are saying their boss doesn’t need to deal with this issue, since Obama won’t be in office after 2016 (assuming he wins another 4 year term). In his 2008 campaign, however, President Obama promised to be a leader on global climate disruption. But expectations have now fallen so low that all we can ask is for... – US in Denial, continued on page 2
Looking to fill gaps? Eliminate fossil-fuel subsidies!

On the way to Durban, ECO was re-

capitulating some of the past articles that have
dealt with this, from full carry-over to full restric-
tions. That the full AAU surplus carries over to the
developing countries needs to be supported by
cap and trade systems in Annex I countries.

Developed countries have several choices how to deal
with this, from  full carry-over to full restric-
tions. One that Brazil is considering is, for example,
striking and poignant is from Bonn in June
2011. Title: “Developed country UNFCCC climate
finance commitments in 2013”. Artic-
tle: “text 05”. It is also striking just how many articles
there have been on the need to close the
gap. Developing countries need to stay as close as
2°C as possible. If only there was a way to kill two
birds (figuratively, of course, as we would
don’t want to really kill them with one stone – oh wait,there is it – eliminate fossil-fuel
subsidies!

The OECD recently estimated that USD
45 to $75 billion a year has been spent on
fossil fuels in its member countries in recent years.
And the IEA in its 2011 

estimated that $400 billion globally in consumption sub-
sidies. Imagine if much of that money was used to
support renewable energy, energy effi-
ciency, adaptation and other climate-related
needs so sorely needed? Capitalization
and inclusion would be a cinch.

As for the gigatonne gap, a joint report
by IEA, OECD, the World Bank and OPEC
(yes you read that right) showed that phas-
ing out subsidies for fossil-fuel consumption
alone could reduce greenhouse gas emis-
sions by 6.9% in 2020. That’s more than Kyoto” right there and is only a portion of the subsidies that need to go. (Of course, to
assuage concerns over energy access, any phasing out of consumption subsidies in
developing countries need to be supported by
cap and trade finance to support safe renew-
able forms of energy – though we also know
that consumption subsidies are socially re-
gressive with only 8% of that $400 billion reaching the poorest 20%, according to
the IEA).

So it is thrilling to see that “Removing fos-
sil fuel subsidies and/or reporting thereof”
is listed as a means to increase the level of
ambition of Parties in the “matters relating to
cap and trade” art. 36-38 text. As ECO has stressed
many times before, the current targets and
actions pledged by Parties are insufficient to
meet the promises that need to be made.

Unfortunately, it doesn’t seem likely the
gap will be completely closed in Durban.
And so it is essential that the process next
year further clarify targets and actions and
closing that gap include the consideration of
phasing out fossil fuel subsidies.

Phasing out fossil fuels from Brazil could also
contribute to efforts by developing coun-
tries to achieve a significant deviation from
developed country business as usual emissions by 2020, again in the context of climate finance to ensure
energy access for all. ECO expects to see
this linkage made explicit in COP decision
but there are many other important points
(hint, hint!) may also wish to draw
inspiration from the OECD’s inventory on
fossil fuel subsidies and how this criteria
be incorporated and improved upon by report-
ing under the UNFCCC.

FOSSIL OF THE DAY AWARD

#1 CANADA

URGENCY NOW, ACTION MAY LATER

#2 UNITED STATES

INFINITE WAYS TO DEFER URGENCY

Fossil Subsidies: Hiding in Plain View

MRV: Opaque ‘Transparency’ or Meaningful Participation
1986
Canada supports the people of South Africa in their fight against apartheid by imposing sanctions

December 2011
Now is the time for Canada to tackle climate change, which will impact millions of people, instead of supporting multinational oil companies

A Message for Canada during the UN Climate Summit in Durban:

Canada, you were once considered a leader on global issues like human rights and environmental protection. Today you’re home to polluting tar sands oil, speeding the dangerous effects of climate change. For us in Africa, climate change is a life and death issue. By dramatically increasing Canada’s global warming pollution, tar sands mining and drilling makes the problem worse, and exposes millions of Africans to more devastating drought and famine today and in the years to come. It’s time to draw the line. We call on Canada to change course and be a leader in clean energy and to support international action to reduce global warming pollution.

SIGNATORIES
Archbishop Desmond Tutu
Nobel Peace Laureate/former Archbishop of Cape Town
Jay Naidoo
Minister of Reconstruction and Development and then Communications in President Mandela’s Cabinet/Chairperson of the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
Zwelinzima Vavi
General Secretary of Congress of South African Trade Unions
Kumi Naidoo
Executive Director Greenpeace International
Bishop Geoff Davies
Executive Director of Southern African Faith Communities Environment Institute
Ruth Barirvule Celestine
Ogoni Solidarity Forum, South Africa

Bobby Peek
GroundWork, Friends of the Earth SA/Golden Environment Prize Recipient for Africa
Dorah Lebelo
Anabela Lemos
Ja! Justicia Ambiental, Mozambique
Southern Cape Land Committee
National Association of Professional Environmentalists Uganda
Friends of the Earth Nigeria
Environmental Monitoring Group
Project 90 by 2030
Centre for Environmental Rights
Johannesburg Anglican Environmental Initiative

Supported by: Environmental Defence, Equiterre, Greenpeace Canada, Nobel Women’s Initiative, and Sierra Club U.S.

DrawTheLineAtTarSands.com