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ECO has been published by Non-Governmental Environmental Groups at major international conferences since the Stockholm Environment Conference in 1972. ECO is produced co-operatively by the Climate Action Network at the UNFCCC meetings in Bonn, Germany during the June SB42/ADP 2.9 meeting. ECO email: administration@climatenetwork.org • ECO website: www.climatenetwork.org/eco-newsletters • Editorial/Production: Linh Do

Guess who's coming to dinner?

When you go out with friends for dinner, do you pay the full bill or do you just put a few coins on the table and run off? In Paris, we'll see how negotiators answer this question. The way it looks now, ECO wouldn't want to own a restaurant in Paris.

Just yesterday, the SED 2013-15 review put the bill on the table in big letters and numbers that everyone can read. Meanwhile, countries are offering INDCs—some of which may look politically ambitious at home—but it is obvious to everyone that they won't add up to what we need. And remember: we haven't yet paid the full bill from Copenhagen.

This truth is starting to dawn on many. Some media stories already say that Paris has failed before it starts—failed to deliver a path to 2°C or 1.5°C. But they forget that there is a secret (though underused) weapon within these talks: Workstream 2 (WS2). Thus far, WS2 has produced positive learning and brought in much needed momentum from outside

experts. To prove the naysayers wrong, the Paris outcome must include a much stronger combination of processes to tackle the gigatonne gap.

1) We can't tackle the gap unless we know how big it is. A Paris outcome must include a regular assessment of the gigatonne gap, which the Parties own together.

2) To be fair, some Parties owe a lot more than others. They need to pay more of the bill. This means stronger domestic targets by developed countries and concrete offers of finance and support.

3) We need an annual high-level platform to celebrate and hold accountable major new international cooperative initiatives that take a quantified bite from the gap.

4) Of the countless new initiatives being announced, some are good, and some (let's face it) are greenwashing. We need a way to record, aggregate and track these initiatives to see how much they collectively help close the gap.

5) The Technical Expert Meetings (TEMs) are one of the few things everyone likes in this process. They should focus on measurable actions and policy options while making connections with other mechanisms like the GCF and the Technical Executive Committee.

6) Finally, we can't pretend that the gigatonne gap will be closed in 2020. This combination of processes needs to be anchored in the post-2020 architecture -- it needs a new home when the ADP closes, and it can't end until the gap is closed.

But some will say: there's so much to do already. Why not just leave it to a future COP in 5 or 10 years? ECO says: You're forgetting who is left holding the bill! Small farmers in Kenya, coastal villagers in the Marshall Islands, and sometimes we forget Miami, New Orleans and New York. In consideration of a;; these people, we must not forget the other half of the Paris deal.

The TEMPpting world of renewable energy supply

ECO ♥s Workstream 2 and has been looking forward to the next TEM since the last one when Parties united behind the slogan "more, faster, now!"

Today, it's finally time to gather some of our brightest minds to talk about renewable energy supply: how to unlock potential and leveragescalable, replicable and transformative support efforts.

It's important that the TEMs are part of every negotiation session and continue beyond 2015. There are many issues and nuances with the areas of high mitigation potential that have not been covered yet. Here's some of the most interesting things we have learned so far:

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- Many countries (from Germany to India, the UAE and Morocco) were too careful when they decided on their renewable energy targets and have subsequently been surprised by their success in achieving and exceeding them.

- Many countries which do not have targets specifically for renewable energy have excellent secondary legislation, which has resulted in a recent boom in renewables. Examples include wind power in Brazil and solar in Japan.

- Many countries have developed frameworks for renewable energy, mostly for reasons other than climate change. This

proves that renewables are more attractive than fossil fuels for a range of reasons. It's all about co-benefits: job creation, reduced freshwater demand, waste management, technological advancement, avoidance of fluctuating fossil fuel import costs, health benefits, and cleaning up polluted air, soil and water, to mention just a few.

It's encouraging to be able to talk about real solutions in the TEMs, and there's more to look forward to the meeting on energy efficiency in urban environments on Friday. However, this talk needs to be turned into action. More action, faster action, now. Knowledge from the technical examination process should inform the comprehensive and actionable decisions on enhanced pre-2020 mitigation ambition in Paris.

Know Your Limits

Yesterday saw a special event on the results of the Structured Expert Dialogue (SED) on the 2013-2015 review, which ended its work this February. ECO hears that it might have been this week's "best show in town". The SED found that the "guardrail" concept, where up to 2°C of warming is considered safe, is inadequate. Instead the long-term goal should be defined as a "defence line" and efforts should be made to draw the defence line as low as possible.

The SED has identified 10 key messages. Here are 3 key ones:

1) Even 2°C warming (the limit agreed in Cancún) would result in catastrophic impacts, slow down economic growth, and significantly hinder poverty reduction efforts.

2) The world is not on a path towards a scenario below 2°C. Past and recent global greenhouse gas emissions have accelerated. So, yes, an emissions gap exists and the current Cancún pledges are more consistent with pathways limiting global warming to 3-4°C.

3) Keeping warming below 2°C is still achievable through deep emission cuts. These cuts can be achieved through full decarbonisation of energy systems, along with scaling-up of low-carbon energy technologies by approximately 90% by 2050 (compared to 2010). Importantly, these measures would not significantly affect global GDP growth. And if that weren't enough: mitigation action also comes with co-benefits, particularly for human health and biodiversity conservation.

For ECO, aiming for a limit of warming to below 1.5°C would mitigate numerous impacts of climate change, and is not necessarily more costly than pursuing the 2°C limit. However, to keep warming below 1.5°C, emissions reductions must begin earlier. And in each case—even to limit warming below 3°C—a radical transformation is necessary to deviate from current trends.

From the SED discussions in Bonn, ECO is taking away that a draft COP decision should strengthen the long-term goal of the Convention towards 1.5°C. The COP decision needs

to operationalise this temperature threshold by phasing out all fossil fuel emissions and phasing in a 100% renewable energy future with sustainable energy access for all, as early as possible, but not later than 2050.

Belarus, Kazakhstan: We have a message for you

Let's be real, why do you need to have a 'proper consultation' with your delegation on the Kyoto Protocol when it doesn't even apply to you? ECO knows that you want to rely on your inserted brackets for the second commitment period of the KP, but let's just accept that it's time to move forward!

The use of assigned amount units (AAUs) from the previous Kyoto period was a stepping stone for agreeing on rules for the this commitment period. That was a massive headache for all of us! Do you remember the Fossil award that you received together with Ukraine and Russia? Why would you want to potentially repeat that in Bonn?

It took 6 months for Ukraine to clean up their mistakes and agree on the wording of the modalities for the second commitment period. While Ukraine delivered on its obligations, it doesn't seem all that prepared for this session.

AAUs from the first commitment period really shouldn't be an issue for you. Let's stop adding brackets to the Kyoto guidelines and give them a chance to be adopted in Paris.

The mysterious case of the missing biomass emissions

SB42 has recently seen the presentation of new LULUCF rules analysis in a forthcoming report on global impacts of biomass. It unfortunately reveals that large quantities of emissions are going missing under the existing accounting system.

Several flaws in the current rules have resulted in instances where no country accounts for the emissions generated by the combustion of trees for energy. The assumption that biomass is carbon neutral has been debunked by an ever-growing body of scientific evidence. But there's an additional problem: biomass is still assumed to be carbon neutral in the energy sector because of a second persisting assumption that emissions will be accounted for in the land-use sector.

But this is clearly wrong. Under the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, countries can opt for business-as-usual baselines with their forest management. This means any emissions built into their projections, including from biomass harvests, don't get counted. All that gets counted is what goes above the projected baseline.

Countries that are not part of the KP second commitment

period, such as the US, don't account for any of their land-use change, and this means that biomass wood pellets, let's say exported from the US to the UK, won't be accounted for in the US land-use sector nor in the UK energy sector. It's just nonsensical.

In the UK, imported biomass could result in around 5Mt CO₂ emissions going missing, and biomass exported from the US to the EU is 6Mt CO₂.

To fix this problem: negotiators should include strong principles for post-2020 LULUCF accounting. There should be a common base year or period as opposed to a business as usual reference level, and in addition the new rules should aim for full transparency and comprehensiveness. ECO advocates the selection of paragraph 152 Option 5 from the Geneva text, with a few small additions, as the best way forward.

Improved principles and rules for LULUCF accounting post-2020 will be essential to avoid more biomass emissions disappearing into an accounting black hole even as they continue to show up in the atmosphere.

Japan draft INDC misses the target

ECO is immensely disappointed Japan's draft INDC yesterday. Japan is only planning to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 26% by 2030 compared to 2013 levels. This is just an 18% reduction compared to 1990 levels. It is unacceptable to disguise this weak target by changing the base year from 1990 to 2013, and ignore mitigation efforts made by other countries since 1990.

Unbelievably, Japan insists that the target is in line with the long term goal of "50% reduction globally and 80% reduction in developed countries by 2050" -- without further explanation.

Worse still, Japan refused to admit that an 80% reduction by 2050 was already endorsed by the government back in 2010. But an analysis seen by ECO shows this "inflated 26% target" will definitely not lead to an 80% reduction by 2050 for Japan.

Japan's climate target stems from poor energy policy, as it assumes only 10GW wind power and 74GW solar power by 2030. These values reflect the bare

minimum rather than a truly aspirational target.

At the same time, Japan's target assumes 20-22% of total electricity will be sourced from nuclear power, despite the 2011 Fukushima disaster. This percentage cannot be fulfilled without extending the operation of old nuclear power plants to 60 years and/or building new nuclear plants. Moreover, carbon intensive coal-fired power plants are prioritised and will provide 26% more of Japan's total energy than renewables by 2030.

Japan can achieve a target of 40-50% reduction from 1990 by 2030 without relying on nuclear power if it accelerates the deployment of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Japan is the only G7 country that has not formally submitted its INDC yet. That is expected with Prime Minister Abe's announcement on Japan's revised draft INDC at next week's G7 summit in Schloss Elmau, which should also include a reasonable explanation on its fairness and ambition.

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Developed Countries: Take the lead on closing the gap

While ECO enjoys the TEMs, let's not forget that the technical examination process is only one part of Workstream 2 and the crucial work of raising pre-2020 mitigation ambition. Developed countries, you have a particular responsibility for closing the gap. After all, the convention clearly asks you to "take the lead".

Here is how you do that: start with fully implementing what you've already committed to do—mitigation and finance. This is particularly relevant for those of you who are backtracking on your 2020 commitments. But you will have to go beyond that.

Developed countries' 2020 targets are too weak and need to be strengthened. The number of studies showing the many benefits of more ambitious climate action keep growing, while the costs of renewable energies keep falling.

The Kyoto Protocol is part of this pre-2020 puzzle. Ratification of the Kyoto Protocol's second commitment period is key. If Bonn does not make progress on this agenda item, it does not bode well for that little meeting we're planning to have in Paris at the end of the year. The eyes of the world will be on us, and it'll be hard to explain why only 32 countries have ratified the Doha amendments when they were agreed upon several years ago. ECO doesn't want to point fingers, but there's a very illustrative map on the UNFCCC website that shows the shocking lack of ratification. Any further obstacles that still

stand in the way of Kyoto's second commitment period must be dealt with during this session.

Oh, and by the way, all the great mitigation options identified in the technical examination process—those are for developed countries too! Developed countries have the technologies and resources at their disposal to quickly transform their energy systems away from fossil fuels and towards energy efficiency and 100% renewable energy. So take the lead. Do it now.



Outside of the UNFCCC, people are mobilising for climate action. Photo credit: Climate Action Network International

Food for Thought – Hunger for Action

ECO is pleased that there's going to be a workshop on the vulnerability of agricultural systems to different climate change scenarios. Climate change poses a serious threat to the food security of millions, and agriculture is important across the globe: food unites us all.

Agriculture is particularly important in developing countries, with approximately 70% of the world's food insecure people living in rural areas. These individuals primarily are small-scale farmers or agricultural labourers, where they depend on agriculture to support already fragile livelihoods. Systems that may increase in fragility if serious climate action isn't taken, the sustainability of these systems, and the enhancement of food security are of vital importance.

It is vital that Parties walk-the-talk and agree to prevent dangerous climate

change, while also providing the means to deal with unavoidable impacts. ECO urges Parties to take immediate action to promote resilient and equitable food systems. Actions should ensure farmers—and the ecosystems they rely on—are protected and able to manage adverse climate change impacts. Systems should promote farming approaches, such as agroecology, that are sustainable, resilient, equitable, biodiverse and enhance the ecosystems of which they are part.

ECO demands Parties recognise and address not just the impacts of climate change on food production but more broadly on the four pillars of food security (production, access, utilisation and stability). Parties should look at vulnerability along the whole value chain; from input access to storage and access to markets. Small-scale food producers must be able to access support

(resources and information), have control over key resources like water and land, and adapt and participate effectively in assessment, planning and policy processes. People most at risk, such as women, must be recognised as key agents for participation, planning and implementation of effective strategies in their communities. Appropriate funding must be made available that prioritises sustainable, adequate and predictable sources of adaptation finance responsive to issues identified by key stakeholders.

The threat of climate change to agriculture and food security is real: we cannot achieve sustainable development or eradicate hunger without ambitious emissions reductions and adaptation action.