

ECO

THE WELCOME TO COP25 (VENUE 3) ISSUE

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Welcome to Madrid

Dear Delegates,

ECO is glad you found your way to ~~Santiago de Chile~~ Madrid. Rest assured, ECO will not forget about the people of Chile and will closely follow the situation and update you. But not only the location of COP25 has changed. Just like the IPCC 1.5°C Special Report last year adjusted our frame of reference, so, too, have the IPCC Special Reports of this year adjusted our measuring sticks by clearly showing us that irreversible tipping points and climate impacts will hit even faster than what we anticipated just last year.

Around the world, millions of people have taken to the streets — from Hong Kong to Bolivia, the UK, Haiti, Iraq, Lebanon, Ecuador, and Chile — demanding their right to a better life. We are not only seeing the failure of big emitters to respond to the demands of people, youth, and science but also a profound blindspot of the inherent linkages between social, ecological and climate justice. The IPCC 1.5°C report robustly highlighted the need for governments to internalize these connections and act on them. ECO knows relocating COP25 has created challenges - but hopes you don't even think about taking this as an excuse to underdeliver. After all, Madrid's official symbol is a bear rearing up on its hind legs feasting on berries from the madroño tree, not a sloth burying its head in the sand.

And there are several berries ECO encourages you to reap in Madrid. COP25 is the perfect opportunity to unpack your plans for raising domestic climate ambition in 2020 to bridge the gap highlighted in the UNEP 2019 gap report. This is the difference between what we need to do and what we are actually doing to tackle climate change. From ECO's point of view: a goal without a plan is just a wish! ECO, therefore, recommends a clear timeline:

Commit yourselves to update and revise your NDCs to be in line with the 1.5°C threshold, in the first quarter of 2020.

Politely ask the UNFCCC Secretariat to assess, by 15 October 2020, the aggregate impact of updated NDCs submitted by 15 September, on projected global emissions and temperature increase.

If you've spent some time in these halls you'll agree: process matters and civil society and non-state actors are great partners in climate ambition and action. So, please, make sure to organize inclusive review processes when preparing your new NDCs back

home. ECO believes it is crucial you show your citizens they can take part in enhancing their NDC.

But there is more: At COP25, ECO expects the big and rich emitters to follow champions from the LDCs and AOSIS and their commitments at the UNSG Summit: Use the ministerial events to send clear political signals that you will respond to the climate emergency and step up climate support to reach US\$100billion by 2020.

And there is even more: ECO (and maybe you as well) feels we raised the issue of Loss and Damage more often than you will order tapas the coming two weeks. But when if not at COP25, during the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM) is the moment to start substantially addressing loss and damage by providing new and additional finance? ECO - of course - has some suggestions for you: Set up a financing facility and expert group under the WIM so that you can deliver on your promise of support and action on the matter. In addition (not instead) you may also establish a task force on loss and damage under the SBs to elevate the topic politically and develop recommendations for COP26.

ECO did not forget the rules over all this. How could we after the showdown on Article 6 last year? But there is so much more: ECO hopes parties continue to engage constructively in the operationalization of the Enhanced Transparency Framework. And get your act together and agree on five year common timeframes for NDCs – the earlier you agree the easier it will be to include them in your NDCs. In the past, market mechanisms undermined ambition and environmental integrity. So learn from history and don't repeat it. Only fools make the same mistake twice. Rules on Article 6 can only be agreed if they avoid any form of double counting, ensure social and environmental safeguards, especially the rights of indigenous peoples, and phase out Kyoto credits. ECO is aware that constructive negotiation often means getting the big picture right and not insisting on all details. But Article 6 is different – here the details make all the difference. Only by insisting on the principles and details of robust rules, can a good outcome be agreed. So we count on you, the EU, AOSIS, the LDCs, New Zealand – stand your ground and only agree to an outcome with robust and strong rules that account for what is actually emitted in the atmosphere.

Shopping for Article 6 Rules

In some parts of the world, today is cyber Monday, one more day of consumption splurge. ECO is no fan of this consumerist model, but in a conciliatory spirit, we have prepared a shopping list nonetheless. And what better thing to hunt for on a day aimed at driving market activity than a robust set of rules to establish the Paris Agreement's market mechanisms under article 6?

By the end of this COP, ECO hopes that Parties will have agreed to a system which not only helps countries deliver on their targets, but also helps increase emission reductions and ensures environmental integrity. Parties might be used to hearing ECO complaining about Article 6, but today ECO wants to just "think positive" about the market mechanisms.

First, the mechanism will generate new projects, in the thousands, that will benefit (and not harm) local communities and provide concrete sustainable development benefits in the countries that most need it, notably LDCs and SIDS. Projects will be mainly small scale and focus on transformative technologies. This will contribute to developing renewable energy to provide access to electricity for poor communities, while respecting the strictest rules on additionality and vulnerability, and setting baselines well below business-as-usual.

While the most experienced readers will remember the scars left by old Kyoto Protocol markets, these will only be a remnant of the past, as none of the credits will have been transitioned into article 6 mechanisms, and only a few, high-

quality projects will have made it to the next level. Of course, all emission reductions will be accurately accounted for, with no double counting, and the entire system will run through an international transaction log connected to national accounts. All of which will be perfectly transparent and allow ECO to peer through piles of well-organized datasets to prepare its next celebratory articles. And there will be a robust governance system to ensure human rights are respected, promoted, and considered including through a set of social and environmental safeguards, meaningful stakeholder participation requirements, and an independent grievance redress mechanism.

The markets will be used to help countries increase their targets, by aiding the development and transfer of new technologies, but countries will have no incentive to rely on international emission reductions as a substitute to domestic efforts. Rather, they will reduce their emissions and use markets only to go the extra mile. All credits will contribute to reducing emissions as well, since an automatic partial cancellation will be applied to ensure an overall reduction in emissions.

Finally, the new mechanisms will be channelling highly needed climate finance to developing countries through the levy of a share of proceeds on credits, that will provide funding for the Adaptation Fund.

ECO has a vision for article 6, and it is not ready to bargain (SIC) - ECO believes you must only agree on rules that ensure the principles highlighted above.

LOSS AND DAMAGE

BUSHFIRES

AUSTRALIA

DROUGHT

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Voices From the Front Lines

Australia burned this spring. Not the regular fires that the country sees every year at the height of summer, but a conflagration. These were fires so hot they started their own thunderstorms, with associated lightning starting yet more fires. At one point, the combined fire front was 6.000 kilometres long. If you drove from Bonn to Madrid, back to Bonn and then returned to Madrid again, you'd still be almost 700km shy of the length of the front. So far six people have died.

Vast swathes of national parks, farmland and ecosystems have been destroyed. An estimated 1,000 koalas have died. Rainforests - places once described as "permanently wet" - burnt for the first time. More than 500 homes were lost. And it's not even summer yet.

Bushfires of this scale are unprecedented in spring. Driven by increasingly hot days and one of the most extreme droughts ever recorded, now in its 36th month, the realities of climate change have arrived for the Australian people, flora and fauna.

The impacts go beyond the direct threat to lives, farms and businesses. Smoke from the fires has seen the air quality in Sydney the worst in the world in November. The threat to health led to dozens of schools being closed, a hospital evacuated, and more than twice the usual number of presentations to emergency departments for asthma and breathing difficulties.

Black carbon particles with the smoke plume were lofted 12-13km and were tracked by NASA across the Pacific, across South America and even detected above the southern Atlantic Ocean. ECO thinks Australia needs to act on climate to stop spreading smoke pollution particles to other nations along with its climate damaging greenhouse pollution (Cough Cough).

This is what 'loss and damage' due to climate change looks like in nations like Australia. But will it change the stance of the Australian Government? ECO believes there is an urgent need to set up a financing facility under the Warsaw International Mechanism to deliver new and additional finance to address loss and damage in developing countries, who cannot rebuild as Australia can. This should include new and innovative sources of finance to generate additional resources (such as levies on air and maritime transport, and climate damages tax on fossil fuels) at a scale of \$US50billion by 2022. The Australian delegation has undoubtedly seen the damage done by climate change in their very own backyards, surely it is not a stretch for them to support the delivery of very real support for their Pacific neighbours?

This year, the Australian delegation will be led by their Energy Minister Angus Taylor, whose record of inaction on climate change speaks for itself. Australians need action on climate change urgently, with the height of summer yet to come. ECO calls on Mr Taylor to stop his political point scoring and instead to deliver real and meaningful action on climate change, restart Australia's contribution to the GCF and support serious action on loss and damage. Australia has a burning need for it.

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Not Chile but Spain Will Host our Latin COP; We Have Some Issues

We want some resonance. A resonance that could amplify Latin American perspectives, visions, and challenges at this so-called "Latin COP".

But here we are, yet again in Europe – for another year. Here, we are leaving representatives from different constituencies behind, in just another example of carelessness and insensitivity to the people and peoples who have less capacity to respond. Does it sound familiar? Regrettably, there is no time to get on a boat and sail through the ocean and, sadly, our surnames are only Pérez, Gonzales or Mamani.

The change of the COP venue and quick shift to another continent certainly can be seen as positive, but in the world we envision "the end does not justify the means". We want to see more empathy and recognition of the consequences for people and communities in Latin America and beyond.

It might be winter here in Madrid, but ECO would encourage everyone to feel that it's hot out there. It's hot for many reasons – and not only because of the sunny weather in Chile.

It is hot because the political and social context in the ex-host country is hard and unfair and requires a profound reassessment of what society as a whole considers a "prosperous nation".

It is hot because there are people and communities that are losing their livelihoods even though they have taken care of and maintained a close and connected relationship with their territories.

It is hot out there as 1,500 environment defenders have been killed in the last 15 years, and the president of the COP, despite leading this process, still refuses to sign the landmark Escazu Agreement, which could have transformative impacts for environment defenders across Latin America.

And it is hot because the conflicts we are witnessing in Latin America challenge everyone to look at how the extractive economies in those countries provide high-living standards – for the few, and for people elsewhere, not for the people.

Uff. Does someone have a sun umbrella?

OK ~~Boomer~~ Fossil

For this COP to be successful, governments, particularly major emitters, must not only commit to mitigation and finance targets that are 1.5°C-compatible pathways; they must also ensure that the transition from an extractive economy to a regenerative one is just and equitable for all involved.

The reason is simple: neoliberal and unsustainable economies that have fuelled the climate crisis have also fuelled a deep socio-economic inequality among and within countries. We must take this once-in-a-century opportunity to establish new relationships of power that are focused on justice, equity, and environmental sustainability to give our future a fighting chance. Workers deserve good jobs with family-sustaining wages, where workers have a voice in their terms of employment. Moreover, it is critical that these new jobs are created in and by the very communities that are losing them, and that community-led programs are established with meaningful public input to help workers transition to new employment, receive protections until they are able to start their new jobs, and are supported with vocational education programs to succeed in their new choice of employment.

ECO urges that all Parties in the next round of NDCs must incorporate just and equitable transition plans for and led by all workers and communities impacted by the energy transition.

The Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures (KCI) met on 29 and 30 November. For those who may not know, the KCI is a body of experts that supports the Forum on the Implementation of Response Measures and it serves the three main bodies—the COP, the CMA and the CMP— and offers a space for countries to address both the negative and positive impacts of mitigation action domestically and internationally. Essentially, at COP24, countries agreed on

themes for a work program that reflects countries' concerns related to the impact of response measures. The thematic areas are:

- Economic diversification and transformation;
- Just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs;
- Assessing and analyzing the impacts of the implementation of response measures;

In June at SB50, countries weren't able to agree on a work plan and on the organization of work for the forum for the next 6 years as mandated at COP24. ECO is concerned that the progress on these negotiations continues to be extremely slow because of political games between the parties. It's disappointing that, on one hand, when countries decide to constructively engage in different activities related to response measures, like those under the KCI, members experienced rich discussions on domestic examples of positive and negative impacts of the implementation of mitigation measures. On the other hand, when it comes to negotiating and agreeing on key elements to make progress on these issues at the UNFCCC, Parties fail to deliver. There can't be ambition if there is no justice.

ECO wants to see action. Just transition elements and economic diversification discussions under the UNFCCC must be treated to the same level of urgency as other elements of the COP25 agenda. We cannot recreate an imbalanced power relationship that leads us to the same place we are in now: severe socio-economic inequality and, literally, planetary destruction.

ECO has one message for all Parties: don't act like a fossil, and do adopt the 6-year work plan of the forum by the end of COP25. A just transition should not take a backseat to any country plans; it is an integral part of charting a working pathway forward to beat the climate emergency.

Brazil Jails Firefighters; Accuses NGOs of Starting Fires

Hey, have you heard the one about the NGOs, the volunteer firefighters and the movie star who torched the Amazon forest so the government would get the blame?

Crazy, right? In normal times this would be the stuff of novelas, Brazil's beloved soap operas, and everybody would consider it a horrible joke.

Except that Brazilian President Bolsonaro, his Environment Minister Ricardo Salles (who plans to be with us here at COP25 for the whole two weeks), and some of their allies in regional police forces and courts, as well as their massive and suggestible social media following, appear to take it very seriously. And when a crowd of land-grabbers, ranchers, illegal miners and loggers considers you an enemy in Brazil, the results can be deadly.

But to explore the dark humor of the story, we have to go back to Bolsonaro's election campaign. Then, he promised to "put an end to all kinds of activism" while stopping the unreasonable persecution of the aforementioned land-grabbers and illegal miners and other poor hard-working fellows who just wanted to replace rainforests with soybean and cattle - and for whom the forest protection laws were a nuisance.

Jump ahead to August, when Bolsonaro fans throughout the Amazon were gleefully lighting fires to celebrate their good luck. But nowhere more prolifically than in the Western Para town of Novo Progresso, where members of a WhatsApp group that included many ranchers and a police chief (!) planned a "day of fire" to help do away with large swathes of that annoying Amazon rainforest.

Then when the backlash within Brazil and around the world made the fires an embarrassment and threatened exports of soybean, beef and timber, President Bolsonaro helpfully suggested he had information that NGOs were lighting the fires.

This accusation was a big hit in pro-Bolsonaro social media circles, but was met with widespread ridicule everywhere else.

Cut to Tuesday, November 26, when Brazil woke up to the news that 4 members of a youth fire brigade in the Amazonian town of Alter do Chão had been arrested, accused of lighting forest fires to profit from donations to extinguish them. Other NGOs were

implicated, and one highly respected NGO in the same region had their computers and key documents confiscated by heavily armed policemen.

It seems the local police force, in the same district in the west of the State of Para as the above mentioned chief of police who participated in the Day of Fire discussions, had been wire-tapping the fire brigade members for months. This vast trove yielded some conversations which, taken out of context and interpreted with a good dose of creativity, seemed to suggest that the firefighters were predicting when fires would take place. The police conveniently overlooked the fact that the existence of fires in the dry season in the Amazon is quite predictable, and laid charges of setting fires.

They arrested the 4 firefighters at gunpoint, questioned them and imprisoned them for days, and even made an offer for free haircuts they couldn't refuse. Meanwhile, it didn't take long for all reasonable observers, including Brazilian and international media, to realize this was a baseless accusation.

When the state Governor Helder Barbalho (who will be in Madrid next week seeking international funds) realised his police force was putting him in an untenable position, he changed the command of the investigations, and the firefighters were released the next day. No evidence to support the charges of setting fires has been produced, and other ongoing investigations have pointed to land-grabbers and real estate speculators as the main suspects for the fires.

As late as Friday 29 November, President Bolsonaro and his Congressman son Eduardo were continuing to promote lies against the firefighters, Brazilian NGOs, and (we kid you not) actor Leonardo DiCaprio.

It seems clear that no matter what the outcome of the investigation, Bolsonaro, Salles and their allies will continue to feed their social media channels with an endless stream of fake news about the case. Meanwhile, no activist is safe in Brazil anymore. There is reason to believe the quickly escalating authoritarianism in the country has picked environmentalists as its newest target, and the crackdown on the firefighters may have been only the first in a long series.

This is no laughing matter.

A Brilliant Opportunity for the Way Forward

ECO is not sure how many delegates remember the First Periodical Review (FPR)(2013-2015) and its Structured Expert Dialogue (SED), when the best scientists of the world presented their newest research on climate change. One of their biggest messages was the insight that there is no guardrail for a limit on global warming (e.g. the 2°C limit) as there are major impacts for warming below such a limit. Consequently the FPR concluded and COP 21 in Paris decided to limit global warming well below 2°C and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C.

The FPR finalised its tasks at COP 21, and COP 21 decided to have a Second Periodical Review (SPR). This is an excellent opportunity for delegates at UNFCCC negotiations to learn from the latest science. What do we know on specificities of the Paris goals? What on a potential overshoot of these goals and associated reversibility? How would Parties change their mind after an intense consideration of the tipping points that we are

approaching? Last week seven distinguished climate scientists alarmed ECO, revealing that humankind could enter a state of potentially catastrophic climate change on a new "hothouse" Earth. The SPR also has the task to examine the progress we see towards achieving the Paris goals. And the Joint Working Group of SBSTA and SBI on the SPR should look at the role of the Global Stocktake (GST) compared with the tasks of the SPR. Of course ECO has in mind that the GST covers only member Parties of the Paris Agreement. Therefore ECO favours that the SPR should also have a look on the progress achieved so that we can have full coverage of global emissions.

In summary ECO is convinced that the SPR could be very helpful in better understanding the climate crisis and what we should do to keep its impacts as low as possible. Therefore COP 25 has to decide on the scope of SPR and to install a SED at COP 25 so that the SPR will be able to begin its operational work next year.