

ECO



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Final Innings for a 2° World

Dear Delegates,

It is April 2010 and we are back . . . with a whimper? The bottom line: Copenhagen wasn't the stuff of dreams after all. It certainly didn't deliver up our dream of a climate threshold well below 2° C (let alone 1.5°) for the planet!

Meanwhile, the science is ever more loudly telling us to kick-start a "race to the top" for more ambitious mitigation targets. Parties are busy finding distractions and reasons not to deliver the needed outcomes under the AWG-LCA and AWG-KP tracks. And none of this, sadly, is very different than what we observed in the long runup to Copenhagen.

So here we are. All too many developed country parties continue playing to weaken the ability to deliver a fair, ambitious and binding outcome, based on narrow national interests. To take it beyond these generalities, ECO has a few suggestions where improvement is especially needed.

First off, the existing LULUCF rules under the Kyoto Protocol, riddled with far too many loopholes, are leading to perverse outcomes as long predicted. And yet the revised rules drafted and partly negotiated at Copenhagen go even further in the wrong direction. Parties must abandon attempts to stretch the LULUCF rules even more, hiding future emission increases from the sector and undermining the integrity of a climate deal. A revised LULUCF framework must be free of loopholes, use historic baselines and not future projections, and set an explicit goal to actually reduce emissions and increase removals from forestry and

land management. Surely this is not unreasonable for a climate deal!

Likewise, even after two full years of negotiations, the Shared Vision text coming out of Copenhagen is far from wholesome. One thing the text has is too many brackets. They surround a number of major elements including the long term global goal, developed country emissions, peak year, and review process.

The current Shared Vision text also skips over the next commitment period, the legal nature of the outcome, and a compliance clause among other aspects. Instead, the Shared Vision needs to guide the negotiations toward the final outcome rather than be wrapped up at the end of the process.

Next up, a focus of the negotiations that must not be lost. While all nations – especially top-emitting countries – should strive to put forward emissions reduction proposals that fully address the prospect of dangerous climate change, the pledges to date are far from what is needed. Instead of putting us on track to achieve the Copenhagen Accord commitment to keep increases below 2° C, the pledges in hand instead lead toward nearly a 4° increase, according to a recent analysis by the Sustainability Institute.

Not only that, merely pleading 'political realities' will not stem the rising Gigatonne Gap, as demonstrated by the current science. Catching up after 2020 really isn't an option, is it, if we are serious about containing global warming.

Now let's turn to an issue that has been gaining prominence recently but needs

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High Level Finance

Spring is in the air here in Bonn, and ECO, recovering some optimism after a long and well deserved break, hopes this season will usher in a cooperative and productive initial session.

And of course with Spring comes spring cleaning. It's time to dust off those Convention booklets and drag back into our minds all those acronyms that rolled off the tongue over the past few years.

And in line with spring as the time of planting and planning ahead, ECO presents a new acronym: AGF, or the Advisory Group on Climate Finance ... catchy, huh?

The AGF, comprising a handful of political and financial heavyweights, first met last week in London to discuss how to raise substantial amounts of climate finance. From all reports it appears to have been a positive meeting.

Importantly, the AGF (we're still getting used to the acronym, bear with us) agreed to assess all options on the table and keep an open mind where there are potentially diverging views. Rumour has it we might get more than a long analytical shopping list in the final report – potentially, in fact, a hierarchy of feasible and equitable options – what a Christmas/Navidad present before Cancún! With the fresh feelings of Spring, we have high expectations of what this group can deliver.

Whilst the Group has a wide mandate to look at public and private sources, ECO feels the strong expertise and political grav-

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Questions, Questions . . .

Dear U.S. Delegation,

We appreciate how much more approachable you have become since the Obama administration took office. So we hope you won't mind responding to a couple questions that have gotten our attention lately.

Over the years, ECO has had an interesting experience learning more about United States politics and your legislative process. We started our studies on Senate ratification from the early Kyoto days. And now, al-

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more prioritisation. Everyone now agrees that adaptation is a major challenge . . . so let's treat it that way. In the work plan for the rest of this year, Parties should focus on producing an adaptation text containing a concrete agreement on both fast-start and long-term finance, as well as a robust mechanism for delivery.

The Adaptation Fund is proving to be an excellent mechanism with governance and outcomes founded on the principle of equity. Here is a working prototype for a well-managed, equitable and effective climate fund under the auspices of the UNFCCC.

That brings up a broader point. There are troublesome winds blowing on the sources and scale of finance so that developed countries meet their obligations under the Convention. The Secretary-General has employed his good offices in convening the high-level Advisory Group on Climate Finance (AGF).

But remember -- ultimately, Parties have the responsibility to produce a decision in Cancún. For fast track financing, developed countries should make good on longstanding commitments and provide expanded financial resources to the mechanisms that already exist under the authority of the COP – the Adaptation Fund, Least Developed Countries Fund and Special Climate Change Fund.

Nearing the end of our highlights tour, let's turn to REDD. Requests for further work on methodological issues in the draft LCA text should be agreed and forwarded to SBSTA at this meeting, so it can fully en-

– *High Level Finance, from front page* –

itas in the room should be laser-focused on unraveling the deadlock in the negotiations on innovative public finance sources.

This is not to say that other sources won't be a part of the picture, but these leaders are best placed to brainstorm. Other

though sometimes it all seems a bit strange, we think we understand your two party system as well as the differences between the House of Representatives and the Senate. Most recently, we have been sorting out the mechanism of checks and balances between your President and the Congress. The highly visible health care debate provided a wonderful example of this in practice.

First, the health care bill resulted in a clear victory for President Obama due to his diligence and political prowess in forging compromise on a very controversial topic.

gage on this agenda in June.

Meanwhile, the LCA REDD group should also continue its work at the June session full speed, focusing first on issues that can be resolved without reference to the broader process -- for example, the operationalization of safeguards, and an objective for REDD.

Furthermore, time should be set aside in the LCA work plan to consider outstanding REDD issues that cut across to other aspects of mitigation such as MRV and NAMAs.

Based on the submissions by parties post-Copenhagen, it is clear that developing country parties will not compromise on their core ask for a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. The outcome of negotiations under the LCA track, regardless of form, must provide for and significantly advance the full implementation of financial obligations of developed countries under the Convention. And the legal form and nature of the LCA track outcome must be in full respect of equity principles, including "common but differentiated responsibilities".

We have reached the last innings on many fronts: inter-generational equity, intra-generational obligations, and the possibility of achieving the overarching goals of poverty alleviation and climate-neutral sustainable development.

Yours sincerely,
**6.8 billion people... and counting...
 on Planet Earth...**

sources will also likely start flowing if some public finance is available for leverage, and if we see ambitious mitigation targets.

At present the AGF is somewhat of a mystery. Though ECO has clocked who's represented on the Group, we would dearly

It is reasonable, therefore, to draw a parallel to the climate change debate and be encouraged by this outcome.

But ECO, ever the logical onlooker, wants to ask, if President Obama and his administration made such remarkable progress in Copenhagen, why do they now remain on the sidelines while the Senate squabbles over climate proposals? After all, President Obama did win a Nobel Prize in part for his willingness to take leadership on climate change.

Second, is it fully understood that the Senate bill expected later this month may fall miles behind the provisions required to help those most needing support in responding to climate change in our world -- the poor nations, the vulnerable, the forests, and their people?

In fact, ECO hears that the already inadequate international climate finance provisions passed by the House of Representatives last year will be mostly eliminated in the forthcoming Senate bill. If the President and his administration are truly committed to fulfilling their pledges in Copenhagen, won't they insist that the Senate bill include more substantial amounts of funding for adaptation, clean technology and REDD?

Since this is an open letter, ECO has questions for others as well. To leaders and ministers who negotiated with President Obama and the US delegation in Copenhagen – will you make your concerns clear about the prospect of minimal international climate finance levels in the Senate?

And to all other delegates reading this: we'd like to suggest you chat up the friendly U.S. delegates you encounter in the corridors or between meetings and ask them about this as well. We're sure they will be happy to answer your questions. And since we're all still in learning mode on the US political system, maybe they can shed some light on other mysteries, such as, what exactly does the Electoral College do anyway?

Signed,
**your new Best Friend Forever (BFF)
 ECO**

love to dispel some of the myths about it, but without a website or comprehensive information, transparency is still elusive. This would enable more effective participation by civil society and other stakeholders to strengthen this process.