

## E-news update November 12 2007

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### CLIMATE

- 1.1. U.N. climate chief confident on Bali progress

6 November 2007, Reuters

The U.N.'s top climate change official said on Tuesday he was confident world governments meeting in Bali next month would finally begin negotiations on mapping out a second plan to fight global warming.

A successor to the Kyoto Protocol to curb greenhouse gas emissions must be established by 2009, three years before Kyoto runs out, Yvo de Boer, the head of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, told Reuters in an interview.

"Bali needs to launch a negotiating agenda, decide that negotiations need to begin on a post-2012 climate change policy, launch that process formally, decide what the main elements that need to be negotiated are, set a timetable for negotiations and like every good timetable, set an end date," de Boer said.

"The end date should be 2009," said de Boer, whose job it is to moderate between countries trying to work out a post-2012 deal.

De Boer was confident the meeting in Bali, Indonesia, could achieve these goals and would send a positive signal to markets in trading carbon emissions.

Companies earn credits for cutting emissions, which they can then sell to individuals, businesses or governments that want to cut their impact on global warming.

"If it doesn't, that would be a huge setback, in the sense that we have now an important report from the scientific community from which to take political decisions and it could well be another six years before you get another report. So this really is a unique moment," he added.

The Bali meeting follows three reports this year by the U.N Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which shared the Nobel Peace Prize in October with former U.S. Vice President Al Gore.

The first said there was 90 percent probability that global warming was real, that human activities caused it and that the problem was urgent. The second detailed the potentially disastrous consequences of unchecked climate change and the third focused on what to do about it.

U.S. crucial

The Kyoto Protocol, whose first phase expires in 2012, binds 36 rich nations to cap greenhouse gas emissions, and a new global deal would seek to engage outsiders such as the United States and Australia, as well as developing countries such as China and India.

Big developing nations, including Brazil, Mexico and Indonesia, are major polluters yet they are excluded from mandatory cuts in greenhouse gas emissions under Kyoto's first phase.

China is the top emitter of carbon dioxide after the United States. Russia is third, India fourth and Japan is fifth.

"Designing a climate change regime that does not involve the United States just does not make any sense," he said.

"So we have to, in designing that regime, listen very carefully to America and try to find out what would be acceptable to America and what's not."

The Bush administration and Australia opposed mandatory limits on carbon emissions under Kyoto, arguing they could hurt their economies. Both also refused to ratify Kyoto because it excluded developing nations from binding cuts, saying this made the pact unfair and unworkable.

But de Boer said the United States and Australia had now signalled they were keen to get negotiations started.

He also said the current system's clean development mechanism (CDM) should be improved in the new regime, with projects to come from a broader range of developing countries and with scope to simplify the system's procedures.

A new regime should also include pilot projects to reduce emissions that result from deforestation, which might be responsible for a fifth of the world's total emissions but was excluded from the protocol's first round.

De Boer also stressed saving the planet was not all about personal sacrifice.

"Even though I come from a Calvinist country, I don't believe that the answer to climate change lies in pain and suffering, cold showers and walking to work," the Dutchman said.

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## 1.2. Merkel Asks India to Do More on Climate Change

31 October 2007, Reuters

German Chancellor Angela Merkel urged India, one of the world's biggest polluters, to do more to combat climate change on Tuesday, saying her country was willing to help New Delhi make progress.

Merkel, a former environment minister who has pushed global warming to the top of her international agenda, said rich nations and emerging economies needed to strike a balance over the amount of responsibility they need to shoulder to prevent climate change and not fight over it.

"We have to prove that we are willing to strike a balance," Merkel told business leaders in New Delhi during a four-day visit to India. "Multilateral agreements are of the essence."

Germany could help India become a more efficient user of energy by sharing technology to avoid "mistakes we made in the industrial countries", she said, speaking through a translator.

"Climate change, beyond the substantive issue that it is, is a very good issue for us to learn to shoulder common responsibilities," she said.

Emerging economies like China and India, also major polluters, are opposed to strict new environmental regulations or energy constraints as they fear such steps could strangle their economic growth.

They demand that industrialised nations, traditionally the chief polluters, bear the brunt of emission cuts.

Scientists say climate change is expected to have a serious impact in South Asia as the region depends on monsoon rains and Himalayan glacier-fed rivers, and has a long coastline.

Receding glaciers could jeopardise water supplies for hundreds of millions of people and rising sea levels could menace cities such as Mumbai and Kolkata, as well as neighbouring Bangladesh.

Support new climate deal

New Delhi is expected to draw up a national plan to tackle global warming by the end of this year and Indian experts say the country has already achieved substantial energy efficiency.

A joint statement issued at the end of Merkel's talks with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said the two sides agreed there is an urgent need to find effective and practical solutions to address climate change concerns.

They called on all parties to "actively and constructively" participate in talks to hammer out a new global climate deal to curb emissions after the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.

Merkel's visit to India, her first as chancellor, is largely aimed at boosting business ties between the two countries, whose trade touched about 10.5 billion euros (US\$15 billion) four years ahead of an official target.

Merkel said after her talks with Singh the two countries had agreed to double the US\$15 billion figure by 2012.

India, Asia's third-biggest economy, has grown at an average of 8.6 percent in the last four years and is expected to maintain a similar rate in the coming years.

However, it needs huge investments in infrastructure. German businessmen travelling with Merkel said New Delhi needed to lift caps set on foreign investment in insurance, banking, retail and telecommunications sectors.

This could push Germany up from its ranking as the sixth largest foreign investor in India, they said, as relations between the two countries blossom after having briefly cooled following India's nuclear tests in 1998.

"I am absolutely convinced that Germany and India can do a lot together and that they also want to do a lot together," Merkel said.

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### 1.3. China launches CDM fund to address climate change

9 November 2007, [www.chinaview.cn](http://www.chinaview.cn)

China launched a state-owned Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) fund Friday to finance the country's efforts to address climate change.

The China CDM Fund, managed by the Ministry of Finance, will generate money from the current CDM projects that help China improve energy efficiency and protection of the environment by using clean energy for power generation.

By the end of October, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), China's top economic planner, had approved 885 CDM projects that were expected to supply 1.5 billion metric tons of carbon credits, said Xie Zhenhua, NDRC deputy director.

He added the projects would generate 15 billion U.S. dollars, of which three billion U.S. dollars would be injected into the fund.

The fund also receives donations from financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

Established under the Kyoto Protocol, CDM is a market-based mechanism that allows developed countries to fulfill their greenhouse gas emission reduction obligations by investing in clean energy projects in developing countries such as China.

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### 1.4. Asia-Pacific states to adopt climate goals at summit: report

11 November 2007, AFP

Sixteen Asia-Pacific countries will seek to expand their combined forests at least 15 million hectares (37 acres) by 2020 to help fight global warming, Kyodo News reported Saturday.

The countries are expected to adopt a special statement on climate change at the East Asian Summit in Singapore on November 21, the Japanese news agency said.

A draft of the statement urges the development of sustainable planning and management of the region's forests, improving forest law enforcement, and fighting illegal logging and other harmful practices.

It also stipulates that the 16 countries will set voluntary energy-saving targets and compile action plans by 2009, and help develop an international climate change accord after the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012, Kyodo reported.

The statement will be the first of its kind to be adopted at the East Asian Summit involving the 16 countries.

The draft also says the countries should aim for a regional goal to reduce energy intensity at least 25 percent by 2030.

But India, which is lagging behind others in energy saving efforts, is strongly opposing such a target, Kyodo said, quoting a Japanese official.

The East Asia Summit members are the 10 countries belonging to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand.

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### 1.5. Climate change: why China matters

9 November 2007, European Parliament

As the economy grows apace in China, so does pollution and it looks set to be a global problem. Ahead of the December UN Climate Change Conference in Bali a delegation from the Parliament's Temporary Committee on Climate Change, led by Chairman Guido Sacconi, visited Beijing to meet with key officials, politicians and experts. The delegation concluded that China is politically committed to fighting climate change, but not yet ready to accept quantitative targets.

"As a fast growing economy China is also rapidly becoming one of the biggest polluters," said Mr Sacconi. "Establishing a new international climate change regime after the expiry of the Kyoto Protocol in 2012 will only be possible if countries like China or India which do not have emission reduction commitments under the current Kyoto Protocol are part of such an agreement."

Why China matters

In 1990 China's CO2 emissions were around 50% of US (the biggest producer) levels. Now China lies just behind the US and is expected to overtake it as the largest emitter of greenhouse gases. With a booming economy and 1.3 billion people, China is the world's largest consumer of coal and oil consumption has doubled in the last 20 years. However, as a developing country it is not required to cut emissions under the 2002 Kyoto Protocol.

"China is strongly committed in the fight against climate change and to engage in the area of emissions reductions, energy-saving, and energy-efficiency. At the same time, it acknowledges the importance of cooperating with industrialised countries on technology and technology transfer, as well as the need for financial assistance in this field. These are certainly extremely positive messages," said Mr Sacconi.

However, he added, "One critical issue remains: the fact that, at this stage, China still considers that the current structure of the Kyoto Protocol should be maintained and developing countries, including emerging economies, should have no quantitative commitments."

China's commitment to fight global warming

"China has recently adopted a Climate Change Programme and is strongly committed to improve its energy efficiency. Our visit to Beijing...allowed us to establish personal contacts with government officials, members of the People's National Congress, as well as business and civil society representatives and to better understand the Chinese position towards climate change," Mr Sacconi said.

The draftsman for the Committee, German Christian Democrat Karl-Heinz Florenz said, "From our discussions with representatives from the National People's Congress, from the government and also from civil society, we understood that climate change is one of the political priorities for the Chinese authorities. I have the impression that the Chinese authorities are adopting and implementing legislation to successfully start the fight against climate change."

The recently-adopted Climate Change Programme is very ambitious with targets to cut energy consumption 20% and increase the share of renewables to 10% of energy supplies by 2010. "Of course the challenge now lies with its implementation, which will have to be closely monitored", Mr Florenz said.

Chinese position towards post-Kyoto climate protection?

"We were happy to learn that for China, like the EU, the UN Climate Change Convention is the only appropriate forum for the international negotiations on climate change. The Chinese authorities also share the EU view that the negotiations for such a new agreement should be concluded by 2009 at the latest, thus avoiding any gap between the current commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol and the future international framework", Mr Florenz added.

Stressing the need to build partnerships and involve new world powers like China and India in the fight against climate change, Mr Florenz said: "This is why the EP attaches such importance to environmental foreign policy". Convinced that China will be a close and key partner of the EU in the negotiations for a post-2012 agreement, he added: "It is in our mutual interest to succeed in the fight against climate change".

The visit was the first of a series to non-EU countries meant to develop parliamentary contacts and forge a strong alliance to address climate change issues.

What the EP is doing

Temporary Committee on Climate Change has urged the EU to secure "by 2009 at the latest" an international agreement that includes: binding emissions targets for all industrialised countries, a global "cap and trade" system and instruments for clean technology transfer - to allow developing countries access to environmentally friendly technologies.

MEPs also call on industrialised countries to lead by example and commit themselves to reducing emissions "by at least 30% by 2020 and 60% - 80% by 2050 compared to 1990".

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1.6. British NGOs challenge Indonesian government and industry on palm oil claims

31 October 2007, Down to Earth (UK), Forest Peoples Programme, Biofuelwatch, Econexus, Sumatran Orangutan Society UK, Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation UK and Carbon Trade Watch

Indonesian government and palm oil industry representatives will be promoting 'sustainable palm oil' during a seminar in London today, which has been organised by the Indonesian government.

Social and environmental NGOs warn that Indonesia's palm oil industry continues to be linked to deforestation and biodiversity losses, human rights abuses and displacement of indigenous peoples and local communities. According to the World Bank, Indonesia is responsible for more greenhouse gas emissions than any country apart from the US and China, primarily because of the destruction of peatlands and rainforests.

According to a recent United Nations report, palm oil is now the main cause of permanent rainforest loss in both Indonesia and Malaysia. Many species, including orangutans, are expected to become extinct in the wild within a few years unless this trend is stopped.

Marcus Colchester from the Forest Peoples Programme says: "The industry representatives speaking in London today have signed up to the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil, which aims to certify sustainable palm oil. We now need to see major changes in industry practices and government policy and implementation. There must be an end to forest and peatland destruction for palm oil and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples and other local communities, who are still losing their land to monoculture plantations. We also need to see respect for the rights of workers and smallholders. In line with the opinion of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Indonesian government needs to push through legal reforms securing the land rights of indigenous peoples and respecting their right to give or withhold consent to the establishment of oil palm estates on their lands."

At present, Indonesia has around 6.5 million hectares of palm oil plantations. There are reports of government plans to convert a further 20 million hectares to oil palms over the next two decades - which would result in a total plantation area larger than the UK.

According to the Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, some 5 million people in West Kalimantan, Indonesia, alone, are likely to become 'biofuel refugees' due to palm oil expansion in the near future.

The Indonesian grassroots NGO Sawit Watch will be addressing the situation of small holders during the meeting. Sawit Watch warned earlier this year that European biofuel targets were driving up the demand for palm oil, thus fuelling social and land conflicts and undermining Indonesia's land reform programme.

Almuth Ernsting from Biofuelwatch explains: "The Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil must not be used as an excuse for promoting palm oil for bioenergy. We are deeply concerned that energy companies will seek to use the small amount of palm oil which will be certified as sustainable, whilst driving ever faster monoculture expansion into South-east Asia's remaining rainforests and into community lands on which people depend for their food and livelihoods. This must not be allowed to happen".

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## CONFERENCES

### 2.1. International Conference Connecting Clean Mobility

14 - 15 November 2007 in Arnheim, Netherlands

More:

[http://www.senternovem.nl/energietransitiedm/agenda/conference\\_connecting\\_clean\\_mobility.asp](http://www.senternovem.nl/energietransitiedm/agenda/conference_connecting_clean_mobility.asp)

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### 2.2. International Renewable Energy Storage Conference

16 - 21 November 2007 in Bonn, Germany

More: [http://www.eurosolar.de/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=271&Itemid=43](http://www.eurosolar.de/en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=271&Itemid=43)

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### 2.3. CAN-E EU ETS Workshop

19 November 2007, Brussels

Registration by e-mail: [tomas@climnet.org](mailto:tomas@climnet.org) before 19 October 5PM.

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### 2.4. Renewable Heating & Cooling

20 - 21 November 2007 in Brussels

