



Climate campaign newsletter: Issue 28 - December 2009

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- Find us: http://twitter.com/greens_climate and http://www.flickr.com/photos/greens_climate

GREEN EYE ON THE EU'S CLIMATE EFFORT

UN climate chief issues appeal to EU environment ministers

UN climate chief [Yvo de Boer addressed](#) an extraordinary [meeting of EU environment ministers](#) on 23 November, telling them "the world is waiting for the EU". The meeting failed to outline any progress in the EU's negotiating position and merely confirmed the existing mandate, which includes no concrete pledges on climate financing, although the UK and France have [outlined a proposal](#).

The prospects of the EU increasing its emissions reduction pledge from 20% to 30% by 2020 from 1990 levels seem to be improving however. EU environment commissioner Stavros Dimas called on the EU to unequivocally [raise its pledge](#) to try and give new momentum to the negotiations. The Swedish EU presidency [also suggested](#) it would be willing to move if the US and China outlined their pledges in advance of the talks, which they have now done (see article below). (see [our blog](#) for more detail)

MEPs call on EU to step up pledges in climate negotiations

The [European Parliament adopted](#) a resolution on the UN climate talks in Copenhagen. [The resolution](#), which was adopted on 25 November, calls on the EU to strengthen its position in the UN climate negotiations, both on emissions pledges and on climate finance for developing countries. It calls for emissions reduction targets in line with the scientific consensus and for the EU to contribute at least €30 billion per year by 2020 in climate aid for developing countries. (see [our press release](#))

Agreement on new EU rules on energy standards for buildings

[An agreement](#) was reached between the European Parliament and Council on revising EU rules on

energy performance standards for buildings. The Greens succeeded in getting an important proposal included in the new legislation, which will mean that all new buildings will have to be 'near zero energy consumption' from 2020 on. Unfortunately, there was no agreement on standards for renovating existing buildings. The legislation will be finalised in 2010. (see [our press release](#))

EU energy labelling scheme to be made more confusing

The well-recognised EU energy labelling scheme, which uses an A-G colour-coded scale, is set to be revised following [an agreement](#) between the European Parliament and Council. If endorsed by the European Parliament plenary, the EU energy label would be revised to include 3 grades above the current best performing 'A' grade - A+, A++, A+++. The Greens have opposed this change, which adds confusion to the labelling scheme. (see [our press release](#))

EU creates post of Climate Commissioner, with Danish nominee Hedegaard proposed

The EU is to create the post of Climate Commissioner as part of the [new European Commission](#). The proposal, which has been circulating for some time, has met with [mixed responses](#). The Greens are keen to ensure that the competence for climate change remains with the directorate general for environment in the Commission. Danish nominee for commissioner, current climate and energy minister Connie Hedegaard, has been proposed for the post.

EU industries get exemptions under emissions trading scheme

EU industries are [set to get](#) substantial exemptions in the next phase of the EU emissions trading scheme from 2013 on. The Greens failed to convince a majority of MEPs on the EP environment committee to reject a [proposed list](#) of industrial sectors to be exempted from the auctioning of permits under the ETS. [The proposal](#) by the European Commission, which would lead to industries accounting for up to 80% of non-power sector emissions being exempted, was not based on complete analysis and therefore not consistent with the terms of the legislation. (see [our press release](#))

ROUND-UP - CLIMATE NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Expectations for UN climate talks in Copenhagen clarified

The open secret, that the UN climate summit in Copenhagen would not deliver a finalised legally-binding international treaty on climate change, [was confirmed](#) in the context of the ASEAN summit. The fall-out from the summit has led to different claims about what the COP15 is now expected to achieve.

US president Obama has tried to win support for his ["two-step" plan](#) for agreeing a deal. However, [the EU](#) and [Denmark](#), which will chair the summit, have made clear that they are still pressing for firm and binding commitments on the main political issues (like emissions reductions and climate financing) to be agreed in Copenhagen. These commitments would then be worked into a complete, legally-binding treaty as early as possible in 2010, with the date to be confirmed at the COP15. (see [our blog](#))

US and China outline pledges for COP15, as Obama and Wen confirm presence

US president [Obama announced](#) that he would attend the UN climate summit in Copenhagen (COP15) and set out the US pledges for a UN climate deal. The pledged emissions reductions (17% by 2020 from 2005 levels) are in line with those proposed in the US climate legislation, which has yet to be adopted.

Chinese premier Wen also [announced his intention](#) to attend the COP15, while China also announced new [pledges on carbon intensity](#). The Chinese pledge - to reduce carbon intensity 40-45% by 2020 - was given [strong support](#) by the International Energy Agency, which deemed it to be far-reaching.

New Zealand, Australia, Russia and Canada all make moves on emissions targets

[New Zealand adopted](#) its climate legislation, which includes a cap and trade scheme and a pledge to reduce emissions 10-20% by 2020 from 1990 levels (although the real impact of this pledge [is not clear](#)). The Australian government also [made progress](#) with its climate legislation, after securing opposition support, which should mean the bill will pass a vote in the senate. The Australian bill pledges emissions cuts of up to 25% by 2020 from 2000 levels (but again the true impact [is unclear](#)).

Russia also [improved its emissions pledge](#) and is now committing to reduce emissions 20-25% by 2020 from 1990 levels. However, in reality, this would lead to [no deviation](#) in the projected emissions from Russia. Canada is also coming under pressure to improve its weak emissions pledges, both from the [national parliament](#) and [others](#).

IEA outlines costs of climate inaction, amidst whistleblower claims

The IEA, in its annual [World Energy Outlook](#), estimated the cost of inaction on climate change at [\\$500 billion per year](#). However, its outlook also typically overstated the role of nuclear and [coal](#) in the future energy mix, while much of the gloss was taken off its report after [revelations by a whistleblower](#) that the IEA manipulated its research on oil. (see [our blog](#))

The latest climate science in this month's science overview

A [groundbreaking report](#), synthesising the latest peer-reviewed science since the IPCC's most recent report, warns that climate change is accelerating beyond expectations, with [another study warning](#) of a 6 degree increase in global temperature. Meanwhile, greenhouse gases reached [record highs](#) in 2008, while [other research showed](#) the east Antarctic ice sheet is melting faster than expected.

WHAT'S ON

3-6 December	Copenhagen Climate Exchange (alternative climate summit)
12 December	Climate action day , including Climate Summit Demonstration in Copenhagen
7-18 December	UN climate summit (COP15) in Copenhagen
10-11 December	EU summit in Brussels (climate change possibly on agenda)
22 December	Council of EU environment ministers