Press release | 04.10.2013

Airline emissions/ICAO

EU must now push ahead with aviation ETS after freezing strategy backfires

A meeting of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) today concluded with a set of decisions on the question of airline emissions, following challenges to the EU's inclusion of aviation in its emissions trading scheme (1). The Greens expressed regret at the outcome, which postpones action on global measures and seeks to prevent the EU from moving ahead with its own scheme on airline emissions. Commenting on the outcome, Green climate change spokesperson **Satu Hassi** (MEP, Finland) stated:

"Today's outcome confirms the flaws with the EU's strategy in freezing the implementation of emissions trading scheme for non-intra EU flights. The international aviation organisation (ICAO) is both seeking to block EU action and once more stalling on urgently-needed international measures to address the growing impact of airline emissions on climate change. The EU must now stand firm and stick by its original plans on aviation emissions. We should not dismantle effective climate policy instruments in exchange for a vague promise on a global scheme in the distant future without guarantees of environmental integrity or ambition.

"In the absence of a meaningful international system that aims to cap and reduce airline emissions, the EU should push ahead and implement its original scheme. This means ending the freeze on the inclusion of non-intra EU flights in the EU's emissions trading scheme. Committing to channel revenues from auctioned emissions permits towards the UN Climate Fund for developing countries would help ensure wider support for the scheme at the ICAO. The growing emissions from the sector are undermining climate change fighting efforts of other sectors. Given the latest stark warnings from the IPCC, we should be strengthening, not weakening our climate policy measures. The German, French and UK governments must stop their doublespeak and support EU action on aviation emissions."

(1) The EU had temporarily frozen the implementation of the EU emissions trading scheme for non-intra EU flights, with a view to seeking a global agreement on aviation emissions at the ICAO. Today's ICAO meeting concluded with decisions seeking to block any regional schemes (a measure directed at the EU scheme), while merely agreeing a 'roadmap' for an agreement on airline emissions that would not enter into force until after 2020.

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