Press release | 25.11.2010

Climate change

EP sends strong signal ahead of UN climate summit in Cancun

The European Parliament today adopted a resolution setting out its position on the forthcoming UN climate summit in Cancun (1). Green MEPs welcomed the resolution, which calls for stronger EU action on emissions and resolving contradictions in the EU's negotiating position. After the vote, Green MEP and EP draftsperson on increasing the EU's emissions target **Bas Eickhout** said:

"The EP has today sent a strong signal ahead of the forthcoming UN climate summit in Cancun. MEPs have called on the EU to strengthen its own climate policies. They have also underlined the need to resolve the contradictions in EU climate diplomacy and truly live up to the promises made in Copenhagen: this will be crucial to ensuring that Europe contributes to a positive outcome at the COP16 in Cancun.

"Crucially, MEPs have called on the EU to improve its current greenhouse gas target for 2020 by moving to a 30% reduction target (from 20% currently).Recent analyses have revealedhow utterly obsolete the EU's current 2020 emissions target is. It is acting as a barrier to proactive emissions reductions efforts and investments in green technologies. Sticking to the 20% target is also now somewhat of an embarrassment for its international climate diplomacy - particularly given other countries pledges are ahead of the EU. EU governments must step up the target now."

Finnish Green MEP and EP environment committee member **Satu Hassi** added:

"The EU's willingness to potentially agree to a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol is a key step for rebuilding trust in the UN climate negotiations. For this reason, the EP has called on the EU to clearly signal its openness to continuing with Kyoto, rather than fudging the issue as at present. Member states still cannot agree on resolving the core problems with the Kyoto Protocol (like hot air and how to account for forestry emissions) and yet these problems are being used as an argument against continuing the protocol. This hypocritical approach risks again damaging relations with developing countries in the talks.

"The EU's position on climate aid to developing countries also risks damaging the prospects of the negotiations. Not only is the EU short of the aid it pledged at Copenhagen last year (2), it is using loans and accounting tricks to make up much of its pledges. This will further damage relations with developing countries. For this reason, the EP has called for the EU to live up to its pledges on fast-start climate financing and to ensure this is new and additional aid, and not loans or recycled aid from development budgets."

(1) The 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) of the UNFCCC will take place from 29 November to 10 December in Cancun, Mexico.

(2) The EU pledged to deliver €2.4 billion per year in funding to developing countries for climate change mitigation and adaptation from 2010-12. The expectation is that this would be new funding, additional to existing development aid commitments, and would not be in the form of loans.

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