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Climate change

Environment ministers stuck in groundhog day on EU climate policy

EU environment ministers met today to discuss EU climate policy ahead of a key UN climate summit in Cancun in December. Green MEPs expressed frustration at the outcome, with ministers once again delaying a decision on increasing the EU's emissions reduction target and fudging the question of the EU's potential commitment to a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol.

Commenting on the outcome, Dutch Green MEP **Bas Eickhout** said:

"Discussions in the environment council on EU climate policy are becoming something of a groundhog day. Instead of sending a clear and positive signal that the EU is willing to move forward ahead of December's key UN climate talks in Cancun, environment ministers have once again put decisions on the key issues of emissions targets and the Kyoto protocol on the back burner."

"There are simply no excuses for any further stalling on strengthening the EU's emissions target to a 30% reduction by 2020. The latest figures on greenhouse gas emission sin Europe, released this week, underline that the EU's 20% reduction target is now completely obsolete, while the clear economic arguments in favour of a stronger target were added weight by the support of business leaders this week. EU leaders should seize the initiative and adopt a stronger target ahead of Cancun."

On the issue of the EU's position as regards the Kyoto Protocol, Finnish Green MEP **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 and we regret that environment ministers have fudged the issue. 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. In general, it is a source of concern that the EU is still hamstrung by divisions on key issues, as this risks the Union being once again sidelined in Cancun, as it was in Copenhagen last year."

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Bas Eickhout

Co-President

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