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Environment and climate

New study highlights urgent need to increase EU emissions reduction target

The Greens/EFA group has launched a new study (1) by independent research organisation CE Delft, which provides a response to the countries that have called for an impact assessment on increasing the EU's current emissions reduction target of 20% by 2020. The launch coincides with today's council of EU environment ministers, who are discussing the conditions under which the EU would be willing to increase to its promised 30% emissions reduction target. Commenting on the study and the urgent need to revise the EU's emissions reduction targets, Dutch Green MEP **Bas Eickhout** said:

"The EU needs to urgently step up its emissions pledge to an unconditional 30% domestic reduction target by 2020 based on 1990 levels. That is the clear message from this study by CE Delft, which echoes findings of other recent research*.

"EU environment ministers meeting today will continue their three-year long procrastination on increasing the EU's emissions reduction targets and indications are that they will simply ask for the European Commission to study under what conditions this would be possible. We do not need more research: there is a wealth of evidence that underlines why the EU needs to increase its target now. Failure to do so will not only mean the EU is lagging behind in international climate efforts, it could damage the EU's own climate policies and lead the EU to miss the economic opportunities offered by undertaking ambitious domestic emissions reductions."

*The key findings of the study include:

- With a collective target of 30% for developed countries, the EU would be expected to reduce its emissions up to 40% by 2020 compared to 1990 levels.

- Many countries have already pledged more ambitious reduction targets than the EU, notably Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Norway, Switzerland and most emerging countries.

- The total impact of EU climate policies would only reduce domestic emissions around 4% compared with the expected business as usual scenario.

- Achieving an increased emissions reduction target of 30% would now be much less costly than was suggested by estimates at the time the EU drafted its climate and energy package of legislation.

Notes to editors:

Link to study "Why the EU could and should adopt higher greenhouse gas reduction targets":

http://www.stopclimatechange.net/fileadmin/bali/user_upload/docs/7213_finalreportSdB.pdf

Greens/EFA political summary of the study http://www.stopclimatechange.net/fileadmin/bali/user_upload/docs/2010-3-15_EU_emissions_pathways_-_GreensEFA_summary.pdf

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