



Brussels, 20 November 2009

**BACKGROUND<sup>1</sup>**  
**ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL**  
**23 November 2009**

*The Environment Council will be held at 10.30 on Monday, 23 November, under the presidency of Mr Andreas Carlgren, Minister for the Environment of Sweden.*

*The Council will be briefed on various aspects of the preparations for the upcoming **Copenhagen climate conference**, inter alia by Mr Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary of the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change.*

*At lunch, ministers will hold a policy debate on this issue. Decisions or the adoption of conclusions are not foreseen at this Council meeting.*

**Presidency press conference:** +/- 16.30

**Press briefing with Mr Yvo de Boer:** +/- 13.30

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<http://video.consilium.europa.eu>

***Video coverage will be available for preview and download in broadcast quality (MPEG4):***  
<http://tvnewsroom.consilium.europa.eu>

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<sup>1</sup> This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the Press Office.

## **Climate change: Preparing the Copenhagen climate conference**

The Council will discuss preparations for the Copenhagen climate conference (7-18 December). Decisions or the adoption of conclusions are not planned at this Council session.

Ministers will first be briefed by Danish minister Connie Hedegaard, host of the Copenhagen talks, and UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer on the path to the international climate conference. Commissioner Stavros Dimas will present greenhouse gas emissions trends and emissions reductions proposals by other parties. Finally, Norwegian minister and chief climate negotiator Hanne Bjurstrøm will speak about the role of initiatives to reduce deforestation in developing countries.

At lunch, ministers will discuss the EU's objectives and priorities for the negotiations as well as tactical considerations. They are invited to reflect on the following questions:

- How to use proposals by parties to increase momentum in the negotiations?
- What should be the EU's vision of a Copenhagen agreement?

The EU has pleaded for the outcome of the Copenhagen conference to be a binding agreement for the period starting 1 January 2013, which would build on the Kyoto Protocol and incorporate its essential elements. It has recently been proposed to work in two phases whereby a binding agreement would be achieved in Copenhagen while texts to give it legal effect would be approved at a later stage.

It is the EU's objective to limit the global average temperature increase to no more than 2°C above pre-industrial levels. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), this means that developed countries should collectively limit their greenhouse gas emissions by 25 to 40 % by 2020 compared to 1990 levels, through domestic and international efforts, as well as by 80 to 95 % by 2050 compared to 1990 levels. The EU has therefore proposed that developed countries should, as a group, achieve a 30% reduction on 1990 levels by 2020.

The EU already has adopted a package of laws that ensures a 20 % cut in its greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels by 2020. The March 2007 European Council committed to a 30% reduction, "provided that other developed countries commit themselves to comparable emission reductions and economically more advanced developing countries to contributing adequately according to their responsibilities and respective capabilities." ([7224/1/07](#)).

The EU also recognises that, in accordance with the findings of IPCC, the 2°C target cannot be achieved without a contribution from developing countries. Scientific research indicates that developing countries as a group, in particular the most advanced among them, would have to reduce their emissions by up to 30% below their projected emissions growth trend.

The EU position for Copenhagen, adopted in October 2009, is set out in [14790/09](#) and [15265/09](#). It will continue to evolve during the 15th Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC, which is to take place in Copenhagen from 7 to 18 December 2009. It will work on a global climate change regime to come into force when the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.