



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on Climate change and development

*2974th EXTERNAL RELATIONS Council meeting
Brussels, 17 November 2009*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"INTRODUCTION"

1. The Council recalls its Conclusions of March 2009 (Environment, ECOFIN and GAERC), June 2009 (Environment and ECOFIN) and October 2009 (Environment), and the European Council Conclusions of March, June, and October 2009, and reaffirms the EU's determination to reach an ambitious and comprehensive agreement in Copenhagen in December 2009 in line with the Bali Action Plan.
2. The Council underlines the importance of taking a medium- to long-term perspective to climate change and development, and of strengthening coherence between the two in order to successfully achieve internationally agreed climate and development objectives, ensuring that the fight against poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are not jeopardized.
3. The Council points out that climate change and its adverse impacts, in particular on sustainable development, migration, as well as on security, pose an additional burden on developing countries, especially on the least developed countries (LDCs), the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the African countries at risk of drought, desertification and floods, and increase the costs of reaching the MDGs.

P R E S S

4. The Council welcomes therefore the submission of the Commission/Presidency Joint Paper on Climate Change and Development and the aim to further integrate climate change into development cooperation, with a special focus on adaptation in the poorest and most vulnerable countries, and takes note of its recommendations.
5. The Council urges the Commission and Member States to engage more strongly in dialogue with and support partner countries to integrate climate change concerns into their development strategies and budget processes and underlines the respect for national ownership and every country's right to development while recognising its primary responsibility for its own national development.
6. The Council calls on EU Member States and the Commission, as well as all other donors, to support programmes that contribute to a low carbon and a climate resilient development path and adaptation to the adverse impacts of climate change. This support should include, inter alia, the preparation of low-carbon development strategies/growth plans (LCDS/LCGP), adaptation measures and their integration into national development strategies and budgets, increased capacity building and technology development and transfer. In providing such support special attention should be paid to gender equality and women's empowerment and to the application of the established principles of aid effectiveness¹ to climate change support.

ADAPTATION

7. The Council recalls the Bali Action Plan, in particular on enhanced action on the provision of new and additional financial resources; it recognizes that development cooperation has an important role to play in supporting developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impact of climate change, especially the LDCs and SIDS, and countries in Africa affected by drought, desertification and floods as is stated in the Bali Action Plan, and that such cooperation should build on support currently provided through bilateral and multilateral channels (including UNFCCC funds). The Council also emphasizes the need for a shift towards a long-term strategic approach to integrating climate resilience into national policies, supported by public finance where necessary. In this regard, support to efforts of developing countries to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change should be addressed taking into account that adaptation is context specific. The Council underlines that adaptation is both about undertaking technical adaptive measures and about initiatives that strengthen the capacity of individuals, ecosystems and societies to adapt to a changing climate.
8. In this context, the Council underlines the human dimension of climate change, including a gender perspective, and that poor people are most at risk, and that their resilience to climate change needs to be strengthened.
9. The Council recognises that effective adaptation can be achieved by, for instance, investments in health and education; improved access to water and energy; sustainable land, forests, and water management; enhancement of carbon stocks; combating desertification; protection of ecosystems and biodiversity; investments in flood protection infrastructure; sufficient water supply (including drinking water); and crop insurance schemes. The Council underlines that development assistance targeting adaptation efforts in the agriculture sector, including through agricultural research, will be decisive for food security and the livelihood of poor people.

¹ Principles established by the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action.

10. The Council stresses the role of the local level and local institutions in effective adaptation, within the framework of national institutions and planning.
11. In line with the Bali Action Plan, the Council recognises that climate change adaptation and disaster risk management are closely linked and that reducing disaster risk is critical to managing and adapting to the impacts of climate change and minimising the impacts on social and economic welfare. The Council emphasizes that close coordination is needed with the UN Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) as outlined in the EU Strategy for Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction in Developing Countries).²

MITIGATION

12. The Council recalls the 2 degree objective and recognises that in accordance with the findings by IPCC in its AR4³ and more recent studies, developed countries as a group have to take the lead by reducing their emissions below 1990 levels through domestic and complementary international efforts by 25 to 40 % by 2020 and by 80-95 % by 2050 and that developing countries as a group should achieve a substantial deviation below the currently predicted emissions growth rate, in the order of 15-30 % by 2020.
13. The Council underlines that development cooperation in support of mitigation in the least developed and most vulnerable countries should be oriented towards promoting win-win strategies for adaptation and mitigation and sustainable development, and should inter alia support access to efficient low carbon energy systems, transition to energy-efficient technology, renewable energy, increased energy security as well as sustainable management of land and marine ecosystems and wetlands, sustainable agriculture including food production, green growth and capacity building related to sustainable forest management.

Financing, Governance and Institutions

14. The Council reiterates that a deal on financing will be a central part of an agreement in Copenhagen. A gradual but significant increase in additional public and private financial flows is needed to help developing countries implement ambitious mitigation and adaptation strategies.⁴ All countries, except the least developed, should contribute to international public financing, through a comprehensive global distribution key based on emission levels and on GDP to reflect both responsibility for global emissions and ability to pay, with a considerable weight on emission levels. The EU and its Member States are ready to take on their resulting fair share of total international public finance.⁵

² Council Conclusions of 18 May 2009, doc. 8571/09.

³ Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

⁴ European Council of 29-30 October 2009 - Presidency Conclusions: paragraph 12 of doc. 15265/09.

⁵ European Council of 29-30 October 2009 - Presidency Conclusions: paragraph 16 of doc. 15265/09.

15. The Council underlines that, while support to mitigation and adaptation in developing countries will require additional resource mobilization from a wide range of financial sources, ODA will continue to play a role, particularly for support to adaptation, including disaster risk reduction, in the most vulnerable and least developed countries. The Council underlines that developed countries should honour their respective commitments of ODA contributions and reaffirms its commitments in this respect as set out in the European Council Conclusions of June 2005.⁶
16. In parallel with deliveries of climate financing all international parties should commit that such financing would not undermine or jeopardize the fight against poverty and continued progress towards the MDGs which will be discussed in Spring 2010. Innovative financing can play a role in ensuring predictable flows of financing for sustainable development, especially towards the poorest and most vulnerable countries.
17. The Council underlines that the overall governance structure and implementation of international climate change financing should, to the extent possible, build on existing and reformed mechanisms, channels and national and international institutions of the international financial architecture, and be decentralised, country-driven, transparent, allowing effective monitoring, and should fulfil standards for aid effectiveness. The Council supports the establishment of a high-level forum or body to inter alia provide a consolidated overview of international sources for financing climate-related investments in developing countries, and emphasises the need for balanced representation in such a forum or body. Priority must be given to avoid duplication and parallel channels and to utilise existing experiences and principles of development cooperation. Coherence, coordination and complementarity between institutions and mechanisms should be ensured.
18. The Council points out that addressing climate change is a multi-level governance issue that requires involvement and responsibility from all levels: individual, local, national, regional, and global, with a special focus on support to the local level, and recalls that the principle of subsidiarity should apply, leading to the decentralisation of knowledge, accountability and resources. Collaboration between different levels is needed.
19. The Council recognises the need to support institutional capacity building of local authorities and organisations and democratic governance processes within the framework of national policies and planning to tackle climate change, and that all countries have the responsibility to ensure efficient, accountable and responsible democratic governance and institutions, promoting transparency, and participatory approaches for all.
20. The Council recognises the need to reform the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) including through enhancing its effectiveness, efficiency, environmental integrity and governance as well as the importance of strengthening the participation of LDCs in the CDM.
21. The Council stresses that climate change also poses challenges that most effectively can be dealt with regionally, and underlines that regional institutions should play a more prominent role in the challenge of climate change, including areas such as exchange of experience and lessons learned, dissemination of know-how, and diffusion of information via early warning systems.

⁶ Council Conclusions of 21 October 2009 (paragraph 52), doc. 14790/09.

WAY FORWARD

22. The Council calls on EU Member States and the Commission to further integrate adaptation, risk reduction, mitigation efforts, into development cooperation policies, strategies and activities, building on dialogue with partner countries and, inter alia, on the Council Conclusions on an EU strategy for Supporting Disasters Risk Reduction in Developing Countries⁷, and the Council Conclusions on Integrating Environment in Development Cooperation⁸. In this regard, the Council supports the OECD guidance on integrating climate change adaptation into development cooperation as well as work on developing a climate change adaptation marker. The Council notes that the 10th EDF Mid-Term Review and other relevant and similar reviews of geographic and thematic instruments provide an opportunity to enhance the integration of climate change issues into development cooperation, and calls on the Commission and Member States to taking forward alignment and harmonisation of programming processes in this respect.
23. The Council invites EU Member States and the Commission to support National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) priorities and priorities identified in related planning documents in the short term, as well as supporting a country-owned process of formulating and implementing national adaptation actions and integrating them into national development plans, strategies and budgets.
24. The Council urges EU Member States and the Commission to base their development cooperation and support on the perspectives of partner countries and the human capacity to address the challenges of mitigation and adaptation within the overall context of national ownership, and in this regard to focus particularly on supporting the local level and its authorities.
25. The Council invites the Commission in cooperation with Member States in an appropriate framework, to report to the Council by the end of 2010, on progress in taking forward the recommendations as set out in these Conclusions."

⁷ Council Conclusions of 19 May 2009, doc. 8571/09.

⁸ Council Conclusions of 25 May 2009, doc. 11474/09.