



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 22 December 2004**

**16298/04**

**ENV 711  
ENER 274  
FISC 262  
ONU 120**

**INFORMATION NOTE**

---

from : General Secretariat

to : Delegations

---

No. prev. doc. : 15561/04 ENV 667 ENER 262 FISC 255 ONU 111

---

Subject : Climate Change:

- Medium and longer term emission reduction strategies, including targets
  - = Council conclusions
- 

Delegations will find attached the conclusions adopted by the Council (Environment) on 20 December 2004.

---

**Climate Change:  
Medium and longer term emission reduction strategies, including targets  
= Council conclusions =**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION:

1. WELCOMES the outcome of the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change ("the Convention") in Buenos Aires, including the Buenos Aires programme of work on adaptation and response measures and the important decision to start a dialogue among all Parties next year on current and future actions on adaptation and mitigation to respond to climate change; LOOKS FORWARD to engaging with all Parties to the Convention in this dialogue, while reconfirming its support for continuing combating climate change under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol to meet the ultimate objective of the Convention.
  
2. ACKNOWLEDGES that climate change is one of mankind's greatest challenges, which is likely to have significant negative global environmental, economic and social implications and is expected to impinge negatively on sustainable development and the livelihoods of millions of people all over the world; REAFFIRMS that, with a view to meeting the ultimate objective of the Convention to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, overall global annual mean surface temperature increase should not exceed 2°C above pre-industrial levels; STRESSES that the Kyoto Protocol is an important first step in the global fight against climate change; EMPHASISES the findings of the IPCC TAR that significant further steps will be necessary to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and limit adverse effects of climate change.

3. NOTES that scientific uncertainties exist in translating a temperature increase of 2°C into greenhouse gas concentrations and emission paths; however, RECOGNISES that recent scientific research and work under the IPCC indicates that it is unlikely that stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations above 550 ppmv CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent would be consistent with meeting the 2°C long-term objective and that in order to have a reasonable chance to limit global warming to no more than 2°C, stabilisation of concentrations well below 550 ppmv CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent may be needed; NOTES that keeping this long-term temperature objective within reach will require global greenhouse gas emissions to peak within two decades, followed by substantial reductions in the order of at least 15% and perhaps by as much as 50% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels.
4. UNDERLINES that climate change is a global challenge that requires a comprehensive and global response; REAFFIRMS the need to start promptly the consideration of the post 2012 framework within the context of the UN climate change process; LOOKS FORWARD to engaging with all Parties to the Convention in a common and open dialogue on further action in 2005; EMPHASISES its willingness, in the context of a global agreement, to commit to its fair share of the necessary global mitigation efforts.
5. RECOGNISES that decision-making in our societies, not least by the business community, requires a long term global policy perspective to inform investment, guide the development of the appropriate regulatory framework and stimulate investment in technology development and diffusion; NOTES, in view of the global emissions reductions required and if allowance is made for an increase in aggregated greenhouse gas emissions from developing countries in pursuit of sustainable development goals, the necessity of significantly enhanced reduction efforts by all developed countries, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the medium term to be able to meet the long-term emission reduction challenge; EMPHASISES the need of proposing medium and longer term emission reduction strategies, including targets, at the March 2005 (Environment) Council as a contribution to the 2005 Spring European Council consideration of medium and longer term emission reduction strategies, including targets, taking into account the Commission's report on costs and benefits.

6. RECOGNISES that a global approach should involve broad participation of countries in order to arrive at a post 2012 regime that is environmentally effective, economically efficient and socially equitable and takes into account common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities; EMPHASISES that developed countries should continue to take the lead in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions; UNDERLINES that the EU is already implementing the Kyoto Protocol and URGES developed countries which do not intend to ratify the Kyoto Protocol to make comparable efforts during the first commitment period and to engage constructively in joint consideration of next steps beyond 2012.
  
7. RECOGNISES that developing countries already undertake actions to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions; NOTES that to stabilise global greenhouse gas emissions within two decades and reduce them thereafter, increasing action by developing countries in controlling their emissions is also needed, including policies to improve energy efficiency; RECOGNISES that these actions should be compatible with sustainable economic and social development and poverty eradication, which are the key priorities of developing countries and that full account should be taken of the specific needs and special circumstances of developing countries, in particular least developed countries (LDCs); UNDERLINES the importance of incorporating climate change considerations into poverty reduction strategies and national strategies for sustainable development.
  
8. ENCOURAGES Parties to explore new approaches for differentiation between Parties in a fair and flexible framework, offering opportunities for broadening and deepening Parties' contributions to the mitigation of climate change, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities; EMPHASISES that such a global approach could be supportive of meeting other sustainable development policy goals and lead to an extension of co-operation to other fields, such as e.g. transfer of technology, energy supply security and reduction of local air pollution.

9. RECONFIRMS its support for continuing combating climate change under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol; EMPHASISES its desire for an early discussion with all Parties on a future climate change regime, which should be developed in a comprehensive way, taking into account all important greenhouse gases, sectors and mitigation options, including emissions from international aviation and maritime transportation; NOTES that the role of land use, land use change and forestry will need to be taken into account; UNDERLINES the crucial role of the methodological rules established under the Convention and the Protocol; STRESSES the importance of utilising tools such as emissions trading and project-based mechanisms beyond 2012 in a global framework, as a means for cost effective emission reductions and to support sustainable development in developing countries, ensuring continuity of projects implemented during the first Kyoto commitment period.

10. RECOGNISES that there is a need for additional policies to arrive at a low greenhouse gas emitting economy, thereby improving competitiveness e.g. by building competitive advantage in new technologies; ACKNOWLEDGES the need of further increase of energy efficiency, where appropriate, by improving standards; STRESSES the need to significantly enhance investments in research and development with regard to low carbon emitting energy technologies, concerning i.a. energy efficiency and renewables and diffusion of existing and new technologies; STRESSES also the role of the forthcoming EU framework programme on technology research 2007-2013 in this context; WELCOMES the process to develop a strategy for addressing the medium and long term time frame for renewable energy beyond 2010 as contained in the (Energy) Council conclusions of November 2004; ACKNOWLEDGES that the Cardiff process needs to be further pursued, in particular with respect to the integration of climate considerations in other policy areas, since thereby co-benefits are often achieved; STRESSES its concern regarding the increase in emissions from the transport sector; VALUES the input from other Council formations to the integration of climate considerations in other policy areas; EMPHASISES its intention to further develop the European Union emissions trading scheme (EU ETS) and in that respect LOOKS FORWARD to the first review of the EU ETS in 2006; RECALLS its intention to consider establishing links with other emissions trading schemes to develop an efficient global emissions trading market; INVITES the European Commission to develop a strategic framework on climate change measures and technologies (eliminating barriers) under the ECCP, building *inter alia* on the Commission's report on costs and benefits as requested by the 2004 Spring European Council, in order to enable decision-making on ways and means to meet a future EU target.

11. REITERATES that mitigation of climate change is the cornerstone of present and future climate change policies and that, since climate change is already occurring, adaptation to climate change is a necessary complement to such policies; REITERATES that even with significant emission reductions over the coming decades, societies in developing and developed countries have to prepare for and adapt to the consequences of some inevitable climate change; NOTES that postponing mitigation will increase the need for adaptation or may even render it impossible, e.g. in case of rapid, non-linear changes; EMPHASISES that the feasibility of adaptation strategies depends to a large extent on the level of mitigation; REITERATES that incorporating the consideration of climate risks into poverty reduction strategies and national strategies for sustainable development is key to minimising developing countries' vulnerability to climate change; UNDERLINES the need to limit climate change effects in order to support national and international efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation goals and targets; EMPHASISES the importance of the EU Action Plan on climate change in the context of development cooperation, adopted by the Council in November 2004, in achieving these goals; UNDERLINES the need to further develop synergies between the Rio Conventions and the other multilateral environmental agreements.
12. UNDERLINES that addressing climate change has costs but also brings opportunities and incentives for innovation in support of the Lisbon Agenda goals of economic growth, full employment and sustainable development; NOTES that broader participation in efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is necessary to achieve the environmental objective and will contribute to mitigate economic adjustment costs and avoid distortions in competition; EMPHASISES that when evaluating costs and benefits of future climate change policies it is vital to include monetary, non-monetary and non-tangible aspects of climate change policies into both the costs of action (taking into account such aspects as technological developments, reduction potentials and consumption patterns) and the costs of inaction (such as damage from more frequent severe weather events, risks of abrupt climate change, loss of biodiversity, irreversible impacts, social and safety aspects and implications for other regions, and positive effects such as ancillary benefits and the contribution of technology innovation to competitiveness and economic growth); LOOKS FORWARD to the Commission's report on costs and benefits in view of the 2005 Spring European Council consideration of medium and longer term emission reduction strategies, including targets.