



WARSAW 2013: SUMMIT OF CLIMATE SINNERS

Postponement is not an option!

Starting on November 11, experts and government representatives from more than 190 countries will be convening for two weeks for the 19th round of the international climate negotiations, this time in Warsaw (Conference of the Parties, COP 19). Two years ahead of the major summit in Paris, at which a global, binding climate agreement is to be signed, participating governments at the Warsaw summit are playing down expectations. It's no big surprise, since host country Poland has significantly hampered European climate policy in the past, using its veto power. Poland has allowed the climate summit to be sponsored by climate-damaging companies and has invited the coal industry to a parallel international "coal summit." There is a very real concern that the Polish government is using the negotiations to whitewash its use of fossil fuels; after all, more than 90% of Poland's current electricity usage is produced through coal and there are still fears in Poland that climate protection measures might come at the expense of economic development.

It's not a good sign for the November negotiations, where priorities include the phasing out of fossil fuels, increased standards, financing of climate funds and greater long-term commitment.

Europe thwarts itself...

Europe used to be a leader in international climate protection. Today, there's no need to waste words on the results of climate conferences past, or to wag a finger at China, India, the USA, Russia or Canada. Just one look at European capitals is more than enough to confirm that the European countries are hardly moving towards a

common energy and climate policy. The conditions for the development of a common policy have changed in the last year. The financial and economic crisis, a languishing energy turnaround in Germany, frustration at the implementation of EU directives as well as party interests and single interests have stymied the European triad of greenhouse gas reduction, development of renewable energy and increasing energy efficiency.

... and there's a lack of ambition

Instead of aiming for 20/20/20 (20% CO₂ reduction, 20% expansion of renewables and 20% savings and increased efficiency by 2020), today the goal is at most 40/0/0. The government in London recently proposed that the EU should agree to 40% CO₂ reduction by 2030, and 50% if the countries outside Europe follow suit and formulate similarly ambitious climate protection goals. Given that the EU long ago achieved the promised 20% reduction, an increase to 40% is overdue.

But the European states haven't even been able to agree on 30% at this point. And even if an accord could be reached on the European level, the question remains as to which methods or technologies would be used to reach this goal. The construction of new nuclear power plants, more efficient coal plants or the removal and storage of CO₂ would then be just as acceptable as the expansion of renewable energies. As a minimum political requirement, Europe must package and vigorously promote the reduction of greenhouse gases, the expansion of renewable energies and the continuous improvement of energy efficiency well beyond 2020.

Germany without a climate policy

But it fits with this development that in Italy, support for solar energy development is waning. And in Spain, the second largest solar market outside Germany, the compensation for energy fed into the grid is to be retroactively reduced.

Germany, too, has shown a surprising lack of courage when it comes to promoting climate protection. Even at this year's Petersberg Climate Dialogue, Chancellor Angela Merkel swore by the World Climate Treaty: "Waiting is not an option", she told the delegates, because even if all industrial countries immediately stopped emitting greenhouse gasses, the two-degree goal is no longer achievable. But with the first landmark decision on the tightening of emission standards for cars on the European level, the interests of the automotive industry are promoted. Even the decision of June 2013 to reduce exhaust emissions within the EU to 95 grams by 2020 represented a compromise with manufacturers. If it were up to the Germans, this target would have been put off to 2024.

Reform of emissions trading comes to naught

It's because of the German government that the European Initiative toward reducing the CO₂ certificates in circulation has come to nothing as yet. The Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Vice Chancellor had prevented reforms at the European level. The idea was that air pollution should be costly to European industry. Therefore, companies would need certificates for the emission of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide. But the price of these certificates is so low that there is no incentive. The European Parliament wants to basically steer in the opposite direction: They considered removing 900 million European emissions trading system certificates from the market. This was intended to raise the price for a ton of CO₂. After all, only with the necessary 30 euro per ton would the emissions trading scheme send out price signals that would act as incentives for the now needed investments in low-carbon technologies.

True, the EU Parliament made a second attempt in July 2013 to remove the certificates from the market temporarily, but this did not reform the system, since there are more than two billion surplus certificates on the market. So it is no surprise that a ton of CO₂ currently costs less than 5 euros.

Europe's credibility is at stake

In Durban, the EU and a group of smaller developing countries – particularly the island states – managed to convince countries like India to develop a global and binding treaty by 2015, which would go into effect in 2020. But the EU lost its leadership role after failing to come up with any recognizable political concept last year in Doha.

Still, the credibility of a German and European climate policy is more important for the international negotiation process, because in Warsaw – as at the previous climate

conferences – the goal is still to convince countries that have not yet made any promises to finally establish their own ambitious climate protection goals. Germany's successful energy transition set an international standard for the energy policy transformation of a developed country. A failure in implementation would have disastrous consequences for international climate policy.

Climate justice – Shared but differentiated responsibility

As before, the large group of developing countries is suffering the greatest climate change impact. This includes the small island states; countries affected by the melting of glaciers; and the most vulnerable, least developed countries, the so-called LDCs. These countries have little if anything to do with the anthropogenic causes of climate change.

For these countries in particular, therefore, fairness and justice are of great importance in the international climate negotiations. And the principle of "shared but differentiated responsibility" (article 3 of the Convention) is also a central element of the negotiations for many development and emerging industrial countries. It is understandable that there are major differences in how "fair" is understood, between industrial, emerging and developing countries, because on one hand it implies responsibility for creating the problem and on the other hand with a country's current economic performance, and thus its possible contribution toward climate protection and its ability to adapt.

But for bringing about climate justice at least three issues should be looked at: the sharing of burdens, risks and opportunities.

In the past, the consideration of only sharing burdens led actors to block negotiations; the most prominent example was the conference in Copenhagen, where industrial and emerging countries worked out a weak compromise in the style of the G20, without taking the concerns of developing countries into consideration.

When considering the distribution of risks, it quickly becomes clear that the higher the ambitions of the major

"There is no doubt that we have to act and that we have to act now. Now is the time. It is not tomorrow. It is not the day after tomorrow. It is now. Now is the time". – Christiana Figueres, UNFCCC, speaking at Chatham House in London, October 2013.

emitting countries toward greater climate protection, the lower the risks that must be shared. The question about "loss and damage" (how to handle damages that have already occurred and those that can not be avoided in the future) raised by developing countries is part of this debate. This also means that the less willing the major emitting countries are to promote climate protection, the heavier the demands will be from impacted countries for compensation for existing damages.

But the sharing of burdens and risks only makes sense if one considers the opportunities linked with the transition to lower-carbon, socially just, closed-circle economies. This includes the issue of climate financing as well as areas of technology transfer and capacity building.

Only if one views the three aspects of climate justice together, are the opportunities for a positive and constructive dynamic increased, leading to a future-oriented and successful international climate policy.

Framework for fairness

Segments of civil society are now proposing to pass a fairness reference framework at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Here, indicators could be developed and used to adjust levels of obligations and expectations. Because in addition to considering the appropriateness of claims as well as the skills and capacities of individual countries, one must also evaluate the requirements for adaptation and development. In many countries, the right to development for the purpose of poverty reduction takes priority over refraining from growth, which in their view is inevitably associated with climate change.

One cannot hold out much hope for climate negotiations, given the inaction of many industrialized nations (USA, Canada) and the narrow ambitions when it comes reduction of greenhouse gasses (Japan, EU), which enables developing and newly industrial countries to set their own sights low and to place their right to development in the foreground.

On the way to lower-carbon societies

This is where the rich countries of Europe must take a pioneering role; other countries are already on their way to surpassing the EU when it comes to developing low-carbon development paths. Back in 2012, China already proposed – in its 12th five-year-plan – an ambitious energy saving law and accelerated development of renewable energy. Experts predict that the country could reach its peak demand for coal even before 2020. Even in the USA, the government has significantly increased the emission standards for newly registered motor vehicles by 2025. In Australia, the government has already set up an emissions trading scheme and South Korea has put it on the agenda for 2015.

In contrast to the limited progress in industrial countries, developing countries have in the meantime made significant progress in passing climate protection laws. According to a recent study by the Parliamentarians

Network GLOBE,¹ Mexico has passed a “general law on climate change”, which sets priorities on both reducing emissions and adapting.

Kenya has prepared a regulation for the creation of a climate change authority and also established an action plan on adaptation and emissions reduction. India has considered recommendations for a “low-carbon-expert group” in the framework of a five-year plan, whose goals include reducing the energy intensity of production processes and diversifying energy sources.

Pakistan adopted its national climate change strategy back in September 2012; in June 2012 Vietnam launched a national EDD action plan aimed at reducing emissions from land use, land-use change and forestry.

The new IPCC report confirms that climate change is caused by people

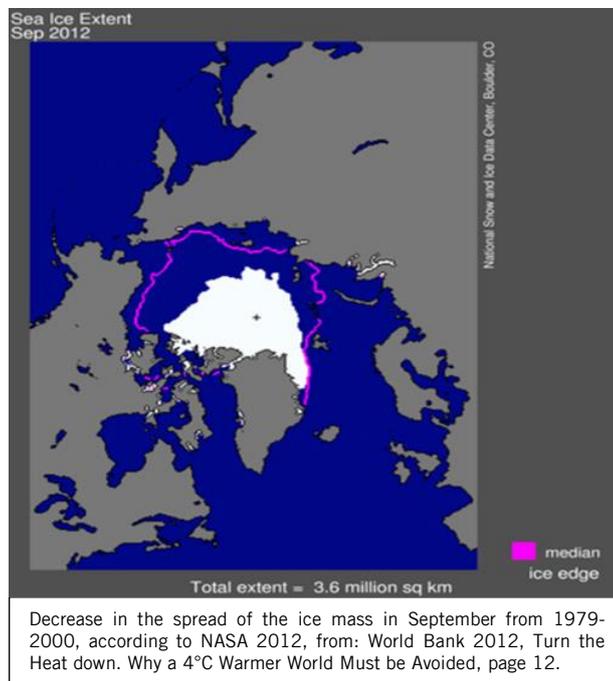
In the fall of 2013, the long-awaited first chapter of the fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel

on Climate Change was presented (three further chapters will follow in 2014); it is equally forceful in pointing to the need for immediate action. Last year, shortly before Doha, it was the World Bank Report – “Turn the Heat Down...” – which was, according to the World Bank president, intended to shock people into action.

The IPCC authors, who set out the scientific, physical basis of climate change in the first chapter, present new evidence here. These prognoses, too, are clear. For example, the previously predicted rise in sea level is considerably higher than in the Assessment Report of 2007. The sea is warming; the ice masses of Greenland and the Antarctic are losing volume and glaciers are melting virtually everywhere in the world.

According to the report, CO₂ concentrations have risen 40% as compared to the pre-industrial age, firstly through the burning of fossil fuels and secondly through changes in land use. Although the number of extreme weather events, like heavy rain or hurricanes, has not increased (as formulated in the 2007 IPCC report), the events have in fact increased in intensity.

This brings Thomas Stocker, co-chair of the working group that prepared the fifth report’s first chapter, to a rather unsurprising conclusion: *“Continued emissions of greenhouse gases will cause further warming and chang-*



¹ http://www.globeinternational.org/images/climate-study/3rd_GLOBE_Report.pdf

es in all components of the climate system. Limiting climate change will require substantial reductions of greenhouse gas emissions”.

Prepare for Paris now

The awful results of climate change are already visible. In many countries we experience the impact through lack of rain or conversely through constant flooding. Conditions are life threatening to the people in these regions. The weather has become more extreme; potable water has become a rare commodity. Conflicts and wars over resources such as land and water drive people from their traditional homes and homelands. Poor and vulnerable societies already have reached the point where they are unable to cope with the impact of an average global warming of four degrees and more. If we do nothing to counter this development, these changes will not only impact natural systems negatively – they will also cause entire societies to collapse.

Thus it is even more important to make the right decisions in Warsaw, so that an international, binding climate protection treaty for all participants can be passed at the negotiations in Paris in two years.

“Not only should long-term climate finance from developed countries be accountable and transparent, but it should also be directed as a priority to the most vulnerable developing countries.” – Essam Hassan Mohamed Ahmed, co-author of the IPCC Report from Egypt.

In order to restore their position as climate protection role models again, Europe and specifically Germany must set the following minimum goals in Warsaw:

Reduction:

1. The German government must continue to follow the 2020 reduction target of 40%. It should announce that these and other longer-term goals should be anchored in a **binding climate protection law** in Germany.
2. Germany must campaign for an **increase in the EU reduction target of at least 30% by 2020** and ambitious goals for 2030.
3. European governments must work towards an agreement in Warsaw regarding a **global emissions peak by 2015**.

Climate financing:

4. In Warsaw, Germany and other industrial countries must declare the level to which they are prepared to support climate financing in developing countries by 2015. The industrial countries **must commit to \$60 billion from 2013-2015**, of which at least 50% is to be dedicated to climate adaptation. And financial support for adaptation measures must be secured for the years 2013-2020.
5. In addition, growth levels must be agreed upon in order to reach the 100-billion goal by 2020. Germany must make commitments to the "Adaptation Fund" and the "Green Climate Fund" in Warsaw, after agreements were reached last June for the "Least Developed Countries Fund."

Adaptation and dealing with climate damages:

6. In order to support adaptation to climate change, Germany must commit to a strong role in the future climate agreement. In Warsaw, the international community must build on the Doha Agreement, creating an **international mechanism for dealing with climate change damages and losses**. In addition to coordinating relevant processes, they should address the increasingly unavoidable social economic and ecological impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable developing countries.

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