

ECO



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Taking the Lead?

It is increasingly clear that the only way to avoid a climatic catastrophe is to move quickly to negotiate an ambitious global agreement that can bring the rise in global emissions to a halt and start reducing them sometime in the next decade. This will be impossible without substantial advances in the commitments by industrialised countries and other contributions of many developing countries to this effort.

Indeed there is growing recognition within developing countries of the need for greatly expanded efforts to shift their development to a low-emissions pathway, including a chorus of voices calling for an immediate start to negotiations of new mechanisms and new responsibilities for curbing rising emissions from developing countries.

However, the poor performance of Annex I countries in fulfilling their responsibilities under the Climate Convention to “take the lead in combating climate change” has placed a major obstacle in the path of progress by developing countries. Recent reports of rising

emissions in industrialised countries, over-allocation of allowances in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme, and a lack of enthusiasm about discussing ambitious post-2012 pathways and targets in anything other than the most general terms, all serve to undermine the voices in developing countries who want their countries to step up to the plate. While there have been proposals for a 30 per cent reductions target for the EU by 2020, when are they going to put these cards on the table?

Even worse is when the US, Australia and Canada shamelessly call on countries like China, India and Brazil to take on commitments, while they themselves have spurned their own responsibilities. Nothing could more discredit the idea of developing countries taking on new contributions than, for example, ex-COP President Rona Ambrose’s announcement that Canada will not even try to meet its Kyoto targets, suggesting that much poorer countries must take on commitments before Canada moves one hair-breadth forward.

ECO is left to wonder: What part of “taking the lead” do they not understand?

But we cannot despair and throw up our hands while a few irresponsible Parties would like to lead a retreat on climate protection, keeping the world hurtling towards catastrophe. Common sense must and will prevail, and all indications are that the Ambroses, Harpers and Bushes will soon be replaced by politicians who recognise the need for urgent action on climate change. Their constituents will seek real leaders who are willing to put forward bold proposals that will

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Do the Real Victims Have a Say?

From the Inuit in the Arctic to the Indigenous Peoples of the Pacific, and from the Kuna in Panama to the Somali in North East Kenya, Indigenous Peoples all over the world are already dramatically impacted by climate change. In addition, Indigenous Peoples are amongst the economically most marginalised in the world. Moreover, most Indigenous Peoples are very dependent upon their natural environment, thus the contraction of forests, coastlines and polar ecosystems destroy the very basis of their livelihoods.

This vulnerability would be reason enough to give Indigenous Peoples a strong voice in the climate regime which they are not. Yet it is worth noting the special status of Indigenous Peoples is clearly recognised by international law including the International Labor Organization and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The establishment of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues five years ago also focused on their special status and participation rights in international policy making.

So why are Indigenous Peoples still being ignored in the climate regime? Despite repeated requests, Indigenous Peoples have not been given special status in Nairobi. When they registered for this meeting they could only enter the building as “NGOs”. While this might seem like a minor detail, it is not. Agenda 21 already

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Nuclear Renaissance?

Coming...coming...well not really.

A side event hosted by the International Atomic Energy Agency can always be anticipated at every climate COP negotiations. This year was no different and neither were the two gentlemen telling their same tired old story about the wonders of nuclear power.

Poor guys. For a decade they could not point to a single new nuclear project in the West that anyone was willing to invest in. And they always had to handle difficult questions about decisions by Germany, Sweden, Belgium and Spain to phase out their existing nuclear power projects. Now that they finally have one new reactor project in Finland to highlight, it is not giving the positive signals they were hoping for. The construction project is running badly behind schedule, it has been heavily criticised by the Finnish nuclear safety authority and its financial arrangements are being investigated by the European Commission because of

suspected illegal subsidies.

However, they still have some friends. Like the *Financial Times* (FT). A week ago its headlines screamed that the International Energy Agency (IEA), in its new World Energy Outlook, would urge the world to build more nuclear power plants to prevent further climate change.

Well, the FT should have held its horses and waited for the actual report, which was launched last Tuesday in London. They would have learned that the IEA's "Alternative" scenarios suggest only a relatively small role for nuclear power. In contrast the report suggests a much larger role for renewables and energy efficiency – together said to displace *six to nine* times more fossil emissions than nuclear. And even this increase of nuclear power would – according to the IEA – be conditional upon solving existing problems related to safety, waste and nuclear proliferation (does North Korea or Iran come to mind?).

Additionally, heavy government subsidies would still be required. Finally, although the new scenarios in the IEA report are improvements on their previous ones, they still do not get anywhere near where the global community needs to be to avoid dangerous climate change.

So, nothing new for nuclear projects from this report either.

Sorry, guys. Maybe next year.

Climate Change Cartoon Competition!

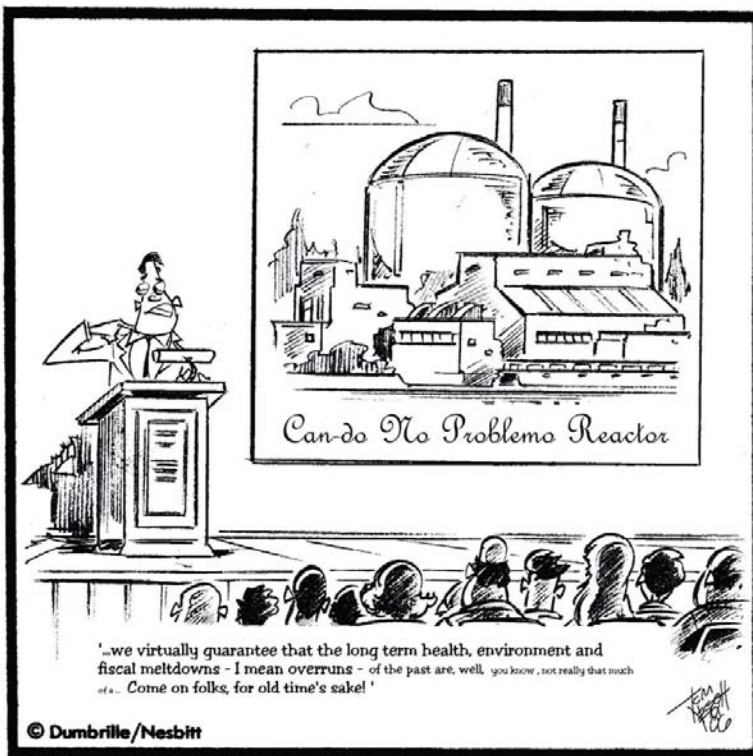


With the huge increase in media coverage of the climate issue over the past year, "climate" is suddenly a hot topic for cartoonists, especially political cartoonists. Over the next 10 days, ECO solicits entries from delegates, observers, and all ECO readers worldwide. We will print a selection of the best entries throughout the rest of the COP, and at the end of next week, a (sort of) impartial panel of judges consisting of ENGOs, BINGOs and RINGOs will choose our lucky winner!

So please, send your entry in today to <ecopaper@hotmail.com>! A small to medium sized jpeg is preferred, but if you only have hard copy please pass it on to a member of Climate Action Network (CAN) who will get it to our editorial team. Enter as many times as you like, anonymously if you prefer, and YOU could be the proud owner of a unique collection of "negotiation stuff" with which you can impress your friends and colleagues!

– Taking the Lead? , from front page – lead to the type of reductions that will actually be steps toward solving the climate problem.

But in the meantime, responsible political leaders and negotiators must move forward without their irresponsible counterparts to put the world on a pathway to global emissions reduction in a necessary time frame, knowing that if they lead, others will follow. And developing countries must move forward as part of this effort despite, not because of, what a few bad apples are telling them to do.



– Do the Real Victims , from front page – pointed out that Indigenous Peoples are not NGOs; they are Peoples. For that reason, a process like the Convention on Biodiversity has long since established a clear special status for Indigenous Peoples' organisations, with speaking rights, badges, meeting room and, most importantly, specific rights to participate in negotiations that are affecting them. In most expert groups under the Biodiversity

Convention there is a specific seat for representatives of Indigenous and local communities.

Additionally, it is important to note that the effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in the Climate Convention is not only of interest to them. As the Indigenous Forum points out: "Indigenous territories and lands cover a vast variety of the world's fragile, important and diverse ecosystems. The protection and

conservation of these lands by Indigenous Peoples as the custodians through uncounted generations, is the lands' best hope of survival and the best defence against the worst elements of climate change and its impacts."

So if mitigating climate change is top of the agenda, it is time to start listening to those people who have made a positive contribution to this planet, and are now becoming the main victim of those who failed to do so.