

**Backgrounder**  
**2007 UN Climate Change Conference**  
Bali, Indonesia  
December 3-14, 2007

From December 3-14, the most important climate change meeting to date will take place in Bali, Indonesia. This [United Nations Climate Change Conference](#), will set out the framework for negotiations of the [second phase of the Kyoto Protocol](#), commencing in 2012, and will lay the groundwork for strengthening global efforts to tackle climate change.

A concerted global effort, starting in Bali, will be required to limit average global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels, the widely accepted threshold beyond which human society faces unacceptable risks from dangerous climate change.

**What exactly is the Bali meeting about?**

The Bali Conference is not concerned with the fine details of a global agreement but rather about obtaining a commitment to negotiate such an agreement. Negotiators will decide on the areas it will cover (e.g. mitigation, adaptation, technology, financing etc.), the processes and procedures needed to reach a deal and the negotiating deadline. If all goes well, the Bali Conference will launch the critical first steps in securing a much stronger global agreement for 2013.

**Why is this meeting important?**

This year, scientists on the UN [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#) shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with [Al Gore](#) for their efforts *to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract such change.*"

The IPCC is urgently recommending that world leaders and their policymakers take all necessary steps to cause average global greenhouse gas emissions to peak by 2015 and then to decline quickly afterwards. Scientists say if they fail to do this and average temperatures exceed the 2° C mark, severe food shortages causing large scale human starvation, and mass species extinction of plants and animals, will certainly follow.

With only a few years left in which to act, any gap between the end of the first phase of Kyoto in 2012 and a subsequent agreement would represent a tragic waste of precious time and a stalling in negotiating momentum that could jeopardize a new deal.

## **What progress has been achieved since Canada hosted the UN Climate Conference in Montreal in 2005?**

The UN Climate Conference in Montreal in 2005 accomplished several important things. First and most importantly, concerted pressure from progressive governments and civil society prevented the Bush Administration from killing Kyoto after 2012. A similar effort saved it again at last year's conference in Nairobi, Kenya.

The Montreal Conference also launched Kyoto Phase II. The "Article 3.9 decision" called for negotiations through an "ad hoc working group" with a goal of completing negotiations for a new round of binding emission reduction targets for industrialized countries to be completed in order to ensure "no gap" between the end of the 1st commitment period (2008-2012) and the new one. Article 3.9 talks will continue to analyze the emissions reductions potential of Annex I (industrialized) countries until 2008 with a view to concluding negotiations by 2008-9 in order to be sure of ratification and no gap in 2013. This was a critical achievement because it meant that climate negotiators would be working hard between then and now to make real progress. A similar breakthrough is needed in Bali.

The Montreal Conference also delivered all of the rules to make Kyoto work (the COP-7 decisions from Marrakesh), enhanced the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and collected \$8 million (US) from countries in attendance to help the CDM Executive Board and secretariat. It is also significant that the decision was made to get prepared for talks in Nairobi under Article 9 of the Convention. Because Article 9 talks happen under the Convention, they involve both industrialized and developing countries in looking at the future Kyoto contributions ALL can make. The first session took place in Nairobi and the second is scheduled for 2008.

## **2) Post-2012: What is needed by Kyoto "Annex I" countries**

### **What does the science demand (IPCC)?**

The November 2007 IPCC Synthesis Report on Climate Change [<http://www.ipcc.ch/>] leaves no room for doubt: Avoiding dangerous climate change is technologically and economically possible – as well as highly beneficial - but time is definitely running out.

The IPCC presents the world's best available scientific evidence. This evidence is telling us that avoiding dangerous climate change necessitates holding global average temperature increases as far below 2°C as possible, compared with pre-industrial levels. To stay under 2°C the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere cannot hit 450 ppm CO<sub>2</sub> eq.<sup>1</sup> And to keep under 450 ppm CO<sub>2</sub> eq., average global emissions must peak by 2015 and then decline quickly thereafter.

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<sup>1</sup> "carbon dioxide equivalent" or the concentration of carbon dioxide that would cause the same amount of warming as a given mixture of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

**The IPCC is saying that Annex I<sup>2</sup> countries must reduce their emissions to a levels 25-40% below 1990 levels by 2020 at the latest, and 80-95% below 1990 levels by 2050.**

These numbers point to the truly urgent need for transformational change in how we produce and use energy.

### **The European Union Position**

The European Union - and Germany as chair of the G8 and EU chair for the UN negotiations— has been pushing hard for strong measures to be contained in the new agreement. EU/Germany:

- Is pushing the UN and G8+5 to set 2°C as the upper limit of global warming;
- Has committed to 20% GHG reductions below 1990 by 2020 for itself and has pledged 30% if other Annex 1 countries do the same;
- Wants global GHG reductions of 50% below 1990 by 2050, with much greater reductions for developed countries;
- Wants negotiations to continue under the Kyoto Protocol and pushed for a Bali negotiating mandate at the G8+5 Heiligendamm Summit;
- Has committed to 20% renewable energy by 2020; and,
- Has committed to 20% efficiency improvement by 2020 and wants the same for all Parties.

### **The United States Position**

With less than 5% of the world's population, the United States is responsible for about 25% of total global warming pollution. Despite this fact, in 2001 President George W. Bush withdrew the U.S. from the Kyoto process, claiming that the Protocol was unfair to industrialized countries and would hurt the U.S. economy. It has been oppositional on each point, listed above. That is, the U.S.:

- Continues to block any reference to the 2°C limit in every forum;
- Opposes any targets for global GHG emissions or country commitments, preferring at best a voluntary "pledge and review" approach;
- Continues to oppose discussions under the Kyoto Protocol, preferring, at best, the Framework Convention and at worst, voluntary agreements under non-UN bodies like the Asia-Pacific Partnership, APEC, and the Bush administration's "Major Emitters" group; and,
- On energy efficiency, suggested weaker language at the G8+5 Heiligendamm Summit concerning countries doing what they can.

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<sup>2</sup> Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, European Community, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain, Northern Ireland, United States of America

Thankfully, Americans are not waiting for the Bush administration to take action and are coming up with creative solutions to reduce global warming pollution throughout the country. This year an unprecedented number of climate change bills were introduced in the U.S. Congress. With presidential elections in November 2008 and a sea-change in attitude towards the climate crisis, the world can reasonably expect much improved U.S. leadership on climate issues in the coming years. At the same time, we cannot afford to lose time by waiting. The rest of the world must push ahead in reducing emissions while planning for the inevitable day when the U.S. climbs aboard.

### **The Australian Position**

Although Australia was one of the first countries to sign Kyoto (agreeing to limit increases in GHG emissions to 108% over its 1990 level), it declined to ratify when it saw the US walk away. Australia's Labor Party is now promising to reverse a decade of opposition to the pact if it wins elections and to immediately ratify. The move would further isolate the United States and Canada ahead of December's international climate meeting in Bali.

### **The Canadian Position**

The current Government of Canada is clearly much closer to the U.S. position than the positions of EU/Germany. For example:

- Canada has abandoned its commitment under the Kyoto Protocol and has expressed more interest in promoting new technologies under the voluntary Asia Pacific Partnership than in strengthening the Kyoto Protocol after 2012.\
- Canada, like the US, has never publicly pronounced on the 2°C limit or what "dangerous" climate change means;
- At the G8+5 Heiligendamm Summit, the US refused to join in making a voluntary pledge to reduce its emissions 50% below 1990 by 2050, while Canada did pledge to the target but only after watering down the language by removing both the baseline year(Canada uses 2006 as its baseline for its domestic plan) and the deadline year, making it virtually meaningless;
- Canada has been actively promoting its [intensity-based](#) approach for GHG reductions, first at the G8+5 Summit, and now in Bali, even though the G8 stated that intensity-based targets should be reserved for developing countries, not developed ones like Canada and despite the fact that the approach has been thoroughly rejected by Canadian and international experts for being too weak to deliver true reductions before 2015, 2020 or later.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> see Bramley, Matthew, "Analysis of the Government of Canada's April 2007 Greenhouse Gas Policy Announcement." Pembina Institute. May 2007.

Lewis, Mark C., "Global Emissions Trading A propensity for intensity: the Canadian carbon conundrum." Deutsch Bank. May 2007.

Marshall, Dale, "Intensity-Based Target: Not the Solution to Climate Change." David Suzuki Foundation. February, 2007.

National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy, "Interim Report to the Minister of the Environment Technical Briefing." June 2007.

Other destructive Canadian positions include:

- In Bonn (May, 2007), openly pushing for a delay in work of the Article 3.9 Ad Hoc Working Group;
- Supporting the suggestion that an international agreement could use a “sectoral approach”, which would make the final negotiated settlement more difficult to reach and biases the outcome towards industry interests and away from what the climate science shows is necessary;
- In the pre-Bali UN meetings in Vienna (August 2007), opposing using the 1990 baseline that is the standard measure under the 1992 Framework;
- In the Framework Article 9 Dialogue, supporting the U.S. position on “strong intellectual property rights” which makes it more difficult for the deployment of clean technologies; and,
- In closed door meetings of the Dialogue, supporting the U.S. in its opposition to a global carbon market.

**Although the government of Canada likes to refer to itself as a “bridge” between the U.S. and the EU, it is unambiguous that Canada has reinforced and shielded the U.S. rather than acted as an honest broker. All signals suggest that Canada intends to continue with this claim and will use the Bali negotiations as a platform to promote intensity-based targets and a false baseline.**

### **3) What about developing countries?**

Although developed countries are largely responsible for historical increases in greenhouse gas emissions, they are also the prime beneficiaries of economic growth associated with them. But this is a quickly evolving situation. China just recently surpassed the U.S. as the world’s worst polluter. And with projected growth to come mainly from previously poor but now rapidly industrializing countries like China and India, emissions from these and other developing countries must be reduced to keep average global temperature increases as far below 2°C as possible.

The Framework Convention and the Kyoto Protocol are founded on the principles of equity, historical responsibility and the capacity of each country to act. This is why developing countries were never required to make absolute reductions in the first commitment period. In 2007 they continue to be wary of taking on absolute targets in the second commitment period, arguing that the developed world agreed to act first and that it has yet to do so decisively. Some key developing countries have signaled a willingness to accept some types of new commitments as part of a package where rich countries would substantially reduce their emissions in the second commitment period. For example, “newly developed” countries like South Korea, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Mexico could take on absolute targets and be brought into the Kyoto emission trading regime, while other countries could make greater commitments to grow low carbon economies under the Framework.

None of this progress will occur if developed countries like Canada refuses commitments to reduce their absolute emissions.

#### **4) What should the Bali mandate contain?**

To avoid the worst impacts from global warming, the world needs a mandate from Bali that will lead to an agreement by 2009 which contains:

- deeper reductions with hard targets for industrialized countries compatible with reductions of around 30% by 2020;
- Graduation of some newly industrialized countries like South Korea, Kuwait, Singapore, UAE, etc. to Kyoto Protocol Annex B<sup>4</sup> countries (i.e. taking on absolute caps);
- New commitments by many developing countries to lower carbon development, through expanded carbon markets, Sustainable Development Policies and Measures (SD PAMs), deforestation reduction, intensity and/or renewables targets, etc.;
- New and ambitious mechanisms for financing, transfer and implementation of green and low-carbon technologies;
- Much expanded funding and support for adaptation.

#### **5) What should I be watching for in Bali?**

Canada's international reputation has steadily declined since the 2005 Montreal Climate Conference as a direct result of the negative role it performs and regressive positions it takes in UN negotiations. It can expect to receive another hard blow in Bali if it continues to promote a defective approach using a false baseline while obstructing real progress in the talks.

**The Government of Canada can turn it around by signing a new agreement containing much stronger mandatory absolute targets for rich, developed countries and also new commitments for poorer, newly developed and developing countries.**

What will it do?

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<sup>4</sup> Under the Kyoto Protocol: EU-15 (15 European countries which were members of the EU in 1990), Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Monaco, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, US, Canada, Hungary, Japan, Poland, Croatia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Ukraine, Norway, Australia, Iceland.