Climate – What is needed?

- Views and positions from the Danish 92 Group in connection with the Climate Change Conference in Poland (COP 14), December 2008

The world is facing a global climate crisis – Science, with the UN Climate panel (IPCC) in the lead, states that global warming is a reality, primarily manmade and that the consequences will be unmanageable, unless we act now.

At the same time, the effects of climate change are becoming increasingly apparent across the world and at a far faster pace than anticipated just a few years ago. Already, the lives of millions of people are being affected by climate change and within a few years, climate change threatens to have a destructive effect on a large part of the world's population and their daily lives.

This is an urgent matter. If we are to succeed in reducing global greenhouse gas emissions within the next few years, as IPCC recommends, we need to act – and act now.

Therefore, responsible politicians and decision makers must live up to their responsibilities and ensure necessary progress is made during the coming international climate negotiations. We need to get away from the narrow national interests, which dominate the negotiations today and threaten the necessary global agreement at the Copenhagen Climate Conference, December 2009.

The Poznan Climate Change Conference in Poland, December 2008, is crucial in this connection. Crucial in propelling global negotiations forward towards a global climate agreement in Copenhagen 2009. Without significant developments in the Poznan negotiations it is unlikely that an adequate and fair agreement can be made in Copenhagen.

Below are the Danish 92 Group positions on what Denmark should work to ensure in Poznan

1. The ambition should continue to be to avoid the dangerous effects of climate change

A more than 2 degree rise in global temperatures over the pre-industrial level will result in a signify-cant increasing risk of collapse of ecosystems, wiping out countless species, and leading to an extensive lack of fresh water which will, in the worst case, affect several billion people and result in general food shortages in the poorest regions of the world.
At the same time, this will increase the risk of triggering unalterable climate change with dire con-sequences, including a melting of the Greenland inland ice resulting in a rise in sea level of seven meters[1].
Today, the inland ice and the icecap across the Arctic regions are melting at a far faster rate than expected by scientists just a few years ago.

For a numbers of years, it has been the stated goal of the European Union to limit climate change to a maximum of 2 degrees over the pre-industrial level. Already, the global temperature has risen by 0.7 percent since the beginning of the 19th Century.

To avoid an increase in temperatures of more than two degrees, the total concentration of green-house gases in the atmosphere must not exceed 450 ppm – measured in C02 equivalent – after which the concentration in the longer run must be stabilised to no more than 400 ppm C02 equivalent.[2] [3] The calculations from IPCC presuppose that the growth in global greenhouse gas emissions is stopped no later than 2015, followed by a rapid reduction in emissions.

Also, the speed of climate change greatly affects whether climate change becomes truly dangerous. Five percent of all ecosystems are unable to adapt to a warming of more than 0.1 degrees per decade. 15 percent of all ecosystems will be unable to adapt to a warming of more than 0.3 degrees per decade, and all ecosystems will rapidly collapse as a result of a warming of more than 0.4 degrees per decade.[4]
Therefore, the reduction in global greenhouse gas emissions must occur at a rate which ensures that the speed of the global rise in temperatures is kept below the present 0.2 Celsius per decade.

Denmark should work towards limiting the global increase in temperature as far below the critical two degrees Celsius as possible. This means that global emissions must reach their peak no later than 2015, followed by rapid reductions of at least 80 percent before 2050, relative to the 1990 level.

[1] IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, Working Group II, Summary for Policy Makers.
[2] IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, Working Group III
[3] Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change, Cambridge University Press, 2006. Chapter 28. "What does a 2ºC target Mean For Greenhouse Gas Concentrations? A Brief Analysis Based on Multi-Gas Emission Pathways and Several Climate Sensitivity Uncertainly Estimates".
[4] Leemans and Eickhout, 2004: "Another reason for concern: regional and global impacts on ecosystems for different levels of climate change", Global Environmental Change 14, 219-228.

2. Negotiations must be moved decisively forward in Poznan

At the Bali Climate summit in December 2007, a two year negotiation process was adopted ending with the Climate Conference in Copenhagen (COP 15). Negotiations are carried out in relation to both the Kyoto Protocol and the overall Climate Convention.

Under the Kyoto Protocol, the industrialised countries of the world are committed to limit their greenhouse gas emissions. At first, binding emission limits have been established for the period 2008-12, where the industrialised countries combined must reduce their emissions by app. five percent relative to the 1990 level. The Kyoto Protocol has been prepared for agreements on additional reductions in the following periods of commitment, and at present negotiations are being held concerning the rich countries' obligations in terms of C02 reductions for the period following 2012.
Hence, the Kyoto Protocol constitutes one of the cornerstones of the global climate regulation.

Simultaneously, negotiations are being carried out within the Climate Convention negotiating track. All countries participate here including the U.S. which has yet to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. These negotiations should result in a new global agreement with sufficient incentives to involve all countries in the effort against climate change, and which are built on the reduction obligations of the industrialised countries under the Kyoto Protocol.

A final agreement in Copenhagen therefore presupposes concurrent progress in the two negotiations tracks, which also overlap to a certain extent. If sufficient negotiation time is to be available before Copenhagen 2009, some basic principles must be adopted in Poznan.

Hence, ***Denmark*** should work towards ensuring that the Poznan Climate Change Conference:

- Establishes a level of ambition for the following climate agreement, a so called "Shared Vision", in relation to the climate effort both in the short and long run which contains the 2 degrees target. This means that the rich countries combined must reduce their domestic emissions by 25-40 percent by 2020 relative to the 1990 level, while developing countries must reduce their emissions by up to 30 percent relative to the expected development ("business as usual"). The vision should also establish "per capita" as the only fair way of dividing greenhouse gas emissions, which humankind can continue to emit, just as it should deal with action to tackle poverty and the right to development. The vision should include "the polluter pays" principle, meaning that industrialised countries should provide adequate additional support to the developing countries' climate adaptation afforts.
- Adopts principles, which will form the basis for the production of initial negotiation text on all significant areas – see section 3-8 below.
- Results in an implementation of pilot activities aimed at promoting global cooperation on technology, limiting deforestation and assisting the poorest countries' adaptation to climate change.
- Implements a real revision of the undesirable parts of the Kyoto Protocol, including a significant improvement of the so called "flexible mechanisms" aimed at securing that they are additional and contribute to sustainable development (see also section 3 below).

Finally, the provisions of the protocol concerning commencement and its mechanism aimed at securing that the affected countries live up to their obligations, must be revised.

- Adopts a concrete work plan for 2009 which makes it highly likely that a sufficiently ambitious agreement is met at the COP 15.
- Adopts principles for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from international transport in relation to aviation and shipping, including principles for how negotiations under the UN's Climate Convention are coordinated with negotiations in the specialised UN agencies for shipping and aviation, respectively IMO and ICAO.

3. The rich countries must lead the way

With greenhouse gas emissions many times higher per capita than those from the world's poor regions, the industrialised countries must lead the way with significant reductions in emissions if the rise in average global temperature is to be kept under 2 degrees Celsius relative to the pre-industrial level.
Therefore, ***Denmark*** should work towards ensuring that the industrialised countries combined reduce their domestic emissions by at least 30 percent in 2020 and close to 100 percent by 2050 calculated in C02 equivalent relative to the 1990 emissions. In addition, the industrialised countries must commit to financing and assisting significant reductions in developing countries.

According to the Kyoto Protocol, industrialised countries can include reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from projects which they finance in other countries in the period 2008-12 (CDM and Joint Implementation projects).
However, a number of quantitative and qualitative problems exist with these flexible mechanisms, as they are designed and used in 2008-12. It is, for example, highly problematic that the EU if using all its authorised CDM/JI credits will have an emissions level of greenhouse gases in 2008-12, which is only about 1 percent under the 1990 level.

Denmark should work towards ensuring that CDM projects – if included in a post 2012 agreement – should deliver real reductions beyond – and not as a substitute for – the minimum 30 percent domestic reductions, to which the industrial countries should commit to. At the same time the CDM should be reformed to ensure environmental integrity and additionallity and that the projects meet the requirement of contributing to sustainable development. This means that they should primarily benefit the poorest developing countries and contribute to reducing poverty. Hence, such projects must not degrade ecosystems, harm biodiversity or have other negative environmental or social consequences on a short as well as long-term basis. (cf. "Gold Standard" criteria).[5]
This exclude for example coal fired power plants, CCS, nuclear energy, big dam projects, HFC-23 destruction and big plantations in developing countries for production of biofuel.

As a rich industrial country with a very high level of per capita greenhouse gas emissions, ***Denmark*** should lead the way and commit to reducing domestic greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent by 2020, relative to 1990.

[5] http://www.cdmgoldstandard.org/

Finally, it will be decisive to ensure that the involved countries fulfil the obligations accepted in the agreement. Therefore, ***Denmark*** should work towards ensuring that the climate agreement contains strong mechanisms, which mean that the countries have real incentive to honour the agreement.

4. The large developing countries must be included

Today emissions from the industrialised countries account for only half of global emissions, whilst the developing countries account for the remainder. Emissions from the large developing countries are rapidly increasing. To limit the global increase in temperature to below 2 degrees Celsius, it will be necessary to bring the total global greenhouse gas emissions under control and to break the raising emissions curve by no later than 2015. This will require the active participation of all countries.

The industrialised countries must lead the way, but the developing countries must also contribute. Figures show that if the industrialised countries reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by 2020, developing countries will have to limit their total emissions to 10-25 percent under the "business as usual" level by 2020[6].

However, the group of developing countries is no homogenous group and the future climate regime should consider the stark differences that exist between the countries. Historically, they have contributed in different ways to the creation of the climate problem and currently their emissions, measured per capita, vary greatly, just as some have a greater potential to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions than e.g. the least developed countries (the LDCs).

Denmark should work towards ensuring that some countries accept real binding goals for a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. This applies to countries with a high income and a high level of greenhouse gas emissions, such as South Korea, Singapore and Saudi Arabia.

Another group of countries also have a significant role to play in reducing global greenhouse gas emissions due to high economic growth, large populations, extensive deforestation, etc. This applies to countries such as China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Nigeria and South Africa.

Some of these countries still have very low greenhouse gas emissions per capita and, from a political point of view, it is totally indefensible to demand that these countries make greater effort to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions than the industrialised countries have done so far.
Still, there are great possibilities in these countries, as they have not yet developed infrastructure and economies, which are as dependent on fossil fuels as most industrial countries. If these countries were to choose a different path for their development there would be significant benefits in terms of less local pollution and less dependence on fossil fuels. Fortunately, countries such as

[6] Elzen & Höhne (2008): Emission reduction trade-offs for meeting concentration targets, slide 9. Findes på: http://www.ipcc.ch/graphics/pr-ar4-2008-06-briefing-bonn.htm

India and South Africa have recently produced plans for the reduction of their greenhouse gas emissions.

Denmark should work towards ensuring that the significant developing countries establish their own goals for the reduction of greenhouse gases and that they commit themselves to using political instruments, such as energy efficiency standards and the promotion of renewable energy. ***Denmark*** should work towards ensuring that the industrialised countries support such an effort through positive incentives, including the formation of close global cooperation on development and diffusion of sustainable technology.

5. Global cooperation on the development and diffusion of sustainable technology

Within the international cooperation on climate a variety of different instruments already exist, which contribute, or can contribute, to the diffusion of sustainable technologies. Apart from the CDM mechanism, different funds have been established and agreements have been made on cooperation on technology between groups of countries.

These initiatives are however, at present, too small and dispersed to seriously affect the large stream of investments made in the energy sector in the rich, as well as the large developing countries. Here the focus is still, to a large extent, on increasing energy production with power plants based on fossil fuels.
Large developing countries, such as China and India, emphasise that cooperation on technology should be developed if they are to play an active role in mitigating climate change. They do not wish to undertake obligations, which will simply make them dependent on the import of energy technologies from the west. They want to be in a position to produce the new solutions themselves, which is positive and should be supported.

In order to be effective, cooperation on technology should not solely focus on the development of new sustainable technological solutions or the transfer of known technology. Emphasis should also be placed on increasing the capacity to apply, adapt and further develop the technologies, just as the authorities must be able to prepare and implement legislation, which encourages a rapid uptake of the technologies in the society.

Cooperation on technology should not focus solely on the large developing countries. Small and impoverished developing countries also have a need for technologies to adapt to climate change and to avoid the catastrophic consequences of extreme weather events.

Therefore, with regards to a new global climate agreement, ***Denmark*** should work towards ensuring binding agreements on the establishment and financing of a wide range of global technology action programmes, which seriously stimulate the development, transfer and application of sustainable technology, which reduce the emission of greenhouse gasses and assists the developing countries in adaptation to climate change.

The action programmes imply that goals for the global effort are set within a 5 year time period and that the manner in which the rich countries will contribute financially, scientifically etc is clearly specified. The requirements that the developing countries will have to fulfil if they wish to participate in, and reap the benefits of, this form of cooperation on technology should also be stated. In other words, the developing countries will be obliged to create the appropriate political conditions, which will facilitate the rapid uptake of the new sustainable technologies within their society.

For example, action programmes can be established for drought resistant varieties of grain (not GMO), early warning systems for extreme weather conditions, wind-energy, solar-energy, electric cars, energy effective buildings, energy savings in sectors, such as steel and cement and the phase-out of powerful industrial greenhouse gases.

The action programmes can not stand alone. Other binding agreements concerning action to stimulate the development and diffusion of sustainable climate technologies should also be established. In this way, ***Denmark*** should ensure that agreements are established concerning:

- Minimum requirements concerning the rich countries allocation of state funds for research and development in these technologies.
- The removal of trade barriers in the rich countries to sustainable technologies, which reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the establishment of trade policies and public procurement policies in order to stimulate the rapid diffusion of these technologies.
- Stopping the use of export credits and assistance funds, including funding from the multilateral development banks, which support the development of energy supplies based on fossil fuels.
- Minimum standards for energy efficient products, for example aircraft, ships, cars and household appliances, in the rich countries.
- The sharing of intellectual property rights in connection with publicly financed research on climate and other initiatives with a view to ensuring that intellectual property rights do not halt the diffusion of important climate technologies.

6. Protection of forests in developing countries should be included in the next climate agreement

Today, the destruction of forests accounts for approximately 20% of human induced greenhouse gas emissions[7]. At the same time, the protection, which natural forests provide against climate change, is destroyed. Despite this, the contribution of greenhouse gases resulting from the destruction of tropical forests is, at present, not included in the Kyoto Protocol.
Therefore, ***Denmark*** should take the initiative in the EU in order to develop an ambitious agreement regarding forests; an agreement, which will result in real progress in mitigating climate change whilst at the same time take social conditions, biodiversity and the value of the nature in the forests into consideration.

[7] Baumert, K.A., T. Herzog and J. Pershing (2005): "Navigating the numbers: Greenhouse gas data and international climate policy". Washington, DC: World Resources Institute.

A precondition for real progress on mitigating climate change with an agreement on forests is that the reduction effort should be additional to what is required to minimise the emissions from the burning of fossil fuels in the rich countries. ***Denmark*** should, therefore work to ensure that an obligation concerning forests is included on top of the domestic reduction obligations (see section 3 above).

Forests are not only significant for the climate but also as the life bread for millions of people, as home to a large part of the world's biological diversity and for the protection of water resources and soil. At the same time, natural forests protect against natural catastrophes, such as floods, mud-slides and storms. Therefore, one should not focus solely on the carbon content of the forests, in connection with a forest agreement. ***Denmark*** should work to ensure that an agreement on forests includes the necessary social and environmental considerations; including that the measures to halt the clearance of forests in developing countries are in harmony with the United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other relevant human rights instruments. Also, indigenous and local populations that are effected by the agreement should be fully involved in the process including the preparation and implementation of the agreement.

At the same time, ***Denmark*** should work to ensure that biodiversity is protected and that the efforts under the Biodiversity Convention and the Climate Convention are connected and aligned.

Denmark should also work to ensure long-term monitoring of the effect of the agreement on forests on the actual global clearance of forests and on the social conditions and biodiversity in the countries in question.

7. The poorest and most vulnerable countries must be assisted in their adaptation to climate change

The world's poorest countries are the least responsible for the global climate change but at the same time they will be hit the hardest by it, in part because of the geographical location of many developing countries but also because of a lack of resources and capacity. Many developing countries will be hit twice, partly through the direct effects of climate change, such as flooding and droughts, and partly because through a new climate agreement they risk having their chance to develop through industrialisation reduced. A climate agreement in Copenhagen, which doesn't take this into consideration risks impeding economic growth and social development in the developing countries.

Denmark should therefore work to ensure a climate agreement, which does not create barriers but rather increases the possibilities for the developing countries to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals and in this connection secure additional funding and resources for adaptation to climate change and technology transfer.

Even though it is natural that the coordination of initiatives for adaptation to climate change occurs at the national level, it is important to remember that it is at the local level, amongst the poorest

sections of society in the developing countries, that the effects of climate change will hit the hardest. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the adaptation effort and assistance really reaches the people who have the greatest need. Additionally, many years of experience with development assistance has shown that this has to build on local ownership and that the local population's knowledge is central to creating lasting solutions. In order to secure the quality of adaptation initiatives in the developing countries, the climate agreement should ensure that the development and implementation of these initiatives occurs with the full participation of the affected people.

Many of the countries, which will be hardest hit by climate change, do not have the resources to effectively participate in the international negotiations on climate change. For example, during the climate conference in Bali, Denmark participated with 81 delegates whilst Ethiopia, which is one of the countries which will be hardest hit by climate change, participated with 2 delegates. Therefore, the EU and ***Denmark*** should prioritise capacity building and involvement of governments and civil society in the developing countries so that they can actively participate in the climate negotiations.

8. Sufficient funding must be secured

It is crucial to ensure the necessary financing of the next climate agreement in order to successfully limit an increase in global temperature to under 2 degrees and at the same time ensure that the world's poor do not pay the price for climate change.

There is an acute need for resources for technology diffusion, forest protection and adaptation activities in the developing countries. The funds, which have been earmarked to date, are far from sufficient.

The World Bank estimates, for example, that in the order of 10 to 40 billion dollars per year alone will be needed to secure the expected new investments in the developing countries[8] whilst Oxfam estimates that there is a need for at least 50 billion dollars per year in the developing countries and that this will be much higher if emissions of greenhouse gases are not drastically reduced[9]. Finally, the UNFCCC estimates that the price for global adaptation will be in the region of 50 to 170 billion dollars, of which 28 to 67 billion is for the developing countries alone[10]. The expected sum in the 3 adaptation funds under the climate convention is only around 300 million dollars per year[11,12]. The funds, therefore, only provide at the most a few percent of what is necessary in the area of climate adaptation.

[8] World Bank (2006): "Clean Energy & Development: Towards an Investment Framework", Washington, DC: World Bank, pp. 33, 143-144.
[9] Oxfam (2007), "Adapting to climate change: What's needed in poor countries, and who should pay"
[10] UNFCCC Dialogue Working Paper 8 (2007), "Reports on the analysis of existing and potential investment and financial flows relevant to the development of an effective and appropriate international response to climate change"
[11] World Bank (2006): "Clean Energy & Development: Towards an Investment Framework", Washington, DC: World Bank, pp. 33, 143-144.
[12] Stern, Nicholas (2006): "Stern Review Report on the Economics of Climate Change". Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

In order to ensure sufficient funding it is necessary to establish new financing mechanisms. ***Denmark*** should work to ensure that the following mechanisms are included in the next climate agreement:

- Auctioning of emission permits. This is in contrast to today where emission permits are usually distributed free to the polluting companies. Norway has, amongst others, suggested that a percentage of the permits could be given to the highest bidder through auctioning.
- A global tax on international shipping and air travel; two sources of pollution which are not covered by the Kyoto Protocol, at the moment.

These mechanisms imply that polluters should help to pay for the implementation of a new climate agreement and they can, depending on how the mechanisms are constructed, help to mobilise a substantial share of the necessary financing. However, the aforementioned mechanisms will have to be included in a broader range of financing mechanisms in order to ensure that the necessary financing is established.

Moreover it is important that the financing mechanisms are included within a climate agreement in Copenhagen so that it becomes part of an overall solution and not a combination of different external initiatives, such as 'Climate Investment Funds' under the World Bank.

The need for support to developing countries adaptation to climate change depends, in the long-term, on how ambitious the agreed reduction targets will be. Therefore, ***Denmark*** should work to ensure that the negotiations concerning the reduction targets for greenhouse gases are linked directly to adaptation by, for example, ensuring that failure to achieve agreed reduction targets will be met with a requirement for progressively increasing payments to adaptation. In this regard it is also important that the next climate agreement includes mechanisms, which will ensure compliance with the agreement and that the funds the countries are required to pay into the adaptation funds are actually paid.

In order to ensure that the world's poor do not pay the price for climate change it is important that the financing of adaptation is not taken from the development assistance. Climate considerations should be included in normal development assistance but climate adaptation should not replace it. Therefore, the financing of climate change adaptation should be additional and at the same time be both predictable and binding so that the developing countries can make long-term plans and strategies for adaptation and mitigation. ***Denmark*** should, therefore, work to ensure that the rich countries contribute the necessary additional and predictable funding for climate adaptation, which will guarantee that the developing countries can both adapt to unavoidable climate change and at the same time achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals.

In this regard, ***Denmark*** should lead the way and establish a framework consisting of additional aid for, amongst other things, adaptation to climate change in the developing countries, over and above the normal development assistance, which should again be increased to 1 percent of GDP.

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This position paper was published in November 2008. The opinions and suggestions in this document are those of the organisations, which cooperate in and with the Danish 92 Group – Forum for Sustainable Development. The organisations are different and not all of them have an opinion on everything touched upon in this text. Likewise, will some of the organisations have additional and further suggestions, which they themselves will promote.

Africa Contact
Care Denmark
Danish Society for Nature Conservation
Danish International Human Settlement Service
BirdLife Denmark
The Ecological Council
Danish United Nations Association
DanChurchAid
Greenpeace Denmark
IBIS
IWGIA -International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs
KULU - Women and Development
The Danish Association for Sustainable Communities
MS - Danish Association for International Co-operation
Nature and Youth
Nepenthes
Network for Ecological Education and Practice
NOAH - Friends of the Earth Denmark
The Danish Organization for Sustainable Energy
WWF Denmark

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