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For the purpose of the conference held by Forum for the 21st century on 29th November 2010 the European Union pronounces and suggests following:

Environmental priorities of the European Union

Tackling climate change is one of the biggest challenges we face. To mitigate risks and avoid catastrophically scenario, the EU adopted an integrated energy and climate change policy in December 2008, including ambitious targets for 2020. The 3 main targets were: cutting greenhouse gases by 20%, reducing energy consumption by 20% through increased energy efficiency and meeting 20% of our energy needs from renewable sources.

*EU is prepared to the initiative and adopt a stronger target, which are aimed at **biodiversity, emissions reduction, improvement of the CDM and the technology transfer mechanism, energy efficiency and reforestation/avoiding deforestation**. In addition, the European Union proposes to Forum for the 21st century to discuss the importance of following environmental priorities of the EU :*

- Climate change: Conference highlights valuable role of soil in climate change mitigation and biodiversity protection.
- Chemicals: The EU proposal in this issue aims to significantly increase the safety of biocide products used and placed on the market in the European Union and simplify procedures related to their authorisation.
- Health and environment
- Sustainable consumption and production

Biodiversity

The EU has committed to stopping the decline of endangered species and habitats in the EU by 2010, but reaching that goal requires much effort. Policies and legislation are already in place to address the challenge, but efforts to implement them need to be replicated on a much larger scale. In particular, the EU intends to expand the program Natura 2000, a set of areas where plant and animal species and their habitats must be protected. It already includes more than 26,000 sites across the EU. During the EU Council on Convention on Biodiversity in Nagoya, the EU adopted several conclusions. The EU reconfirms its headline target of halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restoring them in so far as feasible, while stepping up the EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss. The EU also emphasizes the importance of the EU's key priorities, in particular with regard to mainstreaming biodiversity and enhancing integration into all relevant sectors.

The EU recognizes the importance of coherent and cooperative decision-making and its implementation at local, sub national, national, regional and international levels and underlines the importance for the future EU biodiversity strategy and the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans of Member States.



The EU holds the view that the EU should promote in the relevant forum a widespread application of measures such as those listed in the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan in all countries and regions.

The EU reiterates that a stronger relationship among the three Rio Conventions is of crucial importance to reaching the objectives under the CBD, the UNFCCC and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), as well as the development objectives, including the MDGs. The EU also emphasizes the importance of agreeing at the General Assembly of the United Nations (UNGA) by the end of 2010, a resolution to establish an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The EU reiterates the need to conserve and use sustainable biodiversity in all marine areas, and UNDERLINES the importance of the establishment of a global inventory on a scientific basis, of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas in need of protection as an essential step to promote all necessary measures towards implementation of the 2012 target on marine protected areas as adopted at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in 2002 and consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and its implementation agreements.

Emissions reduction

The EU has agreed a unilateral target to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 20% from 1990 levels by 2020. Furthermore, it has pledged to increase its target to 30% if other countries make comparable commitments.

In May 2010, the European Commission presented a arguing that increasing the EU's 2020 climate goal to 30% would be both affordable and technically feasible. It estimated that as a result of the economic downturn, the cost of meeting the current 20% target has dropped to €48bn per year until 2020, down from an initial estimate of €70 billion when the package was agreed.

There are simply no excuses for any further stalling on strengthening the EU's emissions target to a 30% reduction by 2020. The latest figures on greenhouse gas emission sin Europe, underline that the EU's 20% reduction target is now completely obsolete, while the clear economic arguments in favor of a stronger target were added weight by the support of business leaders. Big companies also argue that a higher emissions reduction target would not only bring the benefits of lower emissions but also "spur innovation and investment thus creating millions of new jobs in a low carbon economy.

European Union insists on reducing emissions by 30% compared to 1990 and invites interested parties to sign agreement.

Technology transfer mechanism

Technology development and its rapid diffusion are considered crucial for tackling the climate change challenge. In particular, enhancing technology transfer towards developing countries has been an integral part of the global climate change regime since the inception of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The European Union proposes to find agreements on the role of intellectual property rights (IPRs) in the transfer of climate change technologies.



Europe has been the pioneer of the carbon market and operates the most advanced market world-wide. This has created a major stimulus for international credits generated by the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). The CDM has been successful in some aspects but has also given rise to criticism, especially, with regard to environmental integrity. As a first step towards a more advanced carbon market the CDM therefore needs major reforms. The European Union proposes to overcome the existing economic and market barriers, and thus to increase the emission reduction target from 20 per cent to 30 per cent, through changes to the CDM, e. g. institutional and administrative reform of the Executive Board and geographical balance. It is also extremely important to stipulate, what successor mechanisms should be put in place to make the carbon market an even more powerful instrument to reduce emissions. The European Union considers as an essential factor, also higher clarity on what credits the EU ETS will accept post-2012. Therefore Europe needs to preserve valuable leverage for the UN talks. The EU strongly believes that it is time for decisions on how to strike the right balance between leverage and clarity. The European commission has been preparing a proposal for a measure to introduce further quality restrictions on the use of credits from industrial gas projects in the post-2012 EU ETS. At this stage an impact assessment is done to carefully examine the best design of these restrictions.

In July 2010, the Commission adopted a decision that determined the cap for 2013 based on the current scope of the EU ETS and the extended scope of the EU ETS as from 2013.

Reforestation

The European Commission has presented a Communication on deforestation which sets out the EU's response to the challenge of climate change. It proposes that at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations on the future climate regime, the EU calls for halting global forest cover loss by 2030 at the latest and reducing gross tropical deforestation by at least 50% by 2020 from current levels. This objective would provide major climate change and biodiversity benefits by 2020.

The Commission proposes to work in the international negotiations on climate change towards the development of a Global Forest Carbon Mechanism, a financial mechanism through which developing countries would be rewarded for emissions reductions achieved by taking action to reduce deforestation and forest degradation.

The Communication identifies possible ways for the EU to contribute to such a mechanism. It also addresses policies that need to be reinforced in the fields of trade, energy, agriculture, food security and development cooperation in order to ensure a coherent policy response to address deforestation and forest degradation. The Communication also indicates that at EU level an appropriate level of funding is required from 2013 to 2020 to fight deforestation. The total amount of funding will depend on the level of mitigation actions undertaken by developing countries.

At global level the European Union supports programs such as Forest Investment program, UN-REDD, etc.

Energy efficiency



Improving energy efficiency is one of the simplest ways to cut greenhouse gas emissions and increase sustainability and security of supply. It supports economic development, creates jobs, and reduces energy costs for households and businesses.

By saving 20% of energy consumption by 2020, the EU hopes to cut emissions by almost 800m tones a year and save as much as €100bn.

European Union already adopted The Action Plan. The plan's stated objective is to provide EU citizens with "the most energy-efficient buildings, appliances, processes, cars and energy systems" in the world. It identifies 75 specific actions in these priority areas to be implemented 2007 - 2013

- New energy performance standards for product groups such as boilers, copiers, TVs and lighting
- new energy standards for buildings and promoting low-energy buildings ("passive houses")
- making power generation and distribution more efficient legislation to limit CO2 emissions from cars to 120g/km by 2012 and strengthened fuel-efficiency labeling;
- awareness and education campaigns;
- improving energy efficiency in urban areas through a "Covenant of Mayors" which will exchange best practices, and;

European Union would like to adopt international agreements to foster energy efficiency worldwide.

Water resources:

European Commission has set out the criteria to be used by Member States to assess the environmental status of their seas. The criteria focus on different aspects of marine ecosystems including biological diversity, fish population, eutrophication, contaminants, litter and noise. Under Marine Strategy, Member states must establish targets for improvement of their seas by 2012. European Union proposes to achieve good environmental status in all EU and world marine waters by 2020.

European Union has established following rules in decreasing pollution of water sources and proposes to discuss it, to protect water resources worldwide.

- Establish systems or authorization for all discharges of urban wastewater;
- Establish systems or authorization for discharges of industrial wastewater into urban sewage collecting systems to ensure safe disposal of sludge.
- Establish systems of prior regulation and/or specific authorization and permits for food processing industries;
- Ensure that all urban wastewater generated in agglomerations with more than 2000 p. e. are supplied with collecting systems,
- Ensure that national authorities take measures to limit pollution of receiving waters from storm water overflows via collecting systems under unusual situations, such as heavy rain;
- Ensure that the environment is protected from adverse effects of the discharge of wastewater;
- The disposal of sewage sludge to surface waters is banned.



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