

Important steps forward but more progress essential, say UK and Germany at international climate talks

Date: 20 Nov 2006 - 11:58

Source: [DEFRA](#)

Greater urgency must be injected into international climate change negotiations if the world is to face up to its responsibilities in tackling climate change, UK Environment Secretary David Miliband and German Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel said today. Both were speaking at the end of two weeks of climate change talks in Nairobi, Kenya.

Mr Miliband and Mr Gabriel said:

"There have been important steps forward during these climate change talks, the first to take place in sub-Saharan Africa. The issues facing Africa have rightly been placed at the top of the agenda.

"Africa is already facing the consequences of climate change which is why we welcome the progress that has been made on the strategy and funding of adaptation, a priority if we are to help those countries least able to manage the impacts of inevitable climate change.

"Driving the take up of low carbon energy technology over the coming decades is also vital - particularly in developing countries. That is why we welcome Kofi Annan's announcement this week to work to dismantle the barriers to clean energy investment in Africa. We now call on business to work with us to deliver early investment on the ground.

"The impacts on the people of Africa will become only more severe if action is avoided. We already know that climate change will worsen food security, increase the spread of malaria and threaten the availability of water in African countries.

"The science tells us that we need faster and deeper political progress if we are to avoid the social, economic and humanitarian consequences of unchecked climate change.

"Germany and the United Kingdom will work together to inject greater urgency and momentum into the process of driving down global emissions. We must build upon the first Kyoto commitment period that ends in 2012, and ensure that a global agreement can be found that leaves no gap. Every country has a part to play in the drive to prevent dangerous climate change, recognising the vastly different circumstances that exist between them.

"Our countries and others have already shown a readiness to lead - taking on hard and long term emission reduction targets to build confidence in the private sector and to break the culture of caution that can hold back progress.

"During 2007 we will be working across all fronts, including the G8, under the German Presidency, to ensure that we can move forward with the ultimate aim of avoiding dangerous climate change to which we are both strongly committed."

The climate change talks reached agreement on the following:

Helping countries adapt to climate change

A five year programme ("The Nairobi Work Plan") was agreed which will help developing countries consider the impacts, their vulnerability and how they can best adapt to climate change. The UK has committed to playing a full role in the work.

Agreement on the principles of the Adaptation Fund marks a significant step towards establishing this new and innovative fund. The Fund, which is to be financed from a 2% levy placed on the proceeds of Clean Development Mechanism trades as well as other voluntary contributions, will finance concrete adaptation projects in particularly vulnerable developing countries.

The UK has so far committed over £40 million to help build developing countries' understanding of how climate change will affect them and to improve integration of climate risks within development plans. A pilot is underway with Bangladesh.

The UK has recently commissioned the Carbon Disclosure Project to consider ways in which Small Island Developing States (SIDS) could be insured against impacts of climate change. The study will assess how the private sector may contribute towards a fund, along with SIDS Governments and the international community. As companies with a large carbon footprint are under pressure from litigation actions, contribution to such a fund could therefore be motivated as an insurance against future liability.

Clean energy investment

Germany and the UK welcomed the UN's plan to help developing countries benefit from clean energy technology. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, addressing the opening of the ministerial section of the climate talks, announced a move to help developing countries - especially those in Africa - to participate in the Kyoto protocol's Clean Development Mechanism. The UK will be playing its part by linking London-based carbon market experts with those developing projects in Africa.

A decision was made agreeing an open process for inclusion of Carbon Capture and Storage in the Clean Development Mechanism whilst ensuring environmental integrity as a precondition of any proposal. Good momentum was established on this item and the matter will be discussed again at the next COP.

The UK recently formed a Taskforce with Brazil, Mozambique and South Africa to develop sustainable biofuels market in Southern Africa.

Deforestation

Agreement was also reached on the need for action to reduce emissions from deforestation, currently responsible for around 18% of global emissions. The Nairobi conference agreed further work is needed to finalise a two year programme for negotiations next year. The UK will be working over the coming months in partnership with other governments including Brazil, Papua New Guinea, Costa Rica and the Coalition of Rainforest Nations, with Germany as Presidency of the G8 and the EU, and with the World Bank and other interested parties, to explore ways of mobilising international resources to assist developing countries in forestry management.

Future framework

The Conference delivered on the promises made in Montreal, with good progress on both tracks of the Montreal Action Plan - the Convention Dialogue and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Developed Countries. The Convention Dialogue session heard from Sir Nick Stern of the findings of his newly published report. The discussion focused on market based opportunities and sustainable development and saw participation from a range of Parties, including the US.

The Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments gave developed countries who have ratified the Kyoto Protocol the opportunity to show their leadership in addressing climate change, by establishing a substantial work plan for arriving at new reduction targets for the next commitment period. The work plan will send a clear signal to the carbon market that parties are serious about reducing their emissions as part of a global effort to reduce emissions by at least 50%.

In addition to the progress made on the Montreal Action Plan, parties held an initial review of the Kyoto Protocol and agreed on a process that would lead to a fully comprehensive review in 2008. This review process will allow us to look at how best we can build on the work that has already been done in implementing the Kyoto Protocol to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

The UK and Germany are determined to work together to ensure that negotiations on a future framework are concluded by 2009 so that there is no gap between commitment periods.

Published on eGov monitor (<http://www.egovmonitor.com>)

Source URL: <http://www.egovmonitor.com/node/8666>