# PRE-2020 MITIGATION ACTION NOW!

**Bonn, October 2015**

*Climate change is a cumulative problem. Every added molecule of $CO_2$ loads the carbon budget further, adds to the extreme weather events we are already experiencing, and takes us one step closer to irreversible tipping points and runaway warming. Emissions today cannot be compensated by higher ambition tomorrow. A focus on emissions levels decades ahead, such as the recent weak G7 statement, is a dangerous distraction if not preceded by aggressive emissions reductions here and now. Pre-2020 action must be centre-stage for Paris.*

## The carbon budget

The UNFCCC Structured Experts Dialogue shows the vast risks associated with 2 degrees of warming ,and how even 1.5 degrees is not safe. However, for a meagre 2 in 3 chance of keeping below the dangerous 2 degrees goal (a risk level equivalent to boarding a plane knowing there are 30 000 plane crashes every day) IPCC shows that in 2011 we had only 1000 Gt $CO_2$ left in the budget.

Since 2011 we have emitted an additional 150 Gt. Factoring in unavoidable emissions from land use (of 100Gt) – assuming we do the best we can to reduce deforestation and tackle emissions from agriculture – and difficult to substitute cement production (150Gt) leaves us with 600 Gt CO2 remaining for all other emissions – 15 years at current emissions levels.

From a fair shares and equity perspective all of this remaining emissions budget belongs to developing countries and the poor who have limited historical responsibility, less capacity to mitigate and still need to build much of their infrastructure.

## Fair shares and immediate action

Developed countries must thus undertake all available efforts to transform their energy sectors, transportation, housing, and industries as fast as conceivably possible. This means going to zero emissions through a restructuring of their economies, production and consumption patterns at scale and pace similar to what countries have done when facing war.

Developed countries need to decrease their domestic emissions in the order of 50% by 2020, 75% by 2025 and 90% by 2030. To keep within the risky 1000Gt budget this still requires developing countries to on average peak by 2025, and then to embark on unprecedented 6-8% yearly emissions reductions, while simultaneously growing their economies and building infrastructure.

A large proportion of these necessary developing country reductions are in fact the responsibility of developed countries and must be enabled by finance and technology – it is their mitigation related climate debt. Developed countries have to undertake their share of these global emissions reductions by providing the necessary technology, finance and capacity building to developing countries.

This is their moral obligation, but is also in their self-interest. Without such provision the carbon budget will burst and they will also risk the dire consequences of tipping points and catastrophic climate change, risking the stability and viability of their own societies.

To have any credibility and relevance, the UNFCCC negotiations and COP21 in Paris must deliver immediate action, pre-2020, facing up to this reality.

This calls for, in concrete terms:

### *1. Raise developed country pre-2020 targets, based on fair sharing of the carbon budget*

All countries must do their fair share.

As is clear in the mandate from Durban, and as governments agreed in Doha in 2012 (under the Kyoto Protocol), rich industrialised countries must raise their 2020 emissions reductions targets in line with what science and equity require.

As part of a science-based and fair outcome, Paris should see an agreement for Annex I targets to increase from their current level of about 12% below 1990 levels by 2020 to at least 50% below 1990 levels, and further commit to 90% reductions by 2030.

Developing countries, in turn, must undertake the maximum immediate action as enabled by financial and technological support. They must also use the pre-2020 period to thoroughly plan, through national multi-stakeholder processes, for ambitious national plans that include activities both conditional and non-conditional on provision of finance and technology.

The current refusal by developed countries to increase their pre-2020 commitments is unacceptable. Without significant increase in effort there will be minimal trust in the negotiations, no example for other countries to follow, and very little left of the global emissions budget for the post-2020 period.

### 2. Commit to meet pre-2020 targets

The ambitious targets for pre-2020 that needs to be announced in Paris, along with the necessary commitments on finance and technology must be more than political pledges. The current refusal to commit to the Kyoto protocol by USA, Canada, Japan and Australia is unacceptable.

The Paris COP should see ambitious science-based reduction targets inscribed in an enforceable agreement that regains its status as 'legal force' through the return of signatories. The international climate regime as it applies by the developed countries must not be weakened or 'deregulated" simply to appease the United States, and other developed countries that seek to escape from the Kyoto Protocol.

Paris must also set up a legal framework to monitor, review and verify the provision of finance and technology, including a roadmap for pre-2020 climate finance. Without a commitment to the already pledged (and insufficient) USD 100 billion, Paris has little prospect of success.

### 3. Transform towards 100% people-centred renewable energy and energy access.

To keep within the carbon budget, an ambitious, visionary transformation to 100% distributed, people-centred renewable energy must be initiated immediately in both developed and developing countries.

The challenge is momentous and requires a concerted global effort – a programme for 'Global Renewable Energy and Energy Access' (GREEAT) much in line with the Africa group call for a Global Partnership on renewable energy.

Such a global 'Marshall plan' requires scrutiny of solutions for a race to the top among developed countries, and an ambitious support mechanism enabled by international public finance (through GCF and/or other international public funding) for developing countries. Ensuring energy access for all and support mechanisms for decentralised, community controlled energy, smart grids and energy efficiency must be key features of such a programme.

Paris should launch a GREEAT programme and set in motion similar efforts in other sectors through the strengthening of the existing Technical Expert Process and establishment of the proposed Accelerated Implementation Mechanism under Workstream 2 of the UNFCCC Durban platform.

### 4. Avoid and remove dirty and harmful energy

There is no room in the carbon budget for new fossil fuel investments that locks in additional pollution. Both new and existing fossil fuel investments risk becoming stranded assets, as many fossil fuel installations will have to be decommissioned before the end of their lifetime.

Governments need to ban investments in dirty energy and instead promote and incentivise clean, renewable energy.

This means that the Green Climate Fund must adopt a clear policy that excludes the chance of public money funding harmful energy projects.

Paris should also see governments commit to ending their subsidies to fossil fuel producers and their use of public export and development banks to finance harmful energy projects.

### 5. Immediately tackle behaviour, consumption and demand-side management

The urgency of climate change requires immediate action on the demand-side of the energy system. While forcefully initiating a transition to 100% renewable energy on the supply-side (i.e renewable energy installations, smart grids etc.) it will still take years before new, zero-carbon structures are in place. To avoid bursting the carbon budget the wealthy minority of the world's population need to immediately curb overconsumption and waste.

Governments in both developed and developing countries must address this through stringent measures such as carbon taxes, progressively tougher technology standards, bans on wasteful products, limits on advertisement, public education and quotas and rationing, while ensuring a just transition for workers and that poor and marginalised people are not affected in negative ways.

A price on carbon alone will not suffice to incur the transformational, non-incremental changes that are required.

ActionAid
Asian Peoples Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD)
Earth in Brackets
Friends of the Earth – EWNI
LDC Watch
Pan African Climate and Environmental Justice Alliance
Third World Network
What Next Forum