



2009

The year of the global deal

Climate change is already a reality, and in some parts of the world its impacts are happening sooner, faster and more strongly than predicted. As the effects of climate change become more apparent, it is increasingly clear that we have a short time to avert its worst impacts on people and societies, species and habitats.

The UN climate change talks in December represent one of the last credible opportunities to forge a global deal, where nations agree to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases in time to prevent the dangerous effects of climate change taking hold.

Here we explain what WWF believes must be achieved to secure a fair, equitable and scientifically-credible global deal to combat climate change.

Time is running out for an effective global response to the threat of climate change. The urgency comes from the scientific evidence, which shows that global emissions need to be put onto a downward path within a decade.

Time is also short in the political process – the existing emission targets under the first phase of the Kyoto Protocol only take us to 2012. A successor agreement needs to be adopted soon to allow time for it to come into force by 2012.

The critical meeting will be the UN climate change conference – technically the Conference of Parties (COP) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – which will be held in Copenhagen in December 2009. At the 2007 COP in Bali, countries agreed a ‘roadmap’ pointing towards an agreement in Copenhagen.

The conference in December 2009 in the Polish city of Poznan is the crucial midway point between Bali and Copenhagen. It provides an opportunity to take stock of how negotiations have progressed since 2007, and – more important – to agree what is to be negotiated during 2009 and to develop the momentum needed in the run-up to Copenhagen.

WWF therefore looks to governments attending the Poznan conference for a clear demonstration of the ambition, commitment and sense of urgency to reach agreement in Copenhagen in December 2009 – the year of the global deal.

Ambition, Commitment and Urgency

Along with the rest of the EU, the UK government is committed to limiting global warming to 2°C above the average recorded in pre-industrial times. Although significant impacts will occur with temperature increases of less than 2°C, once we go above this threshold there will be increasingly severe consequences for people and nature, with the most vulnerable communities and species being hit first and hardest. We also face rapidly increasing risks of passing a number of ‘tipping points’ – events which lead to sudden and increasingly large changes.

There is no longer any doubt that human activities are changing the climate. The scale of the challenge is also increasingly clear.

Most scientists agree that we face a high risk of crossing the 2°C threshold unless global greenhouse gas emissions begin to decline in the next 10 years and are reduced by at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

The greatest burden for addressing this challenge lies on rich, developed nations which bear the greatest historical responsibility for causing climate change and which continue to have the highest emissions. Commitment and ambition must be demonstrated by these countries in Poznan. However, it is clear that rapidly developing countries will also need to show a desire to move to a more sustainable and cleaner development path.

What is the global deal?

In Copenhagen in December 2009, the 190-country Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC is expected to adopt a new international agreement setting out how the world will tackle the growing climate crisis.

A new global deal will need to be sufficiently ambitious to ensure a safe climate, through setting targets for industrialised countries and introducing robust mechanisms to cut emissions of greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation). Crucially, it must also set out plans for how to adapt to the already inevitable impacts of a warmer world (adaptation), and introduce a new system to reward developing countries for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. In addition, a new global deal must have fairness and equity at its heart: it must include mechanisms for financial assistance for the poorest countries and an agreement on technology transfer and access – both of which are vital to help developing countries reduce emissions and adapt to climate change.

WWF's vision for a global deal can be summarised as follows:

- A binding and equitable climate treaty that enters into force in 2013, to ensure that global greenhouse gas emissions peak and start on a downward path well before 2020, and fall steeply thereafter;
- The establishment of a robust global carbon market and other financial mechanisms that promote clean energy investment in developing countries, support adaptation in least developed countries, and deliver deep emissions reductions within industrialised countries;
- Agreement on extended technology transfer, trade and investment to serve the needs of developing countries and pave the way to low-carbon development;
- A credible framework to ensure that emissions from deforestation and degradation in developing countries are drastically reduced, while respecting the rights and access of indigenous people and local communities to forest resources.
- A strong commitment to secure predictable and sustainable finance and resources to help vulnerable developing countries to adapt where possible to the already inevitable impacts of climate change.

What WWF wants from Poznan

Because a new global deal will clearly require a dramatic ramping up in ambition and in international cooperation, it is disappointing to note that negotiations in 2008 have been slow. Most developed countries have failed to show commitment or ambition – evident through the lack of new and constructive ideas that they have brought to the table, leaving the running to some developing countries.

In part, much of the slow progress can be attributed to the critical role of the US and the difficulty of making progress under the Bush administration. President-Elect Obama has already made extremely positive statements about his intention to reduce the USA's own emissions and to engage fully in the international negotiations. At Poznan, the US will still be formally represented by the Bush administration – however, it is to be hoped that the prospects of a new approach by the US in 2009 will inject greater ambition and movement into the negotiations.

WWF is looking for clear political signals of ambition, commitment and a sense of urgency from the highest level to show that the world is committed to strong action on climate change, and that the current financial crisis will not blow global leaders off course. In particular, industrialised countries must show a clear ambition to lead through strong domestic action to reduce their emissions by at least 25-40% below 1990 levels by 2020 – the level which the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) says is needed to keep warming to 2°C.

In order to ensure that real negotiations can get under way swiftly in 2009, the Poznan conference must also set out clear and focused options under the specific topic areas that will be critical components of a global deal. The conference should also agree a precise structure and timeline for the 2009 negotiations process, and secure commitments for capacity building activities in developing countries in advance of 2013.

Key issues include:

- Mitigation – measures required to limit the rise in global average temperatures to less than 2°C above the pre-industrial average. This will require global emissions to peak well before 2020, with developed countries committing to cuts in the range of 25-40% on 1990 levels by 2020. Thereafter, global emissions must decline rapidly so that they have dropped by at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050: this will mean near zero net emissions from developed countries and substantial deviation below a business as usual pathway from major developing nations.
- Adaptation – enabling countries to adapt where possible to the current and future consequences of climate change. Present commitments to deliver an agreement on adaptation under the UNFCCC process remain fragmented, focusing on scientific assessments and expert workshops and lacking substance for implementation and financing. To work towards an effective global deal, all parties must better recognise that early emissions reductions greatly reduce the adaptation costs. Progress on adaptation requires:
 - Massive flows of secure and predictable funding delivered through well-governed and effective funding mechanisms, together with progress on regional insurance schemes;
 - Resources to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to implement National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs), and to non-LDC vulnerable countries to develop National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to address climate risks and integrate adaptation into national development processes;
 - Recognition that a 'business as usual' emissions pathway without a sharp peak and decline well before 2020 means many vulnerable states, communities and ecosystems will find themselves in situations where adaptation is no longer possible. This requires considering mechanisms and options such as insurance set-ups and/or compensation mechanisms.
- Financing – countries should come to Poznan ready to agree a limited number of options that realistically address the scope and scale of the finance challenge. The UNFCCC estimates that developing countries will need at least \$130 billion a year to address climate change, but only a tiny fraction of this money is currently available. Carbon markets will not be able to raise all the necessary funds, particularly in areas such as adaptation, so additional mechanisms are needed which must be predictable and transparent. In this context, the Norwegian proposal to auction carbon allowances is one compelling option that could deliver large-scale climate finance.
- Technology transfer – despite the increased development of low-carbon, efficient and sustainable technology, the scale and speed of deployment remains far behind what is needed. WWF proposes to organise future technology efforts under the UNFCCC through a series of five-year targeted Technology Action Programmes.
- A mechanism to reward developing countries that reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD), as part of the overall emissions reductions needed to stay below a 2°C rise. WWF has a goal of achieving zero net deforestation by 2020 – a system for REDD in the post-2012 will be a critical way of achieving this by increasing the economic incentive for developing countries to conserve their forests. A framework needs to be created that (i) ensures programmes deliver robust carbon benefits that can be monitored effectively; (ii) provides the funding and policy support needed to implement REDD programmes; and (iii) promotes co-benefits, including the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem function and services, and access to benefits by local and indigenous communities.
- To be comprehensive, the deal must include emissions from international aviation and shipping for the first time. International civil aviation and maritime organisations were given responsibility for these emissions in 1997 but have failed to tackle them. The same error must not be repeated in a Copenhagen Treaty.

What WWF will be doing at Poznan

WWF will present discussion papers in areas ranging from finance to bunker fuels and other areas crucial to the global deal, such as the need for a mechanism to cover compensation for those countries most badly affected by climate change impacts.

In addition to press briefings and side events, WWF will also work with key government delegations and other stakeholders to secure strong commitments in the critical areas of the package – mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology transfer and reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation.

Who needs to show leadership in Poznan?

The EU

Leadership from the EU is critical if we are to secure a strong, equitable and scientifically credible global deal at Copenhagen. In early 2008, the European Commission put forward a legislative package to show the EU's commitment to tackling climate change. This includes emissions reduction targets for 2020, and policies to reform the EU Emissions Trading Scheme, promote renewable energy and improve the fuel efficiency of cars. WWF has been working to try and strengthen the package as it passes through the European Parliament and the EU Council.

The conclusion of the negotiations in Europe will coincide with the Poznan conference. The outcome could seriously affect the nature of the Poznan negotiations, and consequently our chances of achieving the global deal in Copenhagen. A strong package of legislation on the part of the EU would not only confirm European commitment, ambition and sense of urgency, but would also demonstrate clear leadership for the rest of the world to follow.

The UK

The UK government has a critical role to play. The Climate Change Act, which received Royal Assent in late November, has been a major focus of WWF-UK's work for the past two years. This groundbreaking piece of legislation will establish the UK as the first country to commit itself to legally binding targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050. This undoubtedly demonstrates a strong example of leadership for the rest of the world to follow. WWF therefore expects the UK to play a constructive role in the negotiations in Poznan, and throughout 2009 towards Copenhagen. On 1 December, the new Climate Change Committee will recommend a UK emissions reduction target for 2020, and WWF urges the government to give an early signal that it will accept an ambitious goal.

Other key countries with high greenhouse gas emissions such as the other EU member states, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Russia, South Africa and the US, must also now take a progressive approach towards a fair and robust Copenhagen agreement.

Why does WWF work on climate change?

WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has warned that at warming of just 1.5-2.5°C, up to 30% of species face a greatly heightened risk of extinction. The consequences of extreme weather events, sea level rise and changes in precipitation will also be severe for people, particularly in the world's poorest countries.

Climate change is one of the most obvious and immediate examples of how current patterns of human consumption are exceeding the capacity of the Earth's natural systems. WWF is working for a One Planet Future, which aims to address major global issues such as climate change, unsustainable lifestyles and the use of natural resources.

We are clear that people cannot thrive without a flourishing natural environment, and nature cannot thrive without careful stewardship by people. Our global priorities therefore focus on climate change and reducing humanity's global footprint to sustainable levels.

WWF is working around the world to influence the process by which we will achieve the global deal. Focusing on the key strategic countries such as those of the EU in addition to Brazil, China, India, Japan, Russia, South Africa and the US, WWF aims to make a compelling case for government and private sector participation in, and advocacy for, the global deal. WWF will therefore be mounting a major global campaign on climate change in 2009 to support this goal.

Campaigning for a stronger
UK Climate Act





The mission of WWF is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by

- conserving the world's biological diversity
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- reducing pollution and wasteful consumption

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