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## Kyoto targets remain distant prospect for EU countries

Section: Climate Change, Energy, Environment, Sustainable Development

New data shows EU must radically strengthen measures to reduce emissions

Brussels, 18 June 2008 - Friends of the Earth Europe is demanding an urgent acceleration of action by governments to fight climate change after new data released today revealed that many European countries remain a long way off meeting their Kyoto targets. [1]

The figures published by the European Environment Agency show that the 15 countries which were members of the EU before enlargement in 2004 reduced their emissions by 0.8 per cent between 2005 and 2006 but still only reached 2.2 per cent below 1990 levels. This puts them a long way short of realising their joint international Kyoto Protocol obligations to cut greenhouse gas pollution by 8 per cent by 2012. [2]

The emissions of the European Union as a whole decreased slightly in 2006. They were 0.3 per cent lower than 2005, reaching minus 7.7 per cent in comparison to 1990 levels.

The biggest source for the recorded decrease in emissions was a drop in emissions from households and the service sector. This was a result of the warmer weather conditions in 2006 which required people to heat their homes less.

The transport sector experienced a growth in emissions with road transport figures rising by 0.7 per cent in 2006.

"This data is alarming. The old Member States are still not on track to meet their Kyoto targets. The small emission cuts achieved are not the result of real political action but mainly due to warmer weather conditions," said Sonja Meister, climate campaigner at Friends of the Earth Europe. "Europe needs to seriously step-up its action against climate change. This data puts even more pressure on the EU to agree on an ambitious energy package to ensure emissions cuts happen every year and are sustained over the long term."

Spain, Luxembourg, Austria, Denmark, Italy and Finland are still furthest from their Kyoto emission reduction targets. [3]

The EU as a whole is not on track to meet its targets. Its stated commitment of limiting the average global temperature rise to 2 degrees centigrade would require at least 30 per cent domestic cuts by 2020, but countries are not even on track to meet the insufficient target of 20 percent by 2020. Friends of the Earth is therefore urging the EU to strengthen its energy package by making the Emission Trading Scheme and the Renewables Directive as strong as possible and by ensuring a meaningful compliance system under the Effort-Sharing agreement. To deal with rising transport emissions it is calling on the EU to agree strong binding targets and an effective penalty system for car manufacturers on fuel efficiency.

"The EU will only be able to fight dangerous climate change if all member states reduce their emissions year on year. The European Commission must be given the power to ensure that all Member States comply with their targets," said Sonja Meister. "Time is running out and only strong legislation including annual cuts will bring the EU on track to meet its long-term targets."

Almost all new Member States have made large emissions cuts in comparison to 1990 figures and will easily meet their Kyoto targets, but this is due to economic collapses of the 1990s rather than as a consequence of intelligent policies. Around half of Germany's emissions reductions can still be accounted for by the breakdown of industry in Eastern Germany.

There is a danger that economic growth in central and Eastern European countries could reverse the trend of emissions reductions - most of these countries experienced rising emissions between 2005 and 2006 (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia).

For more information, please contact: Sonja Meister, Climate Campaigner at Friends of the Earth Europe: Belgian mobile. ☎ +32 4849 75107; email: [sonja.meister@foeeurope.org](mailto:sonja.meister@foeeurope.org)

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Francesca Gater, Communications Officer at Friends of the Earth Europe: Tel:

 +32 25 42 61 05 ; Mobile:  +32 485 930515 ; email:

[francesca.gater@foeeurope.org](mailto:francesca.gater@foeeurope.org)

#### Notes:

[1] The new figures are the greenhouse gas emission figures from 2006, as the data is always published with a delay of about two years. Only the old Member States, the EU-15, have a joint Kyoto target of at least 8 per cent below 1990 levels while the EU-27 formally have no joint target. The official data is available at <http://www.eea.eu.int>

The data is different for 1990 and the Kyoto base year which is not completely based on 1990. For example for the EU-15, the base year for the Kyoto Protocol for CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O is 1990; for the fluorinated gases 12 Member States have selected 1995 as the base year, whereas Austria, France and Italy have chosen 1990.

[2] A linear path drawn from 1990 to 2010 shows that emissions in 2006 should have been at -6.4% and not only at -2.7% compared to the Kyoto base year.

EU 15 = 15 Member States in the EU before the enlargement in 2004: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom

[3] The table below lists for each EU-27 country first its Kyoto target and the current 2006 figures in comparison to the Kyoto base year. Please note: Malta and Cyprus do not have Kyoto targets and thus the emission level in 2006 is given here in comparison for 1990 for these two countries.

Country: Kyoto target (emissions in 2006 compared to Kyoto base year)

Austria: -13.0% (2006: +15.2%)  
 Belgium: -7.5% (2006: -6.0%)  
 Bulgaria: -8.0% (2006: -46.2%)  
 Cyprus: no Kyoto target (2006: + 66.0%)  
 Czech Republic: -8.0% (2006: -23.7%)  
 Denmark: -21.0% (2006: +1.7%)  
 Estonia -8.0% (2006: -55.7%)  
 Finland: +0.0% (2006: +13.1%)  
 France: +0.0% (2006: -4.0%)  
 Germany: -21.0% (2006: -18.5%)  
 Greece: +25.0% (2006: +24.4%)  
 Hungary: -6.0% (2006: -31.9%)  
 Ireland: +13.0% (2006: +25.5%)  
 Italy: -6.5% (2006: +9.9%)  
 Latvia: -8.0% (2006: -55.1%)  
 Lithuania: -8.0% (2006: -53.0%)  
 Luxembourg: -28.0% (2006: +1.2%)  
 Malta: no Kyoto target (2006: +45.0%)  
 Netherlands: -6.0% (2006: -2.6%)  
 Poland: -6.0% (2006: -28.9%)  
 Portugal: +27.0% (2006: +38.3%)  
 Romania: -8% (2006: -43.7%)  
 Slovakia: -8.0% (2006: -32.1%)  
 Slovenia: -8.0% (2006: +1.2%)  
 Spain: +15.0% (2006: +49.5%)  
 Sweden: +4.0% (2006: -8.9%)  
 United Kingdom: -12.5% (2006: -16.0%)