



**Friends of  
the Earth  
Europe**

## “Climate Deal” Action

European Parliament, 8:30 – 9:00 am, October 4th 2006

### What is a “Climate Deal”?

A “Climate Deal” has two parts. One is a lifestyle change that someone is prepared to make in order to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The other, in return, is a demand for real policy action by a government to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The key principle behind this Friends of the Earth Europe campaign is that we will only win the fight against climate change with a two-pronged approach. Governments have to use their political power to move our societies away from dirty and wasteful energy, but individuals play an important role as well: we all can make small steps in our personal lives - buying electricity from renewable sources, using energy saving light bulbs, cycling more and driving less or travelling by train instead of flying. But even the best individual efforts will not do the job unless governments do their bit, too, and get tough on greenhouse gas emissions.

Friends of the Earth Europe has been encouraging citizens across Europe to make “Climate Deals” throughout the summer. We have already collected thousands of “Climate Deals” across more than twenty countries, which will be presented to national Environment Ministers and to the COP/MOP1 delegates in Nairobi later this year.

### Why MEPs?

Today Friends of the Earth Europe encourages MEPs to make their own “Climate Deals”, because they represent the people who are already taking part all over Europe. Some of the MEPs may choose to write a personal lifestyle pledge into their “Climate Deal” and some may choose to promise political action on their part in return for political action by their national government.

If thousands of people – MEPs and citizens alike - show their national governments that they are committed to fighting climate change, national governments will not be able to shy away from taking concrete steps to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

### Why today?

The “Climate Deal” action today is taking place shortly before MEPs on the Environment Committee vote on a resolution on the next UN Climate Conference, which is taking place in Kenya in November 2006. The main topic of the conference will be to discuss the future of the climate regime once the first Kyoto commitment period ends in 2012. An ambitious and enlarged framework for this next period – to be negotiated by 2008 - will be crucial in the fight against climate change.

Friends of the Earth Europe urges MEPs to vote for a strong resolution calling for an ambitious emissions reduction target of 80% by 2050. To trigger an economic shift towards energy efficiency and renewable energy sources, businesses need investment security which can only be given by long term targets.

One of the most controversial amendments to the resolution today is a proposal to integrate forestry projects in developing countries into the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). Friends of the Earth Europe believes that developed countries must cut emissions and change energy behaviour on the domestic level first, before buying CO2 credits via the CDM from developing countries.

*For more information and if you didn't get a chance to make a “Climate Deal” today yourself, please visit: <http://www.foeeurope.org/climatedeal>*

### What do we want from European national governments?

1. Build a strong international regime: the current climate treaty - the Kyoto Protocol - is only a small first step. The world's governments are now negotiating a new phase of the Protocol. Such a new phase must lead to deeper emission reductions in the European Union and must put Europe on a path that will eventually lead to emissions reductions of 80% by 2050.

2. Reduce the waste of energy: We use too much energy too inefficiently. The energy intensity of the European economy has barely improved over the past years. Europe could reduce its energy use by about 20 % at a net cost of zero (i.e. the costs to achieve these savings would be lower than the cost savings through using less energy). Scientists have calculated that with existing technology we can cut our greenhouse gas emissions by up to 75%, whilst maintaining the same level of comfort. Yet, plans to tap into the vast potential have so far been snagged in the claptrap of vested interests: The latest attempt to install EU wide energy efficiency targets resulted in little more than business-as-usual.

3. Increase the use of renewable energies: Only 6% of Europe's energy use is currently met by renewable energies, although renewables could, by 2050, meet half of our total energy demand. But, coal, oil and gas have enjoyed decades of political, financial and infrastructural support. Fossil fuels are still kept artificially cheap because energy companies are allowed to externalise their hidden costs to society, such as inflated health expenses from air pollution or the costs of climate change.

4. Reverse unsustainable trends in the transport sector: Many governments still believe the myth that more roads and more traffic is beneficial for the economy - but studies show the contrary can be true. More cars on our roads and planes in the sky lead to ever-increasing greenhouse gas emissions. Effective policies to reverse the unsustainable trends are largely absent. Years ago the European Commission planned to force carmakers to make their cars less fuel consuming, but industry opposed and got away with voluntary instead of mandatory targets, which they are now sure to nonchalantly miss.

5. Stop subsidising dirty energy: Governments also actively support the fossil fuel business. In 2003, more than 22 billion Euros were given to the coal, oil and gas industry in Europe in the form of direct and indirect subsidies - compared to just over 5 billion for renewable energies. Also, conventional energy companies externalise hidden costs of around €40-70 billion every year to society, e.g. in the form of health costs from air pollution. These costs should be internalised, e.g. through a "dirty fuel tax", using revenues to support renewable energy and efficiency programmes.

6. Phase out nuclear power: 20 years after the Chernobyl disaster, nuclear power remains the most dangerous mechanism of generating electricity. And nuclear power is financially insane: Every Euro spent on new nuclear power could save ten times more emissions if it was invested in energy conservation measures - thus also securing energy supply ten times cheaper. Notably, not a single nuclear power station was ever built or operated without government subsidies.

Friends of the Earth Europe will circulate a press release later today, with details of the Environment Committee vote and with a link to high resolution photos of the MEPs and their "Climate Deals".

#### Contact

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