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## Joint NGO EU Climate and Energy Policy Statement

### SCIENCE: THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 2007 report concludes that "Warming of the climate system is unequivocal". The changes we are now observing mean that the Earth's buffer systems are already being stretched beyond their capacities. Atmospheric concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> and methane are at their highest for at least 650,000 years: that is, the highest in the history of our species. The impacts of climate change are already being felt, particularly in the poorest countries of the world. **Unless urgent and effective measures are undertaken, human history will soon enter a new, and potentially catastrophic, stage.**

The EU has defined "dangerous climate change" as a global average temperature increase of above 2°C. The 450ppmv CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents scenario modelled by the Commission in its January Communication gives but a 50:50 chance of meeting the EU's own target. A stabilization pathway of 400ppmv CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents, while not providing certainty, gives a more plausible chance of meeting the 2°C objective, while safeguarding sustainable development in poor countries.

**The Stern report and Commissions Communication make clear that we can economically afford to act.** The cost of mitigation is less than the costs of climate impacts: these impacts costs have greater adverse implications for competitiveness than those emerging from taking the required action to tackle climate change. This Council meeting affords a chance to show EU leadership on how to address probably the greatest challenge that our species has ever faced.

### ACTION: THE POLITICAL CHALLENGE

**The EU must put in place an internal and external energy strategy in line with the climate objective of keeping warming well below 2°C.** The EU must demonstrate that it is undertaking a paradigm shift in its consumption patterns, particularly in energy. The provisions of the Commission's energy package do not at present appear ambitious enough to achieve this goal. Suitably strong targets and the measures to achieve them must be agreed at the Council and further initiatives explored with international partners. Leadership must be demonstrated both at home, and in the international arena. At the forefront of the reasons for immediate and strong action is that the impacts of climate change are already being felt in many developing countries; the impact is first and worst on the poorest most vulnerable people – those with least capacity to adapt and least responsibility to mitigate. Leadership from the EU is a moral issue.

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## *I. Leadership through example*

### **(i) Fulfillment of existing EU targets, particularly by revisiting the set-up of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) to make it deliver actual reductions toward the EU Kyoto targets.**

The most visible element of the EU's climate policy toolbox, the EU ETS is so far failing to deliver the necessary emission reductions. Most EU Member States have failed in using the EU ETS for this purpose, perverting its original aim and rendering the tool essentially useless. Recently, the European Commission has had to remind Member States of the way the ETS's intended purpose and decided to cut the caps put forward by them. While the new caps are still too high, and allow for emission increases in many countries, this is an absolutely essential step in the right direction. As a minimum, these decisions must be adhered to. If the EU backed down on these decisions and increase emissions from the ETS sectors, it would send a disastrous signal to the outside world – and would be an internationally-obvious failure of your leadership.

### **(ii) EU must commit to a unilateral EU 2020 reduction target of -30%, to be achieved by domestic action. Furthermore, indicating EU willingness to assume a higher overall emissions reduction target in the order of -40 to -60% is required to further develop the CDM into a tool for supporting sustainable development in developing countries, in accordance with the responsibility of industrialized countries.**

The climate process has been slow with no one country willing to break ranks and demonstrate their commitment to taking the necessary action to make progress. The Commission's proposal of a unilateral target is a welcome initiative; however, the -20% target specified is inadequate to tackle the climate challenge. The Commission recognizes the scientifically-derived imperative for a 30% emissions reduction by 2020 for developed countries, but promotes a weaker unilateral commitment for the EU. This mixed signalling is not consistent with leadership.

EU leadership will be demonstrated by a commitment to a domestic unilateral -30% target for 2020. Such a move offers a role model for other Parties and is likely to increase their willingness to take on similar targets.

Domestic action is vital to achieving the paradigm shift in European energy use which is necessary for a sustainable future. To do otherwise is to renege on your countries' UNFCCC commitments to "take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse impacts thereof". As well as giving new impetus to the international negotiations, unilateral domestic action will provide EU businesses with first mover advantages on the global markets and simultaneously bring down the costs of



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sustainable technologies, making them more affordable for all on the world markets. Developing and rapidly industrialising countries will thus be enabled to move ahead on a clean technology path.

The current excessively high cost of clean energy options for these countries is one of the key barriers to progress in negotiating a post 2012 framework.

**(iii) Energy efficiency is the obvious no-regrets means of helping to deliver not only the climate targets, but also the competitiveness goals of the Lisbon Agenda.**

Innovation and efficiency are essential to EU security and prosperity and an effectively implemented long-term strategy is required to drive their deployment on the scale required. Unsustainable demand must be addressed and achievement of the 20% by 2020 energy efficiency target is a critical first step. However, new legislation will be required to fulfil the potential of the Energy Efficiency Action Plan. We therefore call upon the Council to give the Commission the mandate to develop legislative proposals based on the Action Plan to drive new efficiency measures.

**(iv) Renewable Energy is another crucial pillar of the sustainable energy future required as part of the domestic achievement of climate goals.**

The Commission's proposal for a binding target is a good signal, but without specific policies for electricity and heating & cooling it is not going to help the uptake of renewable energy across the board. A discontinuation of the sectoral approach would constitute a step backward compared to current policies and would be an abrogation of leadership. Together with the European Parliament, **we call for a legally binding target of 25% by 2020 broken down into sector-specific targets for electricity and heating and cooling.** Implementation of policies to achieve a third target, for biofuels, is only acceptable if binding sustainability standards are set for both domestic production and imports. These standards have to secure maximum greenhouse gas savings while preventing any adverse effects on biodiversity or food security. The level of any biofuels target must not exceed what is possible to produce sustainably. In addition, biofuels should not be used as an excuse to water down fuel efficiency targets for cars.

The Commission's recent proposal on a 1% per year reduction of lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions of transport fuels is a good step towards maximizing greenhouse gas savings.



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## *II. Leadership through cooperation, ideas and outreach*

**(i) 2007 is a crucial year for making political progress on climate change. The EU must work to ensure that the post-2012 negotiations under the Kyoto Protocol and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change will be formally launched in December 2007 in Indonesia and conclude no later than 2009.**

**Heads of State have to personally ensure that the EU, with all its resources and influence, will deliver the required EU leadership, internally, bilaterally and internationally.** This engagement starts with the EU March Summit, but needs to continue on through high-level bilateral meetings, the G8+5 process, the Greenland process, the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, regional summits, the UN General Assembly, all the way to the international climate negotiations in Indonesia, and beyond. The EU is well placed to engage in these fora, to build greater trust between Parties and create political momentum for real action in the post 2012 discussions under the UNFCCC. Environment Ministers must be given this highest-level backing on climate issues, so they can fulfill their mission to protect the climate. Energy Ministers need to understand that their responsibility is to deliver a climate-friendly, sustainable and secure supply of energy.

The EU must integrate climate change considerations into all foreign relations work, all energy considerations, research and development work and cooperation with internal and international partners.

**The decisions taken by the EU March Summit by Heads of States and Governments will be the crucial EU opening contribution in 2007 Upon this decision hinges progress in the international negotiations and thereby our ability to tackle climate change.** Citizens and governments around the world are watching the EU process around its internal and external climate and energy agenda closely. We observe a high level of skepticism as to whether the EU will deliver in light of its overall rising emissions trends, its troubled attempts at implementing coherent policies and measures, as in the EU ETS, and conflicting messaging from EU member states on sensitive issues in the international negotiations. The Council has the unique responsibility to provide clarity on what EU leadership means in practice and for the EU to table ideas on the way forward.

**(ii) Broadening agreement on measures to increase efficient use of energy will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions worldwide.**

The Commission has proposed an international agreement to promote energy efficiency. The NGO community welcomes this idea with the following reservations. Rather than attempting to gain a



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global agreement, the EU should strive to identify the key actors in different relevant sectors and agree commitments on a scale and within a timeframe that will deliver real climate benefits. A meaningful G8+5 energy efficiency initiative at the June summit in Germany will be an important component of this.

While new technologies can have competitive advantages for European industry, an overemphasis on competition is counterproductive, while a political framework based on cooperation can deliver great co-benefits. There is a real need for the EU to cooperate with other key energy-intensive economies to work to create a common and forward-looking energy strategy involving, cooperation in technology development, innovative financing mechanisms and alignment of minimum efficiency standards on *inter alia* consumer appliances and vehicle emissions. Standards for vehicle emissions should not be seen as a substitute for the required domestic transportation modal shift from road to rail. Significant improvements in the way the world uses energy in all sectors, are necessary to avoid dangerous climate change.