



THE ROAD TO COPENHAGEN

THE PROGRESSIVE CASE
FOR CLIMATE ACTION



SERA

Labour
Environment
Campaign

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and Rachel Reeves.

CONTENTS

P3 INTRODUCTION - ANDREW PAKES & RACHEL REEVES

P4 THE PROGRESSIVE CASE FOR COPENHAGEN - RT HON DAVID MILIBAND MP

P9 ENSURING A FAIR RESPONSE - RT HON DOUGLAS ALEXANDER MP

P13 THE VIEW FROM SPAIN - ELENA ESPINOSA

P16 NOT A TRAPDOOR BUT THE KEY - MATTHIAS MACHNIG

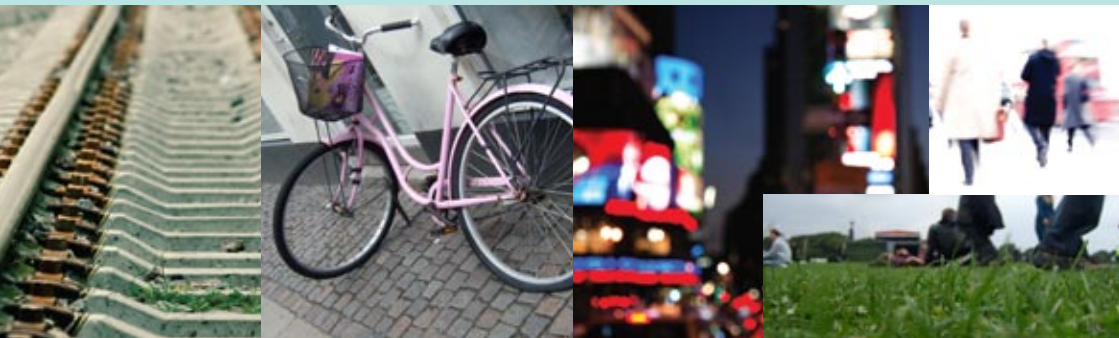
P21 A CALL FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE - MARGOT WALLSTRÖM

P24 COPENHAGEN: WHY THE EU MATTERS - LINDA McAVAN MEP

Production by Melanie Smallman, SERA National Co-ordinator.
Thanks to Jo Billingham, International Manager, Labour Party and Mike Smith, SERA.

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introduction

Andrew Pakes & Rachel Reeves

The UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen in December will be remembered either as the moment world leaders took decisive action or as a squandered opportunity. It is critical that we forge a way forward to take resolute action on what is undoubtedly the greatest issue of our time – climate change. As progressives, we must ensure that Copenhagen succeeds so that communities and families across the world have the opportunities they need to live meaningful and fulfilling lives, and that this is true for this generation and those that follow.

Climate change is like no other challenge in terms of its global reach and in its need for international co-operation. No country acting alone – not even America, or China, can make the difference we need. European countries have consistently been at the vanguard of tackling climate change and this pamphlet brings together the ideas and vision of senior European politicians on the left ahead of Copenhagen.

As Europeans and as politicians on the progressive left we will base our response on our values – particularly the importance of social justice and internationalism. While no one is immune to the impact of climate change, it is the poor who will pay the highest price from rising temperatures, despite being least responsible for them. From higher food and energy prices to destroyed livelihoods and homes, poorer countries, communities and families stand to lose the most from global warming. Moreover, climate change brings in to play issues of inter-generational justice – if we continue to consume the world's resources at our

current rate, we will be handing down to our children and grandchildren a poorer planet. For these reasons progressive politicians have climate change at the top of their agenda. Without action to tackle global warming we have no chance of fulfilling our commitments to economic and social justice.

This set of essays draws on our social democratic and progressive traditions – the need for innovation and a re-modelled economic system coupled with a greater commitment to global justice. We need a compact uniting the developed and developing worlds with the concept of the common good triumphing against narrow country or regional interests. As Margot Wallström argues in her essay, A Call for Climate Justice, the developed world must recognise and take responsibility for the effect their policies and lifestyles have on the poorest and most vulnerable. We must commit to finding solutions that will benefit all, environmentally and economically – including supporting the developing world with access to cleaner and greener technologies and the capacity to adapt their communities to climate change – especially for low-lying countries and those dependent on agriculture.

As these essays emphasise, it is the progressive left leading this debate globally, working to achieve international consensus and promoting solidarity between the developed and developing world. As Linda McAvan sets out in her essay Why the EU Matters, it is the Socialists and Social Democrats who have ensured that the European Union is at the forefront of this debate, ensuring that Europe goes to Copenhagen united in approach. The climate change challenge has no room for Eurosceptics.

But beyond Europe we must reach out to other countries. The possibility of success in Copenhagen has greatly increased with the election of centre left governments abroad. The election of Kevin Rudd's Labor government in Australia in 2007, who stood on a strong environmental platform and made the signing of the Kyoto Protocol his first official act after being sworn in, and the election of President Obama in the US last year, signalling the rebirth of US environmental policy after years of destructive and damaging policies from the Bush administration, have shifted the international balance and will improve the prospect of reaching a global consensus. Both these leaders have shown they are passionate about tackling climate change and have the capacity to provide leadership and vision in December.

China, India and other fast-growing economies must also be part of the solution. It is easier for rich countries to change their behaviours – they have the money and technology to do so. People in these countries want higher living standards and do not accept that they should be held back by limits on factory emissions. We should not deny them what we have already got, but we should support them to grow in ways that are more considerate of the planet. Ultimately, economic growth that jeopardises the health of the planet is not sustainable. By looking at economic policy from a sustainability perspective and global warming from an economic perspective will help us shape both better.

In his article, Copenhagen – not the trapdoor but a key, Matthias Machnig puts climate change at the heart of our economic and social policies. Climate change should not be viewed in isolation, indeed it is an integral part of the wider debate about what sort of economy and society we want. As we re-build the economy on the back of the global recession, we have an opportunity to

question some of the assumptions about how we want to live. Copenhagen unites the need to build an environmentally and economically sustainable system, built on more solid foundations than that which went before. That means developing new industries and technologies to achieve a massive environmental transformation of the economy, tackling the triple challenges of the financial crises, climate change and insecure energy supplies. Investment in green technology now will help support the economic recovery and reap environmental and social benefits for the future.

Transforming the economy and industries by switching to green and sustainable technologies is both possible and profitable, as Machnig illustrates. The Green New Deal is Britain's approach to tackling the simultaneous environmental and economic challenges we are facing. These country-specific programmes are complementary – indeed, the degree of success will depend on all countries playing their part.

As David Miliband and Douglas Alexander stress in their introduction, Britain and Europe are committed to getting a deal in Copenhagen that is right for Europe and for the planet. Yet no one under-estimates the size of the challenge. Beyond Europe we must now build a global consensus for action – climate change cannot be dodged and leadership demands tough decisions. We succeeded at the G20 summit in London in April in averting a global economic depression, in Copenhagen we must avoid sleep-walking in to a global catastrophe on an even greater scale.

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THE PROGRESSIVE CASE FOR COPENHAGEN

Rt Hon David Miliband MP

At the UN summit in Copenhagen, decisions will be taken that determine the future of the planet. But a deal in Copenhagen is in danger; and the greatest danger of all is that amidst the competing priorities of economic recovery, Afghanistan and nuclear non proliferation, we fail to see the problem until it is too late.

The science is clear that to avoid the most dangerous effects of climate change we must limit global temperature rises to two degrees. Above this point global changes are simply unmanageable: up to 30% of known species could be at an increased risk of extinction; the world's malarial zones would increase by over 25%; more than 150 million people could become environmental migrants due to climatic changes.

Equally the economic case, thanks to the Stern Review, is far better understood than before. A deal is not just desirable, but an imperative for national security and sustained economic recovery over the medium term, on a par with the fight against terrorism. High oil and food prices were a trigger for the current economic crisis, building up global financial imbalances and pushing up interest rates. The resource crunch is the second parent of the crisis alongside the credit crunch.

Furthermore, the fact that climate change has foreign policy consequences is better understood. Foreign policy is about the management and if possible reduction of risk. Climate change massively increases risk. The Hadley Centre has assessed the dangers of a 4 degree rise in average temperature by 2100. Climate change will cause migration because it will put land under water, and that migration will be across national borders. Climate change will threaten infrastructure through more extreme weather events, and that infrastructure will also cross national borders, for example in the case of energy. Climate change will also increase pressure on resources, through drought, deforestation and water shortage; this pressure on resources is a major source of conflict. Global warming may not be on the UN Security Council Agenda now, but it will be in future if we do not wean ourselves off carbon.

But there are other areas where the picture is not as clear as it should be. One is the negotiating box for a Copenhagen Agreement. I want relatively briefly to set that out. But less clear, perhaps surprisingly, is the politics of climate change, and I will discuss that at somewhat greater length.

THE COPENHAGEN NEGOTIATING BOX

We need a deal at Copenhagen that is ambitious, effective and fair. Developed countries must take a lead, with sufficient support for developing countries to move from a high-carbon path to low-carbon and climate-resilient growth. Our focus must be on mitigation, finance, technology, deforestation, and adaptation.

First, the targets. Emissions need to peak and start to decline in the next 10 years. Developed countries need to lead the way by setting new binding targets to cut emissions by at least 80% by 2050, with stretching mid-term targets. Developing countries need also to be part of the solution, demonstrating movement to lower carbon growth models to limit emissions in the future.

Second, financing. We need to remove specific blockages on financing for cleaner energy, energy efficiency and renewable energy. This means the developed world not just reaching into its pocket to find the public financing that will be required, but all countries coming up with the innovative financing solutions. For this reason Gordon Brown has proposed a \$100 billion a year by 2020 fund to support developing countries to cut emissions. All countries would pay into the fund, according to ability to do so, per annum by 2020. This would be coupled with new arrangements for international institutions, which would see a stronger voice for developing nations and better coordination of how developing countries use money effectively and efficiently on low carbon, climate resilient and sustainable development plans. Finance for developing countries needs also to be supported by the expansion and enhancement of a global carbon market. Carbon markets can combine efficiency with equity; by allowing trading between companies in different

countries, the market generates automatic financial transfers that can help developing countries onto a low-carbon path.

Third, technology. Politicians and business leaders need to work together to share existing technologies more rapidly around the world and co-operate to develop new technologies that can be put to use as soon and as cheaply as possible, ensuring all countries can benefit. We need stronger international cooperation to develop and share technologies. For example carbon capture and storage and electric vehicles will be vital.

Fourth, deforestation. As upwards of 18% of global emissions come from forestry, deforestation must be included in the deal and part of a future carbon market. The UK wants to see a deal which at least halves the rate at which we are cutting down tropical forests by 2020, with a complete end to global forest loss by 2030 at the latest.

Fifth, adaptation. Climate change is already a reality, and so funding to adapt to the changes already in train must also be a priority. Adaptation means different ways of living, for example with better management of water supply and storage, more flood resistant homes, schools and hospitals, or using new crops that are more drought resistant. Developed nations need to take responsibility to increase access to climate data and research on key technologies for adaptation in agriculture and health, as well as investment in disaster prevention and improved resilience to climate variability.

THE POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

The challenge of climate change is primarily a political one: how to secure collective action on a global scale. The political challenge is domestic and ideological as well as international and technological, and

has massive consequences on the policies and practices of every political party.

There are limits to a 'deep green' solution. While there is huge diversity and debate within the green movement, environmentalists became associated with challenging our interest in economic growth and material progress. By exaggerating the trade off between economic dynamism and environmental protection the politics of the environment failed to gain the legitimacy needed to make it a governing idea for a major party. Arguing for zero growth, particularly to rapidly industrialising developing countries, plays to the worst fears of India and China – that climate change is an excuse to cement the existing disparities in wealth and power. If we are to gain a consensus here and abroad that climate change is soluble, it has to be an ally of aspiration, progress and economic growth.

So if deep green is no answer, what of conservatism? There is a tradition on which Conservatives can call, but it is a commitment to conservation of the status quo, not radical change to meet a new threat. In reality climate change challenges the very basis of conservative thinking. It challenges the idea of national sovereignty over decision making since it is the defining example of interdependence and the need to pool powers in international institutions. It challenges conservatives' attachment to free markets. Markets work when the price of goods reflect their value, but climate change is the defining example of market failure - where the price does not reflect the cost to the environment. It challenges conservatives' dogmatic distrust of the state since it requires the power of the state to regulate, tax and subsidise. David Cameron's language of social responsibility cannot deliver the substance of national action – it is simply not enough to implore greater

responsibility from individuals for a problem that needs organised collective action.

I believe, therefore, it is plausible to argue that unless parties of the centre-left address climate change, it will not be addressed. It is a progressive project to use government to shape markets, it is a progressive project to put social justice at the heart of politics, and it is a progressive project to recognise the importance of internationalism in an age of interdependence.

However, we need to demonstrate that red and green traditions can enhance each other. The causes of global warming go to the heart of our economic, social and foreign policies and even our vision of democracy itself.

In 1997 we made economic stability and high employment our top priorities but today we need a third ambition - to redress the imbalance between the natural resources we consume, and the natural capital we reinvest. A low-carbon economy will be based on new technologies and new sectors and will have a new market at its heart: a market in carbon, with the vast majority of the economy covered by carbon trading.

Climate changes tests our capacity for new thinking in respect of social justice. Without a clear theory of how environmental burdens and rewards can be shared fairly between nations and generations, we will not secure a global deal and we will not sustain the moral authority to drive change at home. The application of a 'polluter pays' principle involves distributing resources based not just on need but desert; a recognition that resources should be linked to fulfilling citizenship responsibilities at home and abroad.

Finally, climate change will even challenge our way of thinking about politics. Our conception of politics has too often been based on active government but not active

enough citizens. Climate change shows how out-dated this model is. People want to do their bit to tackle climate change, however they lack information and fear that their actions will not be reciprocated by others. The implications are most far-reaching in the idea of personal, tradeable carbon allowances, which combine the evidence from science, government embodiment of collective will, and individual initiative.

I believe that the modern challenge of climate change needs a re-modernised Labour Party. The last century has shown that in Britain it has always fallen to progressive forces to respond to the injustices and inequities which free markets throw up, and use the power of collective action to harness markets for positive effects. That is our task: to apply in new ways our insights about economic and social life.

CONCLUSION: THE ROLE OF THE EU

The debate about climate change in Britain has one unique feature. I am not thinking of cross party rhetorical consensus on tough targets. I am thinking of the radically different role accorded to the EU by the Government and Opposition. For us, the EU is key. For the Tories it is anathema. And this is important.

Across Europe, citizens know this is a problem that crosses national boundaries and that the actions of one country alone are worthless unless backed up by other nations acting together. Environmentalism and isolationism are incompatible values. This demands a new role for the EU, which needs to create the institutions, rules and incentives to enable citizens and businesses to make the transition to a low-carbon economy.

A new EU – an Environmental Union – would extend the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme. It would link the scheme

to emerging carbon markets to form the basis of global trading scheme, and secure its long term future as the biggest delivery vehicle of our 2020 and 2050 targets. It would use the size of the single market and intra-European trade to ensure higher environmental standards without competitive disadvantage, whether through mandatory tradeable emissions standards for car manufacturers, tougher energy ratings for products, or regulating out of existence high polluting electrical equipment and household appliances.

It would reform the CAP and refocus the programme on environmental public goods; it would develop a major technology and R&D programme aimed to supporting innovations in energy, such as a European super-grid to connect Europe to solar power in the South and wind power in the North, transport and transferring innovations to developing countries; and it would use the power of negotiating as a single block to forge an ambitious post-2012 international framework.

If we achieve this, the prize is bigger than many imagine. It is an issue that requires progressive means as well as progressive ends. Preventing Climate Change would avoid the disastrous migrations and conflicts over natural resources. Creating a robust Global Carbon Market would see more transfers from North to South than the development policies of all of Europe put together.

So in Britain the debate about climate change is not just left versus right; it is also nationalist versus internationalist. And on this issue right of centre nationalists cannot be allowed to win.

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ENSURING A FAIR & JUST RESPONSE BETWEEN THE DEVELOPED & DEVELOPING NATIONS

Rt Hon Douglas Alexander MP

When I visited Garissa, in the arid plains of northern Kenya, I met families living in temporary shelter who had been forced to leave their homes by flash floods. One of the local farmers told me that the seasons he remembered as a child had vanished. That now when it rains there are floods, and when the sun shines there is drought.

In Bangladesh I met victims of Cyclone Sidr. A woman called Lotifa and her two young children had lost her family home and all that was in it. They were sharing their temporary shelter with another family. I also met a five year old girl, Topo, who lost both of her parents in the cyclone yet kept her hopes to become a dancer when she grows up.

In the developing world, climate change is not a future threat but a current crisis and a daily lived reality.

So in December, when governments from around the world come together in Copenhagen to agree a global climate change deal, we have to remember that it is the world's poorest people who are least responsible for the problem, but will bear a disproportionate share of the impacts.

The UK is pushing for a deal that is not only ambitious in cutting global emissions but

also protects the poor people against the climate change that it is too late to stop.

In this contribution to the debate, I will want to argue that policy-makers, academics, the business community, politicians, and activists have the opportunity to not only mitigate the risks of climate change, but in doing so, build a global low-carbon economy that can deliver benefits for all the citizens of the world.

I will outline what I see as:

- the risks and opportunities in the run up to Copenhagen;
- the interconnections between climate change and development;
- my view on what a good climate change deal would look like; and
- the way climate change tests our progressive values

RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Climate discussions this year have taken place against the background of continued global economic downturn. Some have argued that the world can no longer afford to drive forward the crucial measures needed to combat dangerous climate change.

But, the financial crisis has shown us how quickly risk can spread. Climate change represents global systemic risk on a quite

unprecedented scale, and has the potential for creating economic crisis that dwarfs our current, serious set of circumstances.

The Stern Review, commissioned by our own government, has already shown that the costs of tackling climate change will be only a fraction of the costs of 'business as usual'. Globally, the United Nations Environment Programme estimates that investment in zero-greenhouse energy will reach \$1.9 trillion by 2020. India is now home to the world's fifth largest wind turbine manufacturer, and China invested over \$12 billion in renewables during 2007. Other emerging economies could do much the same, and green growth could provide a better future for those millions who have so often in the past been left behind by growth.

CLIMATE AND DEVELOPMENT – INEXTRICABLY LINKED

According to one estimate, the livelihoods of one-third of the world's population could be affected by water scarcity by 2025. By the end of the century, half the world's population could face severe food shortages due to rising temperatures.

But for many people in developing countries, the changing climate is not some future threat, but already a part of life. The United Nations estimates that nine out of every ten disasters is now climate related. Recorded disasters have doubled in number from 200 a year to more than 400 over the past two decades.

As International Development Secretary I have met people who have shown me in the clearest personal terms, the connection between poverty and climate change. In Ethiopia I met women who had been forced by drought to walk further each day to collect water, until they were walking 5 hours simply to drink from a watering hole shared by people and animals alike.

While we can't ascribe individual events to climate change, and we can't be certain of the impact that climate change will have in the future, we do know that it will hit poor people hardest. Indeed, that climate change could potentially reverse the progress we have made in the last decade towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

For if climate change threatens development, it is also true that development – a new kind of low carbon development – is the only credible response to climate change. This means supporting developing countries in their efforts to exploit the opportunities, while minimising the risks, from the transition to a global low carbon economy. That is why I insisted that DFID puts climate change at the centre of our work.

DFID has established a new central climate change and environment department and we have significantly expanded our climate capacity in country offices. The Department now plays a central role in the UK government's international climate change efforts. The UK has increased our support for low carbon technology, forestry and climate resilience through the £800m UK contribution to the Climate Investment Funds.

And DFID is providing targeted support in the most climate-vulnerable countries. In Zambia, we are helping people on the Zambezi flood plain to protect their crops against the damage caused by flooding. In Lesotho, where a severe drought two years ago left a quarter of the population in need of food aid, we are helping people to establish small, 'keyhole gardens', so they are themselves less vulnerable to failed harvests.

In Bangladesh we are helping the most vulnerable to raise their homes

on plinths – to protect what little they have from being washed away with the rains each year. We are helping farmers whose fields are now flooded by sea water to use new, sea-tolerant varieties of rice. And we are providing communities with rain-water harvesters so the heavy rains of the monsoon period can be stored and put to good use.

We have made climate change a key focus for our engagement with international institutions – particularly the UN, World Bank and regional development banks, whose clean energy investment frameworks and climate funds could generate around \$200 billion by the end of 2010 for climate related investments.

My department has committed £100 million to climate change research over the next five years – making us one of the leading funders of such work anywhere in the world. And this research is already having an impact. To give just one example: in semi-arid central Tanzania, DFID-funded climate adaptation research is helping smallholder farmers to re-discover old crop varieties and introduce new crops that are more durable. Learning from this work will be shared throughout our network across Africa.

DFID is establishing a Climate and Development Knowledge Network to research the social and economic impact of climate change for the most vulnerable developing countries. With others, we are also funding the Hadley Centre to provide research insights to countries in the developing world on the three major weather systems that affect the developing world – Pacific Ocean flows, monsoons in the Indian Ocean and rain fall patterns across the equator.

This is the kind of practical help that can save lives and safeguard livelihoods. But in order to achieve a global climate

deal that delivers for the poorest, we will need the right result in Copenhagen.

WHAT WILL A GOOD CLIMATE CHANGE DEAL WOULD LOOK LIKE?

I see five development tests for any post-Kyoto climate framework.

First, any deal must include a long term goal with credible interim targets. This sets the ambition for all climate policy. It provides clarity on the degree of action required and on the scale of impacts we are prepared to accept. Agreement at the G8 this year to contain temperatures to within two degrees centigrade was a vital first step.

We also need to agree global emissions should peak by 2020 and be reduced emissions by at least 50% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels.

Second, and with a goal established, we will need to allocate the task of meeting it in a way that is fair and equitable. Developed countries must take the greatest responsibility for cutting emissions, because we hold the greatest responsibility for the climate change that is already occurring – and we have the greatest capacity to act. By adopting an 80 per cent reduction target for 2050, the UK Government has shown leadership by example. But that example now needs to be followed. But developing countries, and particularly the largest emerging economies, will need to join that transition too. Developing countries could generate as much as 80 per cent of growth in world energy demand between now and 2020. We cannot simply say to the quarter of the world's population without electricity – 'I'm sorry, we got there first'.

In order to reach that stage, we need to reorder the global economy towards low-carbon development. Crucial to achieving this will be what I would argue

should be the third test of any climate deal – a reformed carbon market that has a greater impact in reducing global emissions, and increases the flow of finance to the least developed countries.

We will need to go beyond the Clean Development Mechanism to reduce emissions on the scale needed, and to create more inclusive markets. Africa, for all of its natural resources, accounts for only 2% of projects in the Clean Development Mechanism. Crucial to correcting this will be expanding to new sectors – such as forests – for deforestation today accounts for almost a fifth of all global emissions.

We need to change the incentives around forests so that they are worth more alive than they are dead. In advance of forestry's inclusion in the carbon market, public finance is needed to protect these precious global assets.

I would suggest that the fourth test for a deal should be its ability to support the development and diffusion of low carbon technologies to further enable developing countries to benefit from 'green collar' jobs and low-carbon growth into the future. We must help developing countries to increase their capacity to innovate as well as encourage greater collaboration between technology firms and research institutions in developed and developing countries.

Finally, we must ensure that any climate change deal includes support for developing countries to build their resilience to adapt to climate change. Underpinning this –

and indeed all of the five tests that I've outlined - is the important issue of finance. To get the ball rolling, we have outlined our commitment and set a target for the world to agree to - \$100bn a year by 2020, starting in 2012. But we need other countries to step forward and we need a political mobilisation of people who care, like we saw in Gleneagles in 2005 for make poverty history.

CLIMATE CHANGE AS THE TEST OF PROGRESSIVE VALUES

In the UK, I see our political opponents talking green but acting blue. It is not enough for the Tories to claim to be a progressive party while refusing to match our commitments on climate financing. We have set a cap of 10% to ensure that our overseas aid is not swallowed up by climate financing. While it is right that we tackle the affects of climate change and poverty together, we must not allow the Tories to get away with committing to 0.7% on aid spending without exposing their unwillingness to match this cap. It's another example of the Tories changing their brand but not their beliefs.

Climate change is one of the most important challenges of our generation. It is not a future threat but a current crisis. It goes to the core of our progressive beliefs. It demands a progressive response because it is the world's poorest people who are least responsible for the problem and it is they who have been affected first and will be affected worst.

Rt Hon Douglas Alexander MP
is Secretary of State for
International Development.

COPENHAGEN 2009 THE VIEW FROM SPAIN

Elena Espinosa

The world faces 2009 conscious of the importance of reaching a global agreement on the framework that will govern the international fight against climate change. This was recognised in 2007 with the adoption of the Bali Action Plan that committed the international community unanimously to jointly fight against climate change. This spirit also guided the analysis and study of the first proposals in 2008. This year, 2009, is the year in which the true negotiations will take place, with the 15th Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC in December, in Copenhagen, as the final milestone where the success of this process will be decided.

Climate change is the most important menace ever known to earth's biodiversity, natural resources, agriculture and access to food, poverty eradication and water availability. But above all it is a matter of ethics and fairness. Humankind needs to make a great deal on the basis of equity, environmental integrity and openness to all different means to achieve the goal of stopping global warming and secure capacity to build resilience to the most probable climate scenarios in the near future.

Taking into account these three principles, nations and governments are expected to make the best possible use of the different tools we have. Among the main challenges

are stopping deforestation, cooperating in access to water and food, protecting the soil from land degradation and desertification, building reassurance policies to cover risks and protecting the most vulnerable societies and human settlements and building a common confidence in our capacities to do it. Climate change already affects several regions, threatening access to drinkable water and energy at reasonable prices, and thus endangering the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

But there are also attractive elements linked to the tools we need to implement: it is a great incentive to innovate, to reduce waste, to invest in new and clean forms of energy and industrial production and to reshape our economies. This is why such a great environmental problem has become one of the main catalysts of the transformation of our production and consumption models, particularly the energy patterns in place since the industrial revolution.

Climate change requires urgent action that cannot be delayed by the current economic situation. It is necessary to reach a global and exhaustive agreement in Copenhagen on the post-2012 global climate regime, based on the science, investing in mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer and a new and much more consistent financing model for development, and all kept within the bounds of a shared vision on how to achieve a transition towards a

low-carbon development pattern, which is respectful of the environment. Agreement could boost private sector investments in the future and, above all, is a milestone in the action needed to save the most important factor for humanity: to keep the world in the conditions that have allowed our species to live and grow. Copenhagen is not the solution but it is a pre-condition where we need to succeed.

It will be vital to agree on the distribution of efforts to mitigate the concentration of GHG in the atmosphere at safe levels; to ensure the flows of additional and foreseeable resources that enable developing countries not only to reduce emissions but also to adapt to climate change impacts.

A crucial element to the success of this process is that all countries make comparable efforts. In developed countries that would require emissions reductions through domestic policy measures or external financial or technological support to enable others to make a significant difference in developing paths towards a low carbon future while maintaining national strategies for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. For big developing countries a significant national effort needs to be made in energy and industrial patterns. In any context cross cutting elements such as climate resilience and low carbon development is to be assessed, both in the national context and in the international solidarity frameworks.

Existing institutions and funds should be reinforced, maximizing their coordination and the efficient use of resources, helping the institutional specialisation and the introduction of cross-cutting criteria on the resilience to the most probable climatic scenario and the least carbon-intensive solution within the normal channels for development financing. Cooperation in observation of climate and impacts as well

as adaptation policies will be crucial. Very special emphasis will have to be applied to energy and water engineering to guarantee access to energy and fresh water in a different climate scenario worldwide. Finally, international support for national policies to avoid deforestation seems to be one of the most significant elements to preserve our climate and our biodiversity.

The Spanish cooperation commitments for Official Development Assistance (ODA) are a tool to guarantee sustainable development in the most unfavourable and vulnerable populations to the effects of the economic and environmental crisis. These commitments are consistent with the aims of the fight against climate change, and include adaptation measures. Cooperation requires multiple coordination levels between the actors and institutions related to climate change and development.

Reinforcing the coherence of the national regulatory frameworks to incentivise the needed changes in the very short period they have to take place will be indispensable. Carbon markets and project-based mechanisms will play a key role. No less important will be the use made of other elements that aim to facilitate these objectives - for example the cooperation to reinforce the capacity to integrate new technologies, where the role of the new International Renewable Energy Agency, IRENA, can be of great help. And finally, we could not forget the necessity to boost R&D&I policies which also boost international cooperation, particularly in the fields of observation and monitoring, strengthening the reporting systems so that that carbon accountability is consistent and trustworthy.

We are facing a chance to drive through the necessary change towards an economy with a greater diversity of alternatives and economic and social opportunities.

A more eco-efficient economy, able to alter the view that environmental investment is dissociated from economic profit and that protection of the environment is an obstacle to socio-economic development. There is no conflict between economic success and a low-carbon world

This green economy must give rise to a new employment scenario combining the generation of profits, the reduction of poverty and the improvement in the environment by means of investment in a new set of assets based, among others, on clean and efficient technologies in housing, water and renewable energies, which must in turn favour a low-carbon economy able to consolidate a long-term answer to climate change.

The need for deep changes in the way the economy operates requires a transition involving governments, unions and employers. Workers must become part of the transition to this new low carbon economy.

We can state that the traditional paradigms of growth have failed. Therefore, we are going through a transitional period and there is a great deal of concern over the future of the economy and the environment. Hence, we have to make sure that the economic stimulus packages do not derive into weak and short-term solutions. Unluckily we are in a crisis, but we have to take advantage of it, using this crisis as a catalyst to change the growth model.

The challenge is very complex, but solving it is an unavoidable responsibility of all of us. As Albert Einstein said, "the significant problems we have cannot be solved at the same level of thinking with which we created them". Thus, we will need a good deal of boldness and efforts, in order to combine all the involved elements in the adequate doses to succeed.

Elena Espinosa is Minister for the Environment in the Spanish Government.



COPENHAGEN - NOT A TRAPDOOR BUT THE KEY

Matthias Machnig

The Danish host government calls it "the most important decision of a lifetime". This refers to the Copenhagen Agreement, the issue currently dominating the international debate. In Copenhagen this December, a new international climate regime must be agreed. This Agreement must lead to binding reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, thus taking the last exit from the road leading straight to global climate collapse. This time all the major countries, including the US, must be on board. The new Obama administration gives us an opportunity to break away from old thinking and old structures and take this major and crucial step together. And yet the negotiations currently appear to have reached a gridlock.

What is the starting situation? The 4th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of 2007 describes it, more recent scientific studies corroborate it: the consequences of climate change will be unmanageable if we fail to limit the rise in global average temperature to 2° C compared to preindustrial times. Storms such as hurricane Katrina will be a normal occurrence, mankind will lose living space: deserts will spread and the rapid melting of the continental ice masses will cause sea levels to rise so dramatically that coastal regions and cities will be flooded. These problems will be aggravated by the

continuing rise in both global population and energy consumption. The world now has more environmental refugees than war refugees. Experts predict that by 2050 the number of environmental refugees will climb to 200 million. That is why we must act now - we owe it to our children.

Scientists say that a window of 10 to 15 years remains in which we can still turn this development around. The 4th IPCC Assessment Report calls for a reversal of the trend by 2020 and a halving of global emissions by 2050. To achieve this, industrialised countries must reduce their overall emissions by 80 to 95% by 2050 compared to 1990. This means phasing out the use of fossil energies.

Many voice the concern that such a drastic change in national energy policy is not possible. I believe that it is both possible and profitable.

We need to fundamentally transform our industry to one based on sustainable, secure and clean energy generation. Granted, this structural transformation cannot be achieved if we allow things to continue as before and rely on radical restructuring taking place at some point in the future. This would be too late for climate protection, as measures only take effect very gradually. It would also be too

damaging to security of energy supply, the basis of our national economies. Inaction would thus pave the way for the next economic crisis. Therefore, this structural transformation must be based on a long-term strategy, and designed in a sound and reliable way for our national economies.

It is, therefore, all about ecological industrial policy. Germany recently started down this road, and in 2007 introduced an integrated energy and climate programme comprising 29 measures. This year the Federal Environment Ministry submitted an "Energy Roadmap 2020" for Germany which points the way to the future and builds on the two pillars renewable energies and energy efficiency. We will continue the renewables' success story: by 2020, we aim to increase their share in electricity supply from today's 15% to at least 30%, and double their share in the heat sector to 14%. By 2050 we aim to obtain 50% of total energy supply from renewable sources. By adopting an act promoting high efficiency we will reduce electricity demand by 11% by 2020. CHP installations are to increase their share to 25% by 2020. We have established a building rehabilitation programme which provides more than one billion euro per year in grants and funding for low interest credits. In 2008, this triggered investments amounting to 6 billion euro.

On top of this, we have the ever recurring - although not openly stated - question at the negotiating table: can we even afford to continue with climate protection measures, especially now in the current crisis? However, the matter of costs is rather an argument in favour of, not against the expansion of new green technologies.

In economic terms, it is not the absolute but the relative costs that are relevant. We must ask ourselves, what is the cost of inaction? The former chief economist

of the World Bank, Lord Nicholas Stern, impressively demonstrated that the costs of inaction by far exceed the costs of action. Unchecked climate change will cost between 5 and 20% of global GDP, active climate policy, on the other hand, only around 1%.

If these subsequent costs of climate change were transferred to conventional electricity generation, renewables would already be competitive today. Through emissions trading and the restricted allocation of CO₂ allowances, we have laid the foundation for redistributing these costs. The CO₂ tonne now has a price and will provide vital impetus for investments in climate-friendly technologies. However since, in order to ensure that the transition to low-carbon technology is sound and economically acceptable, we are only gradually transferring CO₂ costs to our industry, emissions trading in its current form is not sufficient. We must press ahead with the development of the global carbon market. In addition, we need further sustainable incentives for technology-specific support of green technologies, so that not just the cheapest but all available sustainable and safe climate technologies - wind, solar, biomass, geothermics, tidal, CCS and energy efficiency technologies - are broadly deployed and thus made viable for the future. An energy mix achieved through an instrument mix safeguards the energy security of tomorrow.

Increased efforts in research and development are also necessary. But this must not lead to us putting off the use of existing climate protection technologies to a later date, when they might be less expensive. We will achieve the greatest technological progress if we exploit the synergies arising from research and development and broad deployment. Besides, transforming energy structures in the major economies will most certainly not be a walk in the park. There will be

new problems to be solved which will only really become clear in practice. For example, the problem of how to secure an energy supply which meets demand despite fluctuating output from wind or solar power. Storage technologies must be developed for this, flexible and easily controlled plants must replace the power plant park, and massive investments must be made in grid expansion. After all, it takes more than just a few years to gain the necessary experience and master the learning curve.

From an overall economic viewpoint, the current crisis is no stumbling block but can be a trigger for climate protection. Behind the magic phrase "green recovery" there is a simple logic. If you have to invest, do it properly. The economic and financial crisis forces us to make investments on an unprecedented scale in order to support our national economies. On the other hand, the two factors climate protection and energy security have long set in motion a restructuring process which will determine how competitive our economies will be in future. Only those who continue to shape their energy supply efficiently, by saving energy or using renewable sources, will remain competitive on the global market of the future.

Every euro, every pound which we invest today will pay off many times over tomorrow:

- We will avoid unmanageable climate impacts and their costs.
- We will reduce expensive energy imports and ensure greater energy security.
- We will develop new technologies which over the years will become more cost-efficient. For example, wind energy is already close to market prices; in 2015 photovoltaics is expected to be cheaper than household electricity and thus able to contribute to self-sufficiency.

- We will promote new jobs in the lead markets of the future. In Germany there are now 280,000 jobs in the renewable sector alone. By 2020, we expect between 1 and 2 million more jobs in the field of environmental technologies. Estimates indicate that by the year 2020 the global volume of green markets will have doubled to 2,200 billion euro.

- The innovative strength released by technology support will lead to invaluable synergy effects for the development of know-how in the economy as a whole. This will promote new innovations and permanently secure the competitiveness of high-wage industrialised countries.

Climate protection and industrial policy are not diametrically opposed. That is the future that ecological industrial policy has to offer. Either we actively make use of this potential or we leave it to others. In this context I recently noted with interest that China plans to introduce a feed-in law for renewable energies.

Considering this overall picture, it becomes apparent that Copenhagen is not only an obligation but also an opportunity. We are all in the same boat. At the moment that is just a figure of speech. But the consequence is clear - every country must act. But this very fact also presents the opportunity to establish fair rules which guarantee that the necessary climate protection measures will not lead to global distortions of competition.

In Copenhagen, addressing this problem will be either the key or the trapdoor. Newly industrialising and developing countries must retain their right to develop. The people there have just as much right to electricity and to move from A to B as we do. Copenhagen will not succeed if developing countries feel that industrialised countries, under cover

of climate protection, are attempting to hold them back. Conversely, nothing will be achieved if industrialised countries believe that Copenhagen will be used to make an industrial policy at their expense. Thus it is a question of a fair balance of interests between developing and industrialised countries, as well as among industrialised countries themselves.

This makes the starting situation for Copenhagen clear: we must take action - resolute, immediate, binding and concerted action. The technologies are available. Each country must contribute according to their capabilities. Burdens and efforts must be shared out fairly. Strong countries with large emissions must do more. But weaker countries, too, must do what they can. Commitments must be fulfilled in a transparent and credible way.

From this starting situation, key points can be derived for a possible agreement in Copenhagen:

1. We must agree on a binding long-term goal which averts global climate collapse. Specifically, this means we must agree to more than halve global emissions by 2050 compared to 1990 and to reverse the trend in global emissions by 2020 at the latest, in order to limit global warming to 2° C.

2. To enable us to credibly achieve this long-term goal, we need medium-term goals. There can be no success without credibility. By 2020, industrialised countries must lower their total emissions by 25 to 40% compared to 1990 levels. Developing countries should commit to similar efforts according to their capabilities and, by 2020, restrict their overall emissions growth by 15 to 30% compared to the trend. We need the major newly industrialising countries in particular to already initiate absolute emission reductions in those economic sectors

which compete directly with industrialised countries. We also need a reliable review mechanism and transparent reporting.

3. The global carbon market, i.e. global emissions trading, must be given a stronger role. The trading schemes in industrialised countries must be linked, developing countries must be gradually more integrated in certain sectors and the carbon market as a whole must be further developed. A stronger carbon market has two effects: it provides greater incentives for structural transformation through investments in green technologies, and it serves as a source of funding to support developing countries.

4. Structural transformation and adaptation to climate change are a far greater burden for developing countries, particularly the poorest and those worst hit by climate change. Therefore, to finance reduction and adaptation measures in developing countries additional funds from private and public sources will be needed. The annual funding demand of climate protection measures in 2020 is estimated at around 100 billion. This is similar to the amount currently spent each year on global development aid.

That is why, in addition to revenues from the carbon market, industrialised countries must make funds available from public budgets to support in particular the poorest and worst hit of the developing countries, as long as these are verifiably achieving their targets. This support was promised to developing countries in the Bali Action Plan. The distribution of financial burdens and the participation of all parties in the decision-making process will be key issues in Copenhagen. Economic performance and emission levels should be decisive in determining who provides these funds: strong economies and heavy polluters pay more.

Another vital point is that of developing countries receiving support in capacity building and being given appropriate access to the technologies and expertise of industrialised countries. In this respect the International Renewable Energy Agency, (IRENA) founded at the beginning of this year, can send an important signal to developing and newly industrialising countries. After all, in less than one year as many as 136 industrialised and developing countries joined IRENA, thus lending the Agency an exceptional legitimacy and global presence. Germany was intensively involved in promoting the establishment of IRENA and will work towards the accomplishment of IRENA's ambitious aims, especially through the IRENA Innovation Centre in Bonn.

The question now remains: is the time up to December enough to ensure major achievements in Copenhagen? Lately, more and more doubt has been cast on this. The negotiating positions appear to be too far apart. Nevertheless, the same fact applies to us all: we must move forward and reach a good outcome. Political analysis of the run-up to major decisions shows that extraordinary concessions are only possible under extraordinary political and time pressures. The situation was no different prior to the negotiations on the Framework Convention on Climate Change or the Kyoto Protocol. I still remember how, after the key terms of the Bali Road Map had been hammered out, the American mediator had to be carried exhausted from the room.

The key points for Copenhagen are clear. At the Summit of the 8 major industrialised countries (G8) and the Major Economies Forum (MEF), heads of state and government agreed for the first time to meet the 2°C target. This is an important political signal on the road to Copenhagen and a cornerstone for an international agreement. Ultimately, it depends on simple but essential decisions. We could spend another year preparing for the final negotiations and would still not be much closer to these decisions. The finer points of the legal texts can be perfected at a later date. The main political points, the structure of the Copenhagen Agreement, must be agreed in December.

If we do this properly and achieve a good outcome, our efforts will pay off - ecologically, economically and historically.

Matthias Machnig is Former State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.



A CALL FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

MARGOT WALLSTRÖM

History often leaves room for speculation about what really happened. The UN climate summit in Copenhagen in December will not. The proceedings will be well documented for future generations to judge our political leadership and sense of solidarity.

I believe that reaching a successful deal in Copenhagen will depend on leadership from the developed countries and the realisation that the current economic crisis is a tremendous opportunity to combat climate change. But above all, we need to realize that we will not be able to mitigate climate change unless we ensure climate justice. Climate justice will be the true deal maker or breaker in Copenhagen.

Achieving climate justice, and ultimately sustainable development, means first of all finding innovative tools and strategies that can promote European competitiveness and global prosperity, while also mitigating the impacts of climate change and assisting those most in need to adapt to changing environmental realities. The good news is that the tools and strategies exist. If we can exploit the potential of green technologies, investing in research to develop those technologies, and investing in education to produce tomorrow's scientists and inventors, we can create a more sustainable economy.

But climate justice also means recognizing the impact of the policies and lifestyles in the rich world on the most vulnerable

communities and countries around the world. This means that we need to remodel our global financial and trade rules so that they serve people rather than markets. It also requires social justice and gender equality. It means using the talents and energies of people from all walks of life – politicians and NGOs, businesses and trade unions, women and men.

Ultimately, achieving sustainability and a low-carbon economy will not only depend on technological innovation. It will require far ranging social and political innovation. Let us not forget that technology does not have the ability to eliminate poverty, respect human rights, stop climate change and build a sustainable society – people do. Therefore we need a more democratic debate on climate change and a new climate deal.

This is what the Road to Copenhagen Initiative, which I co-chair together with Mary Robinson and Gro Harlem Brundtland, is about – ensuring that a wider range of voices are heard in the climate negotiations. After two years of discussions, the Road to Copenhagen Initiative has identified three issues that must be addressed effectively and equitably if we are to manage climate change and achieve climate justice:

First, it is clear that the poorest, those least responsible, will be the most vulnerable and exposed to climate change. It is estimated that, at best, only 1 per cent of the resources required for adaptation by these countries are currently available. Copenhagen must

therefore deliver a global agreement based on social and development needs, burden sharing and the 'polluter pays' principle. These principles must be reflected in predictable, additional financial resources for developing countries both to ensure mitigation and adaptation.

Second, developed countries must assume a leadership role in cutting their own emissions, cuts that reflect the latest scientific projections. The European Union's leadership role will be crucial. It will also be critical to secure the development and diffusion of appropriate, clean technologies and ensure access to necessary financial resources for developing countries to adopt them.

Third, governments must recognise that the current economic crisis is a tremendous opportunity to bring about the change we need. Investing in green technologies, infrastructure and renewable energy is a sustainable way to stimulate the economy, create new jobs, improve quality of life and take global responsibility. This is what I call smart growth – a sustainable economic growth that can reinforce efforts to combat climate change while at the same time respecting development needs.

As the American writer, Charles R. Swindoll put it: "We are faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations".

I believe we need and can exploit those opportunities and lead the world forward along the path to a sustainable future. The beauty of the concept "sustainable development" is that it brings the future and the rest of the world in the picture. We have the know-how, the tools and the technology to mitigate climate change and ensure sustainable development. Not only that: we have the means and the public support to back us up.

In facing the climate change challenge, the European Union has shown both leadership and solidarity, and the Labour government has played an important role within the Union in achieving agreement on this leadership role. We have unilaterally committed ourselves to cutting our greenhouse gas emissions to 20% below 1990 levels by 2020, and we will increase this to 30% if other countries agree to do their fair share. Moreover, by 2020, 20% of EU electricity will come from renewable energy and we will be 20% more energy-efficient.

At the same time, the EU has been passing legislation to cut CO₂ emissions from cars. By 2015, average emissions from new cars sold in the EU will have to be reduced to 120 grams of CO₂ per kilometre, which is around 25% lower than today's level. There is an agreement in principle to further lower this limit to 95 grams per kilometre by 2020.

To help achieve our emissions-cutting targets, we are revamping the EU Emissions Trading System, making it more harmonised, more efficient and more effective, and broadening its scope to include aviation emissions.

We are engaged in some very encouraging discussions with the United States on creating a transatlantic carbon market by around 2012, and our vision is to broaden this to all OECD countries by 2015. A global carbon market would be a key instrument for achieving the deep cuts that are needed in global emissions.

The EU's emission's scheme only covers around 40% of the EU's total greenhouse gas emissions. For tackling the remaining 60%, the EU has set national emission targets for each Member State. Again, solidarity is the key word here: all EU countries will bear their fair share of the

burden, according to their abilities and the progress they have already achieved.

All these measures will significantly reduce Europe's dependence on imported energy – such as Russian gas – and place it firmly on the path to a low-carbon economy, with all the business opportunities this entails. "Going green" is thus a "win-win" strategy. It offers a way of tackling not only climate change but also the economic recession. Far from being a luxury we cannot afford to buy, it is an opportunity we cannot afford to miss.

Climate change, like the economic recession, calls for solidarity between the developed and the developing worlds. The developed world bears most of the responsibility for driving climate change – yet its worst effects are being felt in the developing world, already suffering from disrupted rainfall patterns, droughts and poor harvests. Climate change also calls for solidarity between the generations. We owe it to future generations to leave them a viable planet. In short, global development has to be sustainable.

The UN climate conference in Copenhagen probably represents the world's last chance to bring climate change under control before it's too late. So far, we have seen some positive developments in the preparatory negotiations such as on the need for a 2° C warming limit. There has however been a disappointing lack of ambitious reduction targets and serious financial commitments by developed countries.

Few players inside UN negotiation circles expect developing countries to make significant moves before developed countries have clarified their positions on emission reductions, access to technology and financing. Narrowing the gap between North and South perspectives

on climate change and development needs will be imperative for the conclusion of a new agreement in Copenhagen.

Developed countries need not only pledge to additional financial contributions to existing official development assistance (ODA) commitments, but also commit to clear, ambitious and binding emission cuts based on both fairness and science. An increasing number of scientists are calling for the level of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere to be stabilised at a significantly lower level than previously recommended. For some, the expectation for Copenhagen is that developed countries deliver a 40% emission cut by 2020, and \$150 billion per year for developing country action. We have to continue to show leadership and solidarity in meeting such expectations.

Copenhagen must be the end and the beginning. When historians look back on Copenhagen, let them say, that it marked the end of empty promises and the beginning of fundamental change. Let history show that our generation didn't fail our children but instead had the courage of visionary leadership, and the will to succeed.

**Margot Wallström is
Vice President of the
European Commission.**

THE ROAD TO COPENHAGEN: WHY THE EU MATTERS

LINDA McAVAN

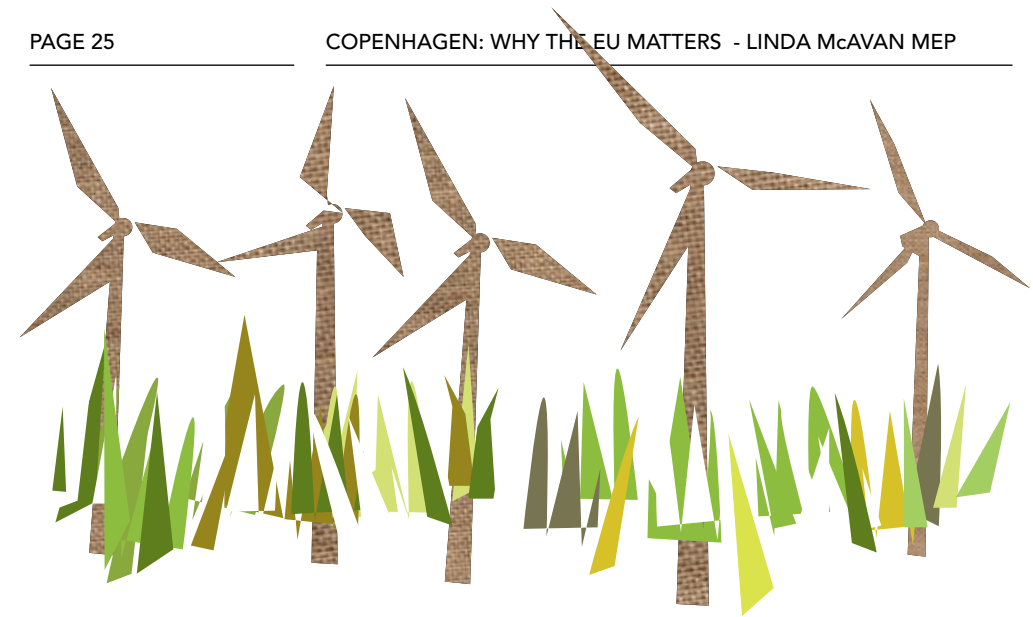
When British negotiators go to Copenhagen in December, they will be working as part of a European Union (EU) team with a shared negotiating mandate. That EU mandate is a pretty strong one. To date the EU is still the only region with binding emission reduction targets backed up by a programme of legislation to deliver them. Our Labour government and MEPs have strongly supported the European Commission's work on climate change, indeed our government played a key role in persuading other EU leaders to sign up to ambitious targets to cut our emissions.

Contrast that with David Cameron's Tories. Cameron was keen to use climate change to help his party ditch its image as the "nasty" party of British politics and even incorporated a tree into the Tory logo to try to convince us. But actions speak louder than logos and it is in their policy on Europe that the Tories really show their true colours. The Tories simply fail to understand that it is only by working through the EU that Britain can deliver. After all, how can the same Tories who oppose the Lisbon Treaty which gives the EU a specific remit to tackle climate change, and who have just joined forces in Europe with Czech climate change sceptics ever be a credible force in international climate change talks?

So what will the European Union be taking to Copenhagen and how robust is our plan? The EU's commitment to tackling climate change goes back a number of years. Unlike the USA, the EU backed Kyoto and has in place policies to cut carbon emissions. But those policies fall well short of what we now know is needed in the light of new scientific evidence. This is why, following the publication of the fourth IPCC report and the Stern report in 2006, the EU decided it had to up its game.

In March 2007 EU leaders agreed a new set of policy objectives as their contribution for the preparation of the international negotiations on a successor Treaty to Kyoto. These included agreement on:

- Accepting the IPCC target of stabilizing global temperatures at 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels
- A 20% cut in CO₂ emissions from 1990 levels by 2020 (30% if other countries agree) and to work for a long term target of a 60-80% cut by 2050 for industrial countries
- 20% of EU energy needs to be met from renewable sources by 2020
- 20% increase in energy efficiency by 2020



Agreeing the targets was the easy part. It showed that Europe could talk the talk on climate change. The next step was to show that Europe could walk the walk: the EU had to show the rest of the world it could turn those targets into concrete, binding legislative measures to deliver real change on ground. This was vital because sceptics, particularly in the US under the Bush administration, were keen to undermine the prospects for a global deal on climate change. By putting a package on the table in advance of the US elections, when there was a real prospect of a change in direction in US policy, Europe could show it was serious and ready to act. European leaders therefore gave the European Commission a strong mandate to put together a package of draft laws to deliver the targets. Hence, in early 2008, the Commission delivered its "2020" climate package:

- A revamped Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS): This "cap and trade" carbon trading, the first of its kind, had been operating since 2005 but design flaws had led to a collapse in the carbon price and windfall profits for some companies. Changes were proposed to address these problems and to extend the ETS scope to new sectors.

- Cars: Road transport accounts for a fifth of all manmade CO₂ emissions in the EU and emissions from transport grew by 35% between 1990 and 2006, while other sectors managed to reduce their emissions by 3% on average. The law was designed to replace a voluntary agreement by the car industry which had failed to deliver real reductions.

- Renewable energy: Each country was given a target to increase its share of renewables in its energy supply. The UK target is 15%.

- National emission ceilings ("effort sharing" in EU jargon). Each country was allocated a national emissions target to cut its non-ETS emissions by 2020. The UK target is 16% compared with 2005.

In the EU system, draft EU laws can only be approved through a legislative process involving Ministers and MEPs from the 27 Member States. Normally, this joint or "co-decision process" can take up to two years, but in the case of climate change there were pressing reasons to work more quickly: the US elections, the UN climate meeting in Poznan in December 2008 and the need to get the legislation through before the European elections in June 2009.

A decision was therefore taken to shorten the normal procedures and try to seek agreement in a first reading between Ministers and MEPs, with any outstanding issues going to the European Summit of EU leaders in December 2008.

To say that the proposals were subject to an intense lobbying campaign is an understatement. Industry, particularly the European car industry and some heavy industrial sectors, argued that by putting such concrete proposals on the table in advance of other industrial countries, the EU would damage its international competitiveness. Then came the banking crisis, which provided ammunition for those who had always opposed the climate package and saw in the crisis an opportunity to block progress, arguing that tackling climate change was a luxury the EU could no longer afford. Some rightwing MEPs dreamed up all kind of technical devices to halt progress in the negotiations which on a number of occasions threatened to derail the talks. However after a rocky ride, agreement between MEPs and Ministers was reached in mid December 2008. Is what emerged perfect? No. Could we have done more? Of course. Compromises had to be made along the way. Concessions were made to the car sector and heavy industry. Regrettably – and this is something that is coming under criticism from other countries in the run-up to Copenhagen – as much as 50% of EU emissions can be “offset” by projects in developing countries and emerging economies. This is a figure MEPs fought hard to reduce since we had major concerns about the quality of offsetting projects and because we wanted stronger incentives for investment at home in low carbon technologies. But the core of the original Commission proposals: binding targets, an EU wide cap and a downward trajectory to get there, remained in place.

The Socialist parties in Europe strongly supported the climate change package and played a crucial role through governments and the European Parliament in securing agreement. For us, tackling climate change is part of the fight for international justice. It is the poorest who will pay – and some are already paying – the highest price for climate change, something I witnessed myself in Kenya a couple of years ago. It is a strategy that works for the economy too.

More energy efficient homes and vehicles will put more money in the pockets of working people. And it fits into the green jobs agenda: a recent European TUC study foresees a 1.5% increase in employment over the next 10-20 years as a result of climate change policies. Just one example, the EU law on energy performance of buildings is predicted to deliver between 274,000 to 856,250 jobs by 2030.

Back in the UK, those of us who want to make a difference on climate change should be very wary of Tory rhetoric as we head towards a general election. No one will forget the spectacle of David Cameron cycling to the office with a chauffeur driven car following closely behind carrying his shoes and briefcase. He is trying a similar trompe l'oeil on climate change. We must make it clear that a Eurosceptic party, isolated on the fringes of European politics can never deliver on climate change. Only by playing a full role in the EU can we ensure success.

Linda McAvan is Labour MEP for Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire and spokesperson on climate change for the Socialist and Democrat Group in the European Parliament.
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THE PROGRESSIVE CASE FOR CLIMATE ACTION

SERA is the Labour Environment Campaign. We have been campaigning for over 30 years to bring together the joint causes of environmental progress and social justice. This pamphlet sets out the progressive case for ambitious international action to tackle climate change and restates the vital role of the European Union in negotiating a global response.

“A deal at Copenhagen is not just desirable, but an imperative for national security and sustained economic recovery over the medium term, on a par with the fight against terrorism.”

RT HON DAVID MILIBAND MP

“In the developing world, climate change is not a future threat but a current crisis and a daily lived reality...It is not enough for the Tories to claim to be a progressive party while refusing to match our commitments on climate financing.”

RT HON DOUGLAS ALEXANDER MP

“Climate Change is the most important menace ever known to earth’s biodiversity, natural resources, poverty eradication and water availability. But it is a great incentive to innovate, to reduce waste, to invest in new and clean forms of energy and to reshape our economies.”

ELENA ESPINOSA

“If we can exploit the potential of green technologies, investing in research to develop those technologies and investing in education to produce tomorrow’s scientists and inventors, we can create a more sustainable economy”

MARGARET WALLSTROM