



The path from Copenhagen to a real deal on climate change

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The UN climate negotiations in Copenhagen had three main outcomes: draft detailed negotiating texts under the two ad-hoc working groups, a mandate to continue negotiations in these groups for one year, and a political statement dubbed 'The Copenhagen Accord' (see Annex I for an overview). The Accord does not deliver the needed fair, ambitious and binding deal millions globally have been calling for to avoid dangerous climate change. However, if governments build on the good aspects of the Accord and commence further meaningful negotiations, it could be one of the stepping stones toward a fair, ambitious and binding deal.

With every year of delay taking a significant human, ecological and economic toll, it is essential to negotiate a deal that will ensure the survival of nations, communities, species and habitats. Our expectations and the planet's requirements for a fair, ambitious and binding deal have not changed – in fact they are more urgently required than ever. The essential elements of such a deal are that it leads to a global emissions peak before 2017, holds warming to well below 2 degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels with an eventual decline below 1.5 degrees, and supports adaptation to the warming that does occur.

As a first step in establishing trust in the negotiations, WWF recommends that by 31 January 2010 every country, except the least developed and small island developing states, should submit their most ambitious mitigation targets and actions, as appropriate to their situations, into the Copenhagen Accord appendices. The UNFCCC secretariat should be empowered to do a technical review of the targets and report on their compatibility with a 2 degree limit in time for the resumed negotiations under the ad-hoc working groups, to inform further refinement that ensures the targets match the necessary limit as identified by science.

The Accord mandates several new actions and instruments, including a new fund for adaptation and mitigation in developing countries, a high level body informing the work on finance, efforts combating deforestation, and enhancing technology cooperation. Turning these ambitions into real action should be a priority, and will also help rebuild trust that will be of benefit to further negotiations under the UNFCCC.

Several politicians and commentators have chosen to focus blame for Copenhagen's weak outcome on the UNFCCC process itself, citing the complexity of resolving such politically charged yet technical issues through that inclusive forum. However, the past two years saw an unprecedented number of

meetings take up and fail to resolve the issue of climate change at ministerial and head of state level, including many bilaterals, the G8, G20, the Greenland Dialogue and the UN General Assembly. The failing was not with the UNFCCC process but with a lack of willingness to use every opportunity to make real progress.

Moving forward, with the Copenhagen Accord hopefully starting a process of transparency about ambitions and real implementation that will break through some political deadlocks, countries should focus on maximizing results from each of these negotiating forums, while investing a renewed authority to the UNFCCC to complete a real deal.

Negotiations in the AWG-LCA and AWG-KP bodies produced draft texts that will be carried forward as the basis for resumed negotiations in 2010. The current draft texts are still heavily bracketed, but in most areas contain the options needed to create an effective agreement. The core text introduced by the LCA chair, in particular, along with the texts on specific issues, are a good basis for negotiations this year, which can be further informed by the areas of the Copenhagen Accord where progress has been made.

Political leaders must assume full responsibility for the success of continued negotiations – they must give their negotiators robust and innovative mandates to ensure that the difficult issues that have led to stalemates for so long are overcome. They must also commit to engaging sufficiently and prioritizing completion of the job they failed to carry out in Copenhagen.

In conclusion, the process leading to a real deal involves the following three steps:

- 1) Countries should put ambitious targets and actions into the Accord appendices, and in doing so describe how these are compatible with a high probability of staying well below 2 degree warming above pre-industrial temperatures.
- 2) Parties should take immediate action to demonstrate seriousness about the Accord's agreed outcome by operationalizing the funds, mechanisms and international monitoring, reporting, and verification guidelines very quickly.
- 3) Mexico as the CoP16 host country, the UNFCCC secretariat, and all Parties must move quickly to establish a work plan, timelines and schedule of negotiating sessions for 2010 under the UNFCCC. This will include establishing interim deadlines for agreeing on key issues such as the legal form of the outcome. Other forums and configurations should be used where appropriate to make progress that feeds into the UNFCCC.

No one can be satisfied with the Copenhagen Accord as it stands. Its usefulness comes if it helps to define a pathway that closes the gap between the current state of affairs and an agreement and a set of implemented actions that are robust enough to prevent dangerous anthropogenic global warming. Despite the grueling and disappointing process that culminated at Copenhagen, there is

no time to rest. Every year of delay means real and permanent damage to the environment, societies and economies. Any gap in creating an adequate response is unacceptable.

Annex I: WWF overview of the Copenhagen Accord

The Copenhagen Accord is a flawed political agreement, which is, in itself, too weak to address climate change appropriately. The Accord does little to commit the countries of the world to address and limit the impacts of climate change to ensure the survival of people, communities and nations, species, habitats and ecosystems.

The Accord has a very uncertain status and political and legal legitimacy in the context of the UNFCCC negotiations. It has been widely criticized as inadequate and indeed many of those countries that have endorsed it have also expressed disappointment, reservations and regrets about it.

Nevertheless the Copenhagen Accord did make some progress towards an agreement in some difficult and crucial areas. These areas are:

1. Transparency of developing country mitigation actions due to their domestic measurement, reporting and verification every two years under clearly defined guidelines;
2. Transparency of international financial support for developing countries to tackle climate change; and
3. Reference to keeping global temperature increase to below two degrees (though lacking a basis of comparison, e.g. below pre-industrial levels).

The Accord does mention a range of new actions and instruments that will be established or will be provided:

- A mechanism including REDD-plus, to enable the mobilization of financial resources from developed countries;
- New and additional resources from developed countries parties, including forestry and investments through international institutions approaching USD 30 billion for the period 2010-12 and USD 100 billion by 2020;
- A High Level Panel under the guidance of and accountable to the CoP to study the contribution of the potential sources of revenue, including alternative sources of finance, towards meeting the goal;
- A Technology mechanism to accelerate technology development and transfer in support of action on adaptation and mitigation;
- A Copenhagen Green Climate Fund.
- Guidelines for international MRV adopted by the COP

In those areas where it represents progress, the Accord can inform and provide political guidance to the ongoing negotiations under the Convention and Kyoto Protocol leading to a legally binding agreement. Standing alone the Accord is far from what is needed, which is why it is so crucial that Parties use it as an instrument to unlock a fuller and more ambitious agreement later in 2010.