

EU 2020 Climate Targets – What You See is Not What You Get

London, 28/10/2009 The EU's proposition going into Copenhagen is not what it seems. New analysis shows that, far from leading the world with ambitious reduction targets, the EU is hiding behind clever accounting and in fact pledging to do very little.

Campaign group Sandbag's new brief puts into perspective Europe's decision to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020 versus 1990, and 30% if an ambitious deal is reached in Copenhagen. It highlights in particular that:

- Large volumes of unused carbon permits or 'hot air' from the current phase of the Emissions Trading System – up to 700m tons of CO₂ – could be credited towards the post-2012 phase, which will make it that much easier to meet future targets - reducing effort by almost a quarter;
- Emissions savings in Europe to date were not a result of climate and energy policies but arose from unrelated macro economic circumstances and isolated reductions in industrial gases, yet these have been used to justify weaker targets;
- Using a 1990 baseline to calculate targets makes Europe's effort look unfairly good compared to other parts of the world, although there is equivalence of effort in the pledges of other countries with different baseline years.

Giving credit to increasing calls to raise the EU's ambition to a 40% reduction target, Bryony Worthington, Director of Sandbag said:

"We want the debate about Europe's targets to be conducted in an open and transparent way using the most recent data. Europe has huge potential to reduce its emissions, but we are currently hiding behind past 'successes' which had little to do with climate policy. If we continue to use these as an excuse to do less now and in the future, we will never develop the low carbon economy we need to make our economy strong and secure and the climate safe.

"The solution is clear: European leaders should stop fooling themselves, confirm at the October EU Council a minimum 30% domestic reduction effort, and put thereafter a 40% target by 2020 on the negotiating table."

Notes to the editor:

A copy of the briefing is available on our website:

http://sandbag.org.uk/files/sandbag.org.uk/EUambition_final.pdf

For more information please contact Bryony Worthington, Director of Sandbag on +44 7876 130 352 or email bryony@sandbag.org.uk

Sandbag was established in 2008 and is a UK based not-for-profit campaigning organisation dedicated to achieving real action to tackle climate change and focused on the issue of emissions trading. Our aim is educate and inform civil society about emissions trading policy, to scrutinise how it is working on the ground and to lobby for improvements. In doing this we

seek to involve civil society more in the operation and future development of emissions trading.

Sandbag's campaigning work is supported by grants from leading environmental foundations and membership donations.