



EU's 2020 targets allow massive growth in emissions: Emissions Trading Scheme reform is urgently needed ahead of 2020

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The EU's emissions can increase by 2.2% year-on-year and still technically meet Europe's 2020 emissions reduction target, because of a loophole in how the targets are set, says Sandbag Climate Campaign in a briefing note released today [1].

The loophole comes from the translation of the EU target into carbon budgets, rather than a point-in-time reduction in CO₂ emissions (20% cut in 2020 emissions from 1990 levels). Phase II ETS surplus allowances and offset credits coupled with lower than anticipated emissions means the EU could have some 3.8 billion spare allowances out to 2020. [2] Cumulatively this would allow the EU's emissions to grow 19% above current (2012) levels, and still meet the legally binding target.

Today's vote in the European Parliament finalising the back-loading of allowances in the EU ETS is welcome news, yet the proposal remains woefully inadequate compared to the scale of the problem. EU leaders must now urgently move to reform the EU ETS ahead of 2020 or risk a lost decade for emissions reductions. Revising the EU's 2020 targets to reduce emissions 30% below 1990 levels offers an opportunity to get back on track. This increase in ambition could also leverage corresponding increases in ambition from other parties to the UNFCCC both out to 2020 and beyond.

An opportunity for the EU to increase its ambition comes in 2014 [3] when Parties to the UNFCCC indicate if they intend to increase their target for the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol.

Damien Morris, Senior Policy Advisor at Sandbag, said: *"The gulf between Europe's projected emissions and its current carbon commitments are an absolute travesty. Europe cannot maintain a 2020 climate target that allows it to grow its emissions by 2% a year from current levels and expect to be taken seriously in international negotiations. EU policymakers must urgently agree to step up the ambition of their 2020 targets or face embarrassment come the ministerial meeting in Bonn next June"*.

ENDS

For more information please contact:

Rob Elsworth | rob@sandbag.org.uk | +32 (0) 485 91 34 09

The Sandbag Climate Campaign is the NGO leading in research-led campaigning for effective emissions trading. Through expert analysis, hard hitting reports and targeted advocacy we aim to shine a light on what's working and what's not and campaign for changes that could save billions of tonnes of carbon emissions.

Notes for Editors:

[1] For a copy of the full briefing "Europe's "2020 Confidence Trick: Room to grow emissions under the current climate targets" click [HERE](#). For the calculation behind the briefing note please click [HERE](#)

[2] See Table 1 in the briefing "Europe's 2020 Confidence Trick" for full breakdown.

[3] Under the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol, Europe can propose to increase the ambition of its targets for the second commitment period (2013-2020) at any time however, a subsequent decision also taken at COP18 in Qatar, requests that all parties indicate whether they intend to increase their target by April 30th 2014 and requires they submit their latest emissions projections to show the potential for increasing ambition.