

CLIMATE CHANGE AT THE WSSD

Recent reports by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) are a portentous warning of the potential impacts of global warming. In the face of these, the stance of the US Administration on both the Kyoto Protocol and reduced domestic support for energy efficiency and renewable energy, have caused alarm among governments, the media and the public.

Some measures proposed at the CSD10 discussions have gone some way toward recognising the importance of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies both as a means to tackle climate change and as a direct aid to poverty alleviation and sustainable development. We also welcomed the report of the G8 Task Force on Renewable Energy (but regret the lack of interest it has raised with the G8 governments) and the recommendations of the GEF consultation on energy held in January 2002, which served as the basis for some of the recommendations contained in the Chairman paper produced at the end of WSSD Prepcom 2. Some of the recommendations arising from Prepcom 2 are useful, but need to be strengthened, as we point out in our *Greenpeace Annotations and Comments on the Chairman's paper* see www.greenpeace.org/politics/EarthSummit/html/docs.html.

Opinion polls around the world show ever higher levels of support for action on climate change. The public – including in the USA – rightly expects governments to protect the planet from climate change, and in particular to reaffirm and strengthen the commitment, made in the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, to stabilise “greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system” (an obligation that the US administration is proposing to violate with the recently announced “Bush climate plan” see www.greenpeace.org/~climate/climatecountdown/documents/bushclimate.pdf).

Greenpeace welcomes the stance taken by the EU, Japan, China, Brazil and other countries in reaffirming their commitment to the Kyoto process and in calling on the US Administration to reverse its position on Kyoto.

In the run-up to the WSSD, governments should:

- Reaffirm the need for urgent action to combat climate change and to express their unambiguous support for the Kyoto Protocol as the only international framework to start combating dangerous climate change by agreeing to its ratification and entry into force by the time of the WSSD.
- Commit to ensuring that clean, sustainable energy services are made available to the two billion people who currently live without them.
- Recognise that, as carbon-based fuels are the primary cause of climate change, the only sustainable energy system capable of meeting humankind's energy needs must be based on renewable energy sources and energy efficiency technologies.

To achieve the necessary massive expansion of these technologies governments should commit to make available the finance and infrastructure to bring basic, affordable and sustainable energy services to the two billion people who currently live without them, within ten years.¹

OECD governments should commit to immediately target 20% of their energy sector lending and support in the form of guarantees via their Export Credit Agencies to renewable energy development and energy efficiency programmes followed by a plan to phase out support for non-sustainable 'conventional' energy activities altogether, within 5 years and ensure that all International Financial Institutions they support make the same commitment.

All governments should commit to phase out subsidies to conventional energy sources, estimated at \$US 250-300 billion annually, within 10 years²

¹ This should be new money, not 'stolen' from other development programmes. Access to energy alone will not alleviate the grinding poverty of billions, but it is an essential prerequisite

² This should include a transition plan and flexible time frames to avoid undue hardships on developing country economies overly reliant upon conventional energy sources and exports. Those countries which have signed the Kyoto Protocol have already made a commitment to examine, report on, and phase-out these subsidies

All governments should commit to aggressive national renewable portfolio standards, energy efficiency standards and other measures to help build renewable energy markets³.

www.greenpeace.org/~climate

³ The primary responsibility for this initiative must lie with the OECD governments, in keeping with the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities' enshrined in the Climate Convention