

ESSENTIAL OUTCOMES FOR A FAIR AND EFFECTIVE CLIMATE AGREEMENT

World leaders are meeting in Copenhagen in December to discuss climate change and work out a response. Christian Aid is setting out its essential outcomes that a fair and effective agreement must include and the 'red lines' that must not be crossed.

In December 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark, world leaders must agree a global response to climate change that will shield the world, its economy and, above all, its people from the threat of climate chaos.

An effective global climate change agreement must deal with the scale of the global threat. It must also be fair, ensuring that the effort of responding to the climate challenge is borne by those most responsible for it and capable of dealing with it.

Developing countries, and particularly the poorest and most vulnerable people, must not be left behind – they are a significant part of the solution. Those threatened – whether by drought in Kenya, floods in Bangladesh or hurricanes in Haiti – must be allowed to secure their lives and livelihoods. Crucially, their aspirations for development must also be safeguarded, not undermined, by any new climate agreement.

Preventing climate chaos

The agreement will be effective only if it keeps the global temperature rise well below 2°C.

Red lines:

We believe there are minimum standards – 'red lines' – that any agreement in Copenhagen must meet:

- **Prevent climate chaos:** the outcome must be consistent with keeping global warming well below 2°C.
- **Share the effort:** national commitments at Copenhagen must be based on clear principles, not political bargaining.

Figure 1 shows the scale of the climate challenge. To put the world on a pathway to stay well below a 2°C global temperature rise requires a cut of more than 80 per cent in global annual emissions. This demands transformative and urgent global movement towards a low-carbon future.

The graph shows that even if Annex 1 countries (industrialised countries named in Annex 1 of the Kyoto Protocol) slash their emissions to almost zero, there remains a need for dramatic cuts in developing countries' emissions.

So a fair Copenhagen agreement must impose a dual obligation for mitigation:

- highly ambitious targets and measures for decarbonising industrialised countries' economies
- robust mechanisms that will support developing countries to follow a low-carbon development pathway.

The scale of this dual obligation must minimise carbon emissions, with the aim of keeping global warming as far below 2°C as possible. The current range of emissions

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POVERTY

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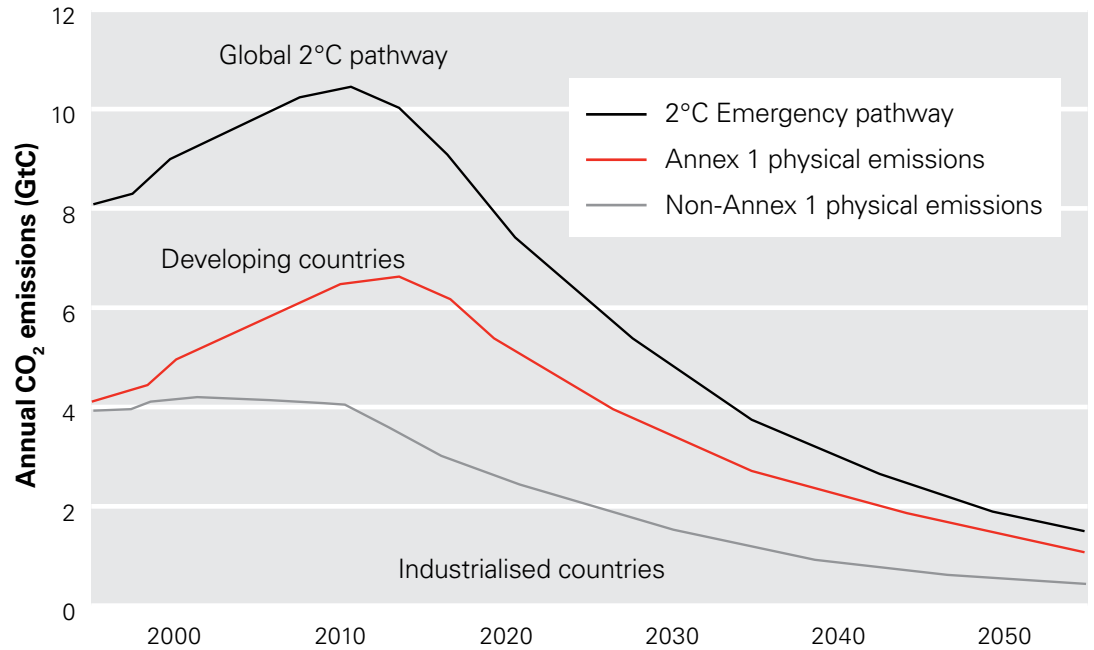


Figure 1: 'Emergency' pathway for emissions reductions to stay below 2°C global warming, with the two lower lines showing how this emissions reduction can be shared between developing and industrialised countries.¹

Red lines:

- Global effort that will deliver a peak and fall in emissions by 2015.
- Annex 1 cuts amounting to more than 40 per cent from 1990 levels by 2020.
- Annex 1 countries bearing the full incremental costs of developing countries' emissions cuts.
- A commitment by emerging economies to plan for and use climate finance to deliver a low-carbon future.

cuts being discussed in pre-Copenhagen negotiations are clearly inadequate.

Sharing the effort

Countries with greatest responsibility for climate change and with the greatest capacity to respond must take on the greatest share of the task.

Red lines:

- Action at Copenhagen must respect the principles of responsibility, capacity and the right to development.
- Annex 1 obligations for funding and emissions reductions should be based on these principles.
- In response, non-Annex 1 countries should be willing to apply these principles to themselves in future agreements.

Action on climate change is too important to be left at the mercy of political expediency, which could lead to decisions being made on the basis of individual countries' vested interests.

Any climate change agreement will only be fair and effective if it is based on agreed principles for sharing the effort of action.

The principle of 'common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities', as set out in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), must guide the implementation of that convention. Action on climate change must also safeguard developing countries' right to lift their people out of poverty.

Christian Aid supports the Greenhouse Development Rights (GDRs) framework, which quantifies the demands on each country according to clear principles. GDRs are based on a Responsibility and Capacity Index (RCI),² which shows the

percentage of global effort that should be taken by each country.

RCI calculates that the US should make about one-third of the global effort on climate change, while the EU should take on one quarter. The RCI also shows a small but growing responsibility for emerging economies to take control of their own climate emissions.

At what cost?

The cost of responding to climate change is high, but is dwarfed by the economic and human costs of insufficient action.

Substantial financing will be required for developing countries to act on climate change in the coming years, over and above that from carbon offsets and markets.

Developing countries need financial support for:

- mitigation and low-carbon development (including energy, forestry and agriculture)
- adaptation to the effects of climate change
- technology cooperation
- capacity building.³

To deliver this financial support, a system is needed to deliver sufficient, predictable funding, year on year.

This should be financed by new funding sources such as auctions of carbon credits and a tax on shipping and aviation.⁴ To ensure effective governance and coordination of the financial mechanism, it must operate under the authority and guidance of the UNFCCC.

This funding is not aid, given as charity by rich to poor countries. Instead, these are 'restitution payments', that is the action of restoring or giving back something to its proper owner. It reflects an obligation to compensate developing countries, which have done little to cause climate change but are now suffering its worst impacts.

Strengthening the poor

Poor communities must be viewed not only as victims of climate change but also as part of the solution.

It is both essential and possible to engage poor countries and communities in finding a solution to climate change. With the right

Red lines:

- **Total developed country finance (additional to official development assistance commitments) for developing countries should be well in excess of €110 billion.**
- **A clear commitment by Annex 1 parties to deliver this fund through the UNFCCC, via a predictable and equitable financial mechanism to ensure finance and technological cooperation for adaptation and low-carbon development in developing countries.**

support, those currently most excluded from decision making can become central and help guide choices.

A climate agreement must address:

- expansion of energy services to poor people in a low-carbon, sustainable way
- adaptation to current and future impacts for the most vulnerable peoples, communities and ecosystems
- learning from existing experience of sustainable development and disaster risk reduction.

Fundamentally, action on climate change should not be an excuse for human rights abuses or harm to vulnerable people. It must take account of sustainable development and local environmental impacts, and ensure indigenous peoples' rights are respected.

Conclusions

Europe, the US and other industrialised countries must dramatically improve their offers – those currently on the table are completely inadequate.

The level of ambition so far demonstrated by industrialised countries and their leaders has been far from adequate. There is a need to raise the level of trust between the industrialised and developing world, in order to reach a fair and far-reaching agreement.

The European Union often presents itself as a leader in climate change negotiations because it has clear emissions cuts targets. However, the targets currently on offer are too low, with too many get-out clauses for

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high-emitting countries. The EU has yet to table any significant financing proposals.

The UK and the Republic of Ireland should lead the way within the EU by calling for much bolder emissions targets and global financing. They must demonstrate commitment to cutting their own emissions,

by strictly limiting the use for carbon off-setting to meet domestic targets.

The US is suffering from years of inaction on climate change. While the signs are increasingly positive, it has yet to make any binding commitments. Only with binding and appropriate targets for the US can a global agreement work. Such targets must be complemented by a major support package for climate change action in developing countries.

Governments from around the world will need to accept that a conventional fossil fuel-based economy is not a sustainable one. Annex 1 countries will need to work with developing countries to ensure that their route to development stays open.

Ultimately, global leaders must learn to listen to the demands of those most at risk, and move with urgency and confidence towards a lasting, global solution to climate change.

Red lines:

- The UNFCCC negotiations in 2009 must be fair, inclusive and open.
 - They must reflect the concerns and protect the rights of marginalised and vulnerable people, not just the vested interests of the economically powerful.
 - Financing and support under the Copenhagen deal must be accessible to the poorest and most vulnerable countries and communities.
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Endnotes

1 Paul Baer, Tom Athanasiou, Sivan Kartha et al, Paul Baer, Tom Athanasiou, Sivan Kartha et al, *The Right to Development in Climate Constrained World: the Greenhouse Development*

Rights Framework, Second Edition, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Christian Aid, EcoEquity and the Stockholm Environment Institute, 2008.

2 Ibid.

3 Capacity building is needed

for countries to participate in the negotiations, to enable developing countries to formulate, implement and monitor robust mitigation and adaptation strategies that respond to the needs of their people.

4 See Signpost to Copenhagen on finance: *Climate finance: why, who for, how much and where from?*

5 Based on current and conservative estimates.

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