



CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL

emission reduction targets policy position

Climate change is a global crisis requiring all nations to unite in common resolve to take aggressive, transformative actions. To avoid dangerous climatic disruption, the world's leaders must commit to a global agreement in Copenhagen commensurate to the enormity of the climate challenge.

This is a defining moment that will demonstrate the measure of strength and wisdom of this generation and will determine the future of generations to come. Our will to take bold, immediate steps to resolve the climate challenge must not be compromised.

12/09

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), endorsed by 192 national governments, has the stated goal of stabilizing “greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.”

While earlier estimates from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) suggested a GHG stabilization goal of 450 parts per million CO₂ equivalent (ppm CO₂e), **current scientific models indicate that avoiding dangerous climatic disruption and ocean acidification likely requires stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations at 350 ppm CO₂e.¹**

Also according to the Convention, stabilization must be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.

Our planet is already experiencing climate change impacts that risk undermining the adaptive capacity of natural ecosystems and human communities.

Scientific evidence suggests that the **current trajectory of global warming meets and even surpasses the IPCC's worst-case scenarios², setting us on a path to exceed a 2 degree Celsius (2°C) increase in global mean temperature.** This would be catastrophic, with devastating consequences for all life on Earth.



what is needed in copenhagen:

A UNFCCC agreement committing all nations to ambitious mitigation and adaptation efforts is imperative, now. In line with the UNFCCC principle of

“common but differentiated responsibilities” and the goal of avoiding dangerous levels of climate change, current scientific estimates suggest that the following measures are required:

- Developed countries must reduce their aggregate emissions by at least 45 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 95 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.³
- Developing countries must reduce their aggregate emissions by 30 percent below business-as-usual trajectories by 2020.

Less ambitious emissions reduction actions will result in greater adaptation needs and increased risk to life, health, ecosystems and biodiversity, none of which can be compensated by purely financial means.

Developed and developing countries must work together on a platform of international cooperation to keep global mean temperature increase below 2°C. **A renewed global agreement founded upon an ambitious commitment to meet stabilization targets and transition of the global economy to a low-carbon development pathway must be achieved at the Copenhagen Conference of the Parties (COP15).**



Developed countries must take the lead in committing to deep and immediate GHG emissions reductions. They should adopt strong emission reduction targets that meet the requirements of the Bali Action Plan (BAP)⁴ and strive to meet those targets domestically as much as possible. **Developed countries must also assist developing countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change through adequate and sustainable financing, technology transfer and incentives for early action.** This financial support must be over and above current levels of Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Developing countries will also need to deviate significantly below business-as-usual GHG emissions trajectories to meet the 2°C target. **Domestic efforts in developing countries and adequate and sustained financial and technological assistance from developed nations must enable developing countries to reduce their aggregate emissions to at least 30 percent below business-as-usual by 2020.** Developing countries have different responsibilities based on their national circumstances. Without significant emission reductions from the higher emitting developing countries and emerging economies, global efforts to reduce the rate of climate change cannot succeed. The leadership of China, India, Brazil and Indonesia are particularly critical. The autonomous actions taken by these nations to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions should chart the path toward a new model of low emissions economic growth.

Energy efficiency and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) are the two most immediate, most cost-effective emissions reduction options. These opportunities must be seized now. These also offer among the greatest number of multiple benefits that simultaneously address climate change mitigation and adaptation. The UNFCCC COP15 agreement must provide the incentives, policy framework and financing mechanisms necessary to prompt private and public sector action to seize energy efficiency and REDD+ opportunities without further rhetoric or delay.

1 Current GHG concentrations are 385ppm CO₂e, increasing at 2ppm per year.

2 International Scientific Congress Climate Change: Global Risks, Challenges & Decisions - Synthesis Report (2009).

3 CI uses the higher end of the range of emissions reduction levels from the IPCC Fourth Assessment report given current science indicates that keeping global mean temperature increases below 2 degrees Celsius may require GHG concentration stabilization well below 450 ppm.

4 The BAP establishes that the long term global goal for emission reductions is aimed "to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention." Having this as starting point, measures not consistent with the IPCC guidance would be unacceptable.

OUR VISION

We imagine a healthy prosperous world in which societies are forever committed to caring for and valuing nature for the long-term benefit of people and all life on Earth.

OUR MISSION

Building upon a strong foundation of science, partnership and field demonstration, CI empowers societies to responsibly and sustainably care for nature for the well-being of humanity.



CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL

conservation.org

2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22202 USA
800.406.2306

FROM FRONT TO BACK AND LEFT TO RIGHT:

© ISTOCKPHOTO.COM,
© CARR CLIFTON/MINDEN PICTURES,
© STEVE BROER/SHUTTERSTOCK