



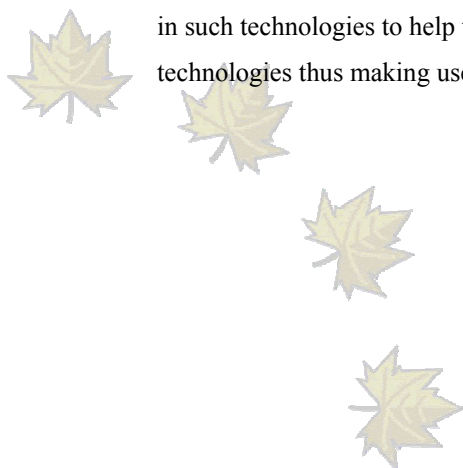
EFAEP: The European Federation of Associations of Environmental Professionals

Climate Change: EFAEP urges Member States not to water down reduction targets

In the context of the international financial crisis EFAEP observes with great concern that some governments seek solutions at the cost of climate protection. EFAEP urges the 27 Member States of the European Union to hold on to their decisions taken in March 2007 and not to water down the target of a reduction of 20% for greenhouse gas emissions. The Stern Report states that to stabilize CO₂ at the current levels will require emissions to be at least 25% below current levels by 2050 and perhaps much more. The current EU target is a vital part of achieving this. A lowering of this reduction target will not be a solution for the financial crisis but will on the contrary in the medium and long term do enormous harm to our economies. The economic costs of environmental damages are huge. As the first results of an EU study on the costs of biodiversity loss lead by Pavan Sukhdev has shown, the cost of forest loss alone is between 2 and 5 trillion US\$ a year. Seen together with the results of the Stern report which states that climate change will cost at least 5% and up to as much as 20% of global GDP if nothing is done, the potential economic harm of climate change and biodiversity loss combined, make the losses suffered during the current financial crisis seem small.

These shocking numbers on the financial cost of climate change make it very clear that climate change is no longer only a question of our quality of life but has become a threat to our economic wealth. The dimensions are so enormous that we can not afford to hesitate any longer. The reduction targets of 20% are already a minimum solution which will not be able to stop climate change but will only avoid the worst excesses. Any further reduction of these targets would be a serious threat to the economic wealth and quality of life of EU citizens.

EFAEP therefore urges all Member States of the European Union to support the European Commission in its role as the world wide leader in the combat against climate change and make use of the enormous economic potential of climate friendly technologies. Instead of cutting down reduction targets, governments should invest in such technologies to help their economies by making Europe the leading producer of environmentally friendly technologies thus making use of the enormous economic potential of this growing sector.



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