

G8: The Climate Check List

Climate change is the greatest threat we face, and it has mostly been caused by G8 countries. Today, G8 countries still emit more than 40% of global CO2 emissions, despite only 13% of the global population living in these countries. It is the responsibility of the G8 to make clear binding commitments to fight climate change. If they are to deliver at the Heiligendamm summit, they must at a minimum agree to ALL of the following **essentials**:

- Climate change must be kept as far below a 2 degree increase as possible, compared to **pre-industrial** levels
- Therefore, global emissions have to start falling within the next 10-15 years and global emissions must be cut by 50% to 2050 (**compared to 1990 levels**).
- **Industrialised countries must take the lead and commit to 30% cuts by 2020 as well as 80-90% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels. Germany must unilaterally commit to -40% by 2020, to show leadership.**
- The G8 must clearly agree that the next climate negotiations in December see a formal mandate and timetable to secure the next round of binding and radical emissions cuts under the Kyoto Protocol **by 2009** at the latest.
- The G8 must recognise that **protecting intact forests is crucial for preserving biodiversity and combating climate change**. With up to 25% of all greenhouse gas emissions coming almost exclusively from tropical forest clearance, they must commit immediately to stop the **loss and degradation of intact forests by 2010 and of all forests by 2020**.

These essentials are the bare minimum that the G8 must commit to for the Heiligendamm summit to be called successful. However, **if the seven G8 countries that have signed the Kyoto Protocol agree these essentials, that too is real progress. The world cannot and should not wait for George W. Bush.**

The following key issues will also be relevant to judging the G8 outcome:

There must be:

- No support for coal as there is no such thing as "clean coal" (see: <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/press/reports/briefing-ccs-carbon-capture-storage>).
- No support for dangerous and expensive nuclear power, which undermines solutions to climate change. Greenpeace has shown that global energy demand can be met without nuclear energy or carbon capture and storage coal: www.energyblueprint.info).
- An effective framework for funding reductions in deforestation and forest degradation in the tropics. The World Bank estimate of (US) \$300 million for a pilot phase must be seen as an absolute minimum, and the UN not the Bank must take the lead. These incentives must support the Kyoto Protocol, and not undermine other climate mitigation strategies.

- A clear signal for the support of the global expansion (and qualitative improvement) of carbon markets.
- A target to decrease the demand for primary energy by at least 20% by 2020.
- A commitment to financially support developing countries to adjust and adapt to the no longer avoidable climate change impacts.
- An agreement that biomass should be used primarily for combined heat and power production, and only if it adheres to strict and binding sustainability standards. For example, that no forest-land can be cleared for biofuel production.

Progress on these points would be very welcome at Heiligendamm. However, **if all essentials are not delivered upon, it will remain impossible to call Heiligendamm a success.**

Background

The G8 summits were founded in 1975. Climate change is a relatively recent addition to the G8 agenda. In 2000, the G8 proposed an ambitious program for the expansion of renewable energies. But this initiative was never adopted. In 2005, climate change was one of the priorities of the G8 meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland. However, the result was vague and meaningless, as Tony Blair did not want to offend his friend George W. Bush.

In the run up to the 2007 G8 meeting, the US administration has very forcefully fought any progress on climate change (see: http://weblog.greenpeace.org/makingwaves/archives/2007/05/us_harpoons_g8_climate_language.html#more). They have declared their “fundamental opposition” to the necessary emission cuts the global scientific consensus demands. Bush’s “new climate initiative” launched on May 31st fails to agree to binding cuts, and is a dangerous diversion from the immediate action needed now.

Greenpeace calls on the German G8 Presidency to move forward without the US. **It would be a positive outcome, if the above essentials are agreed by all seven Kyoto Protocol members of the G8.** Even at Gleneagles, leaders did document the isolation of the US by stating: “Those of us who have ratified the Kyoto Protocol welcome its entry into force and will work to make it a success”. Sentences such as “Those of us who have ratified the Kyoto Protocol ...” should be numerous in the Heiligendamm outcome document. They are likely to signal success.

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