



PRESS RELEASE

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NEW REPORT WARNS EU TO STOP GAMBLING WITH THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

The European Union is gambling with the future of the planet by colluding in attempts to destroy the existing climate change agreement, faith-based groups are warning today (Thursday 5 November).

The EU's active support for US attempts to abandon the Kyoto Protocol on climate change is increasing the risk that the Copenhagen conference next month will fail to reach any agreement, according to a new report by Aprovev, a European network of faith-based development agencies, launched at the UN climate talks in Barcelona this week.

'Gambling with the Kyoto Protocol is a dangerous game,' says Nelson Muffuh of Christian Aid, one of Aprovev's member agencies. 'Killing off the only existing legally-binding treaty is a big risk to the climate. Any alternative to the Kyoto Protocol is likely to be weaker.'

'Our call to EU leaders and other industrialised countries ahead of Copenhagen is: Don't play roulette with the future of our planet.'

The new report **ARGUES THAT** the EU is letting the US lead the way towards climate disaster. With only a few days left of formal negotiations before the Copenhagen conference opens on 7 December, the international climate regime is starting to crumble – with the EU contributing to the damage.

Recent statements from the EU that it is willing to abandon the Kyoto Protocol are a strong blow to the UN climate negotiations at a very late and crucial stage. The Kyoto Protocol is the foundation for international cooperation on global climate change and should be amended and improved, not replaced.

Negotiating a new treaty from scratch is a dangerous strategy that jeopardises many of the good elements of the Kyoto Protocol - including the principle that developed countries should have a bigger obligation to reduce emission than developing countries, based on their historical responsibility for greenhouse climate change.

“The EU’s apparent readiness to abandon this key equity principle is now undermining the entire negotiating process and blocking progress on the road to Copenhagen. This has become clear this week at the UN climate conference in Barcelona, where the mistrust and suspicion between developing and developed countries is increasing”, says Augustine Njamnshi, representative of the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance, a civil society organization working closely with Aprodev. “In the mean while, climate change is already forcing the poor to adapt and already having a devastating impact on the livelihoods of communities in developing countries.”

Without the Kyoto Protocol’s legally binding, internationally-agreed targets, each country will be left to ‘pledge’ whatever targets and financial contributions it wants – without any guarantee that pledges will add up to the global reductions required by science. This means that short-term economic interests, national election cycles and petty party politics will ultimately determine the future of our entire planet.

As a network of development agencies, Aprodev believes that anything less than the Kyoto Protocol will undermine the world’s chances of preventing dangerous climate change, as well as global efforts to eradicate poverty.

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Interviews with Nelson Muffuh and Augustine Njamnshi can be arranged.