



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Copenhagen Accord Pledges Do Not Meet Climate Goals

Emissions reduction pledges submitted to the UNFCCC as part of the Copenhagen Accord process fall short of the level of greenhouse gas emissions reductions required to limit temperature increase to 2°C (3.6°F) relative to pre-industrial temperatures. Instead, the proposals, if fully implemented, would allow global mean temperature to increase approximately 3.9°C (7.0°F). To reach the Copenhagen Accord goal, global emissions must peak within the next decade and fall to at least 50% below 1990 levels by 2050.

The Climate Interactive team of researchers from Sustainability Institute, the MIT Sloan School of Management, and Ventana Systems have analyzed the emissions reductions goals expressed by various nations in their submissions to UNFCCC as part of process laid out in the Copenhagen Accord. The researchers analyzed proposals through February 2, 2010. The analysis, based on the C-ROADS computer simulation of climate change, assumes that the goals for emissions reductions pledged by nations in their submissions are fully achieved and that loopholes (such as double counting of offsets or the selling of surplus emissions quotas) do not occur.

Simulation of the emissions reductions pledges contained within letters submitted to the UNFCCC show a large gap between the 2 degree target and current pledges. Using the C-ROADS simulation, the researchers estimate that current pledges would allow global mean temperature to increase by 3.9°C (7.0°F) by 2100. Full details and assumptions are at <http://climateinteractive.org/scoreboard/scoreboard-science-and-data>

The team of researchers conducted a similar analysis during the COP-15 negotiation in Copenhagen (December 7-18, 2009), which showed an expected temperature increase of 3.9°C (7.0°F) by 2100. *Thus, in the month following the creation of the Accord, the gap between current pledges and the level of collective reductions needed to meet climate goals has not been closed.*

The Copenhagen Accord calls for “deep cuts in global emissions ... with a view to reduce global emissions so as to hold the increase in global temperature below 2 degrees Celsius.” Our analysis shows that doing so would require global greenhouse gas emissions to peak by 2020 and then fall at least 60% below current emissions.

Under the current proposals submitted to the UNFCCC, global emissions of greenhouse gasses would increase on average 0.8% per year between now and 2020. After 2020, emissions would need to fall at a rate of approximately 3.3% per year to achieve the goal of reducing emissions 60% below current levels by 2050. The Copenhagen Accord does not include commitments or means to achieve these reductions. According to Dr. Elizabeth Sawin of Sustainability Institute, “Without deeper near term emissions reductions and an explicit commitment to longer term global emissions reductions, the Copenhagen Accord leaves the task of creating a global framework to prevent dangerous interference with the Earth’s climate unfinished. A new degree of collective ambition and cooperation will be required before the world sees a climate agreement consistent with limiting warming to even 2°C, let alone the 1.5°C goal named by a growing number of governments and civil society groups.”

Notes For Editors:

The C-ROADS (Climate - Rapid Overview And Decision Support) climate policy simulator is a scientifically sound tool that enables users to rapidly evaluate the impact of national greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction policies on key climate impacts including per-capita emissions, atmospheric GHG concentrations, mean global temperature and sea level, through 2100. C-ROADS has been carefully calibrated to the best available peer reviewed science, including the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC. The scientific review panel that assessed the model concluded that C-ROADS “reproduces the response properties of state-of- the-art three dimensional climate models very well.... Given the model’s capabilities and its close alignment with a range of scenarios published in the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC we support its widespread use among a broad range of users and recommend that it be considered as an official United Nations tool.” C-ROADS was developed by the Sustainability Institute, MIT Sloan School of Management, and Ventana Systems. Full documentation and details are available at <http://climateinteractive.org>.

- C-ROADS is based on simulation modeling originally conducted at MIT and has been developed by a partnership of MIT’s Sloan School of Management, Sustainability Institute and Ventana Systems.
- C-ROADS draws upon and is intended to complement the insights of other, more disaggregated models such as MAGICC, MINICAM, EPPA, AIM and MERGE.
- The development and use of C-ROADS has been supported by Active Philanthropy, Zennström Philanthropies, The Morgan Family Foundation, The Rockefeller Brothers Fund and others.
- Sustainability Institute is a non-profit organization based in Hartland, VT, USA. It was founded by Donella Meadows in 1997. Current projects at SI include simulation modeling of climate change and public health and the Donella Meadows Leadership Fellows Program.

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