

Folketinget - Europaudvalget
Christiansborg, den 30. oktober 2006

Europaudvalget
EUU alm. del - Samrådsspørgsmål F
Offentligt

I et kommende samråd ønskes en drøftelse af følgende spørgsmål:

Ad

EUU alm. del

F

På baggrund af rapporten "Stern Review: The Economics of Climate Change" som den britiske regering modtog den 30. oktober 2006 samt rapporten "Greenhouse Gas Emission Trends and Projections in Europe 2006" som Det Europæiske Miljøagentur offentliggjorde den 27. oktober 2006 bedes regeringen oplyse, om den finder det realistisk, at hhv. EU og Danmark når sine respektive mål til opfyldelse af Kyoto-forpligtelsen (dvs. en reduktion i EU på 8 pct. og i Danmark på 21 pct. i perioden 2008-2012). Regeringen bedes endvidere oplyse, hvilke nye initiativer den agter hhv. at foreslå i EU og gennemføre i Danmark.

Resumé af Stern-rapporten samt pressemeddelelse fra Det Europæiske Miljøagentur vedlægges til udvalgets orientering.

P.u.v.

Elisabeth Arnold
formand.

Til miljøministeren og finansministeren
Kopi til udenrigsministeren
Kopi til ombudsmanden

Summary of Conclusions

There is still time to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, if we take strong action now.

The scientific evidence is now overwhelming: climate change is a serious global threat, and it demands an urgent global response.

This Review has assessed a wide range of evidence on the impacts of climate change and on the economic costs, and has used a number of different techniques to assess costs and risks. From all of these perspectives, the evidence gathered by the Review leads to a simple conclusion: the benefits of strong and early action far outweigh the economic costs of not acting.

Climate change will affect the basic elements of life for people around the world – access to water, food production, health, and the environment. Hundreds of millions of people could suffer hunger, water shortages and coastal flooding as the world warms.

Using the results from formal economic models, the Review estimates that if we don't act, the overall costs and risks of climate change will be equivalent to losing at least 5% of global GDP each year, now and forever. If a wider range of risks and impacts is taken into account, the estimates of damage could rise to 20% of GDP or more.

In contrast, the costs of action – reducing greenhouse gas emissions to avoid the worst impacts of climate change – can be limited to around 1% of global GDP each year.

The investment that takes place in the next 10-20 years will have a profound effect on the climate in the second half of this century and in the next. Our actions now and over the coming decades could create risks of major disruption to economic and social activity, on a scale similar to those associated with the great wars and the economic depression of the first half of the 20th century. And it will be difficult or impossible to reverse these changes.

So prompt and strong action is clearly warranted. Because climate change is a global problem, the response to it must be international. It must be based on a shared vision of long-term goals and agreement on frameworks that will accelerate action over the next decade, and it must build on mutually reinforcing approaches at national, regional and international level.

Climate change could have very serious impacts on growth and development.

If no action is taken to reduce emissions, the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere could reach double its pre-industrial level as early as 2035, virtually committing us to a global average temperature rise of over 2°C. In the longer term, there would be more than a 50% chance that the temperature rise would exceed 5°C. This rise would be very dangerous indeed; it is equivalent to the change in average temperatures from the last ice age to today. Such a radical change in the physical geography of the world must lead to major changes in the human geography – where people live and how they live their lives.

Even at more moderate levels of warming, all the evidence – from detailed studies of regional and sectoral impacts of changing weather patterns through to economic

STERN REVIEW: The Economics of Climate Change

models of the global effects – shows that climate change will have serious impacts on world output, on human life and on the environment.

All countries will be affected. The most vulnerable – the poorest countries and populations – will suffer earliest and most, even though they have contributed least to the causes of climate change. The costs of extreme weather, including floods, droughts and storms, are already rising, including for rich countries.

Adaptation to climate change – that is, taking steps to build resilience and minimise costs – is essential. It is no longer possible to prevent the climate change that will take place over the next two to three decades, but it is still possible to protect our societies and economies from its impacts to some extent – for example, by providing better information, improved planning and more climate-resilient crops and infrastructure. Adaptation will cost tens of billions of dollars a year in developing countries alone, and will put still further pressure on already scarce resources. Adaptation efforts, particularly in developing countries, should be accelerated.

The costs of stabilising the climate are significant but manageable; delay would be dangerous and much more costly.

The risks of the worst impacts of climate change can be substantially reduced if greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere can be stabilised between 450 and 550ppm CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e). The current level is 430ppm CO₂e today, and it is rising at more than 2ppm each year. Stabilisation in this range would require emissions to be at least 25% below current levels by 2050, and perhaps much more.

Ultimately, stabilisation – at whatever level – requires that annual emissions be brought down to more than 80% below current levels.

This is a major challenge, but sustained long-term action can achieve it at costs that are low in comparison to the risks of inaction. Central estimates of the annual costs of achieving stabilisation between 500 and 550ppm CO₂e are around 1% of global GDP, if we start to take strong action now.

Costs could be even lower than that if there are major gains in efficiency, or if the strong co-benefits, for example from reduced air pollution, are measured. Costs will be higher if innovation in low-carbon technologies is slower than expected, or if policy-makers fail to make the most of economic instruments that allow emissions to be reduced whenever, wherever and however it is cheapest to do so.

It would already be very difficult and costly to aim to stabilise at 450ppm CO₂e. If we delay, the opportunity to stabilise at 500-550ppm CO₂e may slip away.

Action on climate change is required across all countries, and it need not cap the aspirations for growth of rich or poor countries.

The costs of taking action are not evenly distributed across sectors or around the world. Even if the rich world takes on responsibility for absolute cuts in emissions of 60-80% by 2050, developing countries must take significant action too. But developing countries should not be required to bear the full costs of this action alone, and they will not have to. Carbon markets in rich countries are already beginning to deliver flows of finance to support low-carbon development, including through the Clean Development Mechanism. A transformation of these flows is now required to support action on the scale required.

Action on climate change will also create significant business opportunities, as new markets are created in low-carbon energy technologies and other low-carbon goods and services. These markets could grow to be worth hundreds of billions of dollars each year, and employment in these sectors will expand accordingly.

The world does not need to choose between averting climate change and promoting growth and development. Changes in energy technologies and in the structure of economies have created opportunities to decouple growth from greenhouse gas emissions. Indeed, ignoring climate change will eventually damage economic growth.

Tackling climate change is the pro-growth strategy for the longer term, and it can be done in a way that does not cap the aspirations for growth of rich or poor countries.

A range of options exists to cut emissions; strong, deliberate policy action is required to motivate their take-up.

Emissions can be cut through increased energy efficiency, changes in demand, and through adoption of clean power, heat and transport technologies. The power sector around the world would need to be at least 60% decarbonised by 2050 for atmospheric concentrations to stabilise at or below 550ppm CO_{2e}, and deep emissions cuts will also be required in the transport sector.

Even with very strong expansion of the use of renewable energy and other low-carbon energy sources, fossil fuels could still make up over half of global energy supply in 2050. Coal will continue to be important in the energy mix around the world, including in fast-growing economies. Extensive carbon capture and storage will be necessary to allow the continued use of fossil fuels without damage to the atmosphere.

Cuts in non-energy emissions, such as those resulting from deforestation and from agricultural and industrial processes, are also essential.

With strong, deliberate policy choices, it is possible to reduce emissions in both developed and developing economies on the scale necessary for stabilisation in the required range while continuing to grow.

Climate change is the greatest market failure the world has ever seen, and it interacts with other market imperfections. Three elements of policy are required for an effective global response. The first is the pricing of carbon, implemented through tax, trading or regulation. The second is policy to support innovation and the deployment of low-carbon technologies. And the third is action to remove barriers to energy efficiency, and to inform, educate and persuade individuals about what they can do to respond to climate change.

Climate change demands an international response, based on a shared understanding of long-term goals and agreement on frameworks for action.

Many countries and regions are taking action already: the EU, California and China are among those with the most ambitious policies that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol provide a basis for international co-operation, along with a range of partnerships and other approaches. But more ambitious action is now required around the world.

STERN REVIEW: The Economics of Climate Change

Countries facing diverse circumstances will use different approaches to make their contribution to tackling climate change. But action by individual countries is not enough. Each country, however large, is just a part of the problem. It is essential to create a shared international vision of long-term goals, and to build the international frameworks that will help each country to play its part in meeting these common goals.

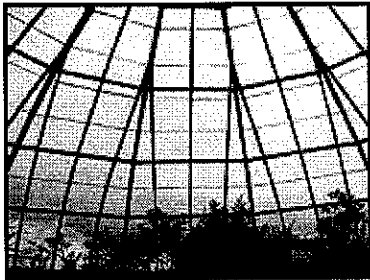
Key elements of future international frameworks should include:

- *Emissions trading:* Expanding and linking the growing number of emissions trading schemes around the world is a powerful way to promote cost-effective reductions in emissions and to bring forward action in developing countries: strong targets in rich countries could drive flows amounting to tens of billions of dollars each year to support the transition to low-carbon development paths.
- *Technology cooperation:* Informal co-ordination as well as formal agreements can boost the effectiveness of investments in innovation around the world. Globally, support for energy R&D should at least double, and support for the deployment of new low-carbon technologies should increase up to five-fold. International co-operation on product standards is a powerful way to boost energy efficiency.
- *Action to reduce deforestation:* The loss of natural forests around the world contributes more to global emissions each year than the transport sector. Curbing deforestation is a highly cost-effective way to reduce emissions; large-scale international pilot programmes to explore the best ways to do this could get underway very quickly.
- *Adaptation:* The poorest countries are most vulnerable to climate change. It is essential that climate change be fully integrated into development policy, and that rich countries honour their pledges to increase support through overseas development assistance. International funding should also support improved regional information on climate change impacts, and research into new crop varieties that will be more resilient to drought and flood.

EEA

EU must take immediate action on Kyoto targets

Press release



All Member States must seriously tackle greenhouse gas emissions immediately, if the EU-15 is to meet its collective Kyoto target, a new European Environment Agency (EEA) report states.

The report, 'Greenhouse gas emission trends and projections in Europe 2006', presents an evaluation of historic data between 1990 and 2004. It also evaluates projections of European countries' progress towards their 2010 greenhouse gas emissions targets.

"Levels of greenhouse gases would be much higher without current efforts to cut emissions. However, several countries within the EU-15 are not doing enough and could jeopardise the collective effort," said Professor Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director of the EEA.

The EU-15 has a Kyoto target to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 8 % on 1990 levels by 2012. Within this overall target, each EU-15 member state has a differentiated emissions target, which can be achieved by a variety of means.

Only by implementing all existing and planned domestic policy measures and using Kyoto mechanisms and carbon sinks, can emissions be brought down to 8.0 %, the EU-15 target, according to the report. However, this projection relies on figures from several Member States suggesting they will cut emissions by more than is required to meet their national targets and this cannot be assured, the report stresses.

Looking ahead to 2010, the report says that existing domestic policies and measures will reduce EU-15 greenhouse gas emissions by a net effect of 0.6 % from 1990 levels. When additional domestic policies and measures (i.e. those planned but not yet implemented) are taken into account, the EU-15 could reduce emissions by an additional 4.0 %.

The projected use of Kyoto mechanisms by ten of the EU-15 will reduce emissions by a further 2.6 % at a cost of EUR 2 830 million. The use of carbon sinks, such as planting forests to remove CO₂, would reduce emissions by an additional 0.8 %.

Between 1990 and 2004, EU-15 greenhouse gas emissions decreased from most sectors, the report says. However, emissions from the transport sector increased by nearly 26 % and are projected to increase to 35 % above 1990 levels by 2010, if countries use only existing policies. If additional policies are implemented, Member States project that transport emissions will, at best, stabilise at 2004 levels.

The ten new EU Member States are not part of the joint EU-15 target and all, except Cyprus and Malta, have individual targets under the Kyoto Protocol. They are all on track to meet their targets, but this is largely due to the collapse of economies in the 1990s and emissions are now rising again in these countries, the report says.

Also see:

The European Commission's new report, 'Progress towards achieving the Kyoto targets'

Notes to the editor:

Background on the report

The report, prepared by the EEA and its European Topic Centre on Air and Climate Change (ETC/ACC), complements the annual evaluation report of the European Commission to the Council and European Parliament. For more information see the Commission web site: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/gge.htm>

The EEA report covers 33 countries including:

EU-15 countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

New Member States: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia.

Acceding countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Turkey.

Other EEA member countries: Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, Switzerland.

Data source

The report is based on data and information submitted by the countries to the European Commission and the EEA by 6 June 2006.

EU Kyoto Targets

The EU-15 has a Kyoto target to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 8 % on 1990 levels by 2012. Within this overall target, each EU-15 member state has a differentiated reduction target; some should reduce emissions while others are allowed a limited increase. New Member States have individual targets except Cyprus and Malta, which have no targets. Countries can achieve these targets by a variety of means.

EU emissions trading scheme

The EU emissions trading scheme is the European Union's climate change policy tool, which helps industries to cut their CO₂ emissions in a cost-effective way. It requires a cap on emissions for all large CO₂ emission sources.

Note: All Member States should have delivered a national allocation plan (NAP) for the Kyoto period to the European Commission. This plan should include "emission caps" for industries that are included in the emission trading sectors, and should have been delivered by 30th June, 2006. However, not all countries have done so to date and the Commission has not so far published formal opinions on the NAPs. Because the EEA report only includes information on national projections provided by countries by 6th June, 2006, it does not include any new national projection information provided within the recent NAPs. For more information on NAPs see: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/2nd_phase_ep.htm

Domestic policies and measures

Domestic policies and measures take place within the national boundaries of the country and include: the promotion of electricity from renewable energy; improvements in energy efficiency; promotion of biofuels in transport; reduction of carbon dioxide emissions from cars; recovery of gases from landfills and reduction of fluorinated gases.

Kyoto Mechanisms

The Kyoto Mechanisms help developed countries to achieve their Kyoto targets by gaining credits through carbon cutting activities in other countries. They also help the transfer of low-carbon technologies to other countries. The projected use of Kyoto mechanisms by ten of the EU-15 Member States will reduce emissions by 2010 by 2.6 %. These countries are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. For more information on Kyoto mechanisms see the UNFCCC web site: http://unfccc.int/kyoto_mechanisms/items/1673.php

Annex 2 – Overview of progress for EU Member States and other EEA member countries

National projections for 2010	Policies and measures included in national projections	EU-15 Member States	New EU Member States	Other EEA member countries
Kyoto target on track	Existing domestic policies and measures	Sweden* United Kingdom*	Lithuania Poland Czech Republic*	Iceland
	Existing and planned domestic policies and measures	France* Germany Greece	Estonia Hungary Latvia Slovakia Slovenia*	Bulgaria Rumania
	Existing domestic policies and measures	Luxembourg		
	Use of Kyoto mechanisms			
	Existing and planned domestic policies and measures	Finland The Netherlands*		Switzerland

	Use of Kyoto mechanisms			Norway
	Existing and planned domestic policies and measures			Liechtenstein
Kyoto target not on track	Existing and planned domestic policies and measures	Austria*		
		Belgium*		
		Denmark*		
		Ireland*		
		Italy		
		Portugal*		
	Use of Kyoto mechanisms			
No Kyoto target			Cyprus	Turkey
			Malta	

Notes:

National projections provided by 6th June, 2006 have been taken into account in this report.

* Projected net removal from carbon sink activities (land use change and forestry).

About the European Environment Agency (EEA):

The EEA is based in Copenhagen. The agency aims to help achieve significant and measurable improvement in Europe's environment through the provision of timely, targeted, relevant and reliable information to policy makers and the public.

Contact information:

Brendan Killeen,
Press Officer
Phone: +45 33 36 72 69
Mobile: +45 23 68 36 71
E-mail: brendan.killeen at eea.europa.eu

Marion Hannerup,
Head of Communications and Corporate Affairs
Phone: +45 33 36 71 60
Mobile: +45 51 33 22 43
E-mail: marion.hannerup at eea.europa.eu

European Environment Agency, Kongens Nytorv 6, DK-1050 Copenhagen K, Denmark - Phone: +45 3336 7100
Comments to EEA Web Team, © Copyright 1993-2006, Disclaimer and Privacy policy

EMAS registered environmental management at EEA

Udvalget udbeder sig - i 5 eksemplarer - ministerens besvarelse af følgende spørgsmål:

Ad

EUU alm. del

- 6 Hvad kan ministeren oplyse om rapporten "Greenhouse gas emission trends and projections in Europe 2006" fra Det Europæiske Miljøagentur, hvori det konkluderes, at hverken Danmark eller EU med de nuværende initiativer vil kunne opfylde Kyoto-målene, jf. vedlagte pressemeddelelse.

P.u.v.

Elisabeth Arnold
formand.