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CAN Europe Briefing Paper

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE UNFCCC TALANOIA DIALOGUE

The UNFCCC Talanoia Dialogue opens this year a crucially important window of opportunity to galvanise global urgent action on climate change that must not be wasted. In this paper CAN Europe outlines our recommendations for the European Union for the 2018 Talanoia Dialogue.

Talanoia Dialogue is about bridging the emissions gap by exploring what more can we do

The Dialogue offers a number of platforms throughout the year to advance global response to climate change, culminating with a high-level political phase at the COP24 in Katowice. Discussions are themed around the three central questions about climate action:

1. Where are we?
2. Where do we want to go?
3. How do we get there?

It is important to reach a joint understanding on all of the three questions, however CAN Europe urges the EU and other governments to focus this year on the question two and three - what is our decarbonisation vision and how it will be achieved. Established scientific literature¹² can already tell us where we are, while discussion on the means and willingness to rapidly decarbonise our economies remains much less explored.

Present what the EU is willing to do to bridge the gap between NDCs and 1.5°C

Since Paris countries have acknowledged that countries' current targets (NDCs) are not inline with the goals of the Paris Agreement, in other words they are not adequate to prevent dangerous climate change. This inadequacy of joint global action has since then become a widely repeated mantra, while this understanding hasn't so far initiated much additional action. In order to improve the level of joint action, countries need to do more individual action. When concluding the Talanoia Dialogue we call on the EU, its members states and all other governments to outline how they will increase their individual action on climate change.

Work to secure a COP 24 Decision to ensure all countries revise their 2030 NDCs by 2020

This acknowledgement that every country needs to do more should be captured at COP24 in a COP Decision. While in Paris countries already committed to revise and resubmit the 2030 NDCs, a COP 24 Decision enhancing this requirement would encourage the national revision processes that need to follow in the coming two years. reconfirming all countries' commitment to revise the current 2030 NDCs by 2020.

¹ IPCC AR5 Synthesis Report, table 2.2, page 64

² UNFCCC Synthesis report by the secretariat Aggregate effect of the INDCs: an update, FCCC/CP/2016/2, figure 13 on page 56

Long term strategies need to be aligned with the Paris Agreement's long term goals of 1.5°C and zero

Countries are also invited to communicate long term decarbonisation strategies to the UNFCCC by 2020. The Katowice COP would be a timely opportunity to outline further features for those strategies. Most importantly ensuring that all countries' long term planning is consistent with keeping temperature rise below 1.5°C and reducing emissions to zero. EU leaders have recently invited the Commission to present a proposal for an EU long term low emissions strategy in the first quarter of 2019. At the same time, there is an ample opportunity to discuss the features about the EU's long term climate vision within the framework of the proposed Governance Regulation.

Use the Talanoa Dialogue to ensure that shipping and aviation also contribute their share

The Paris Agreement sets forth that countries should move towards economy-wide NDCs. This means that governments should set pursue policies at national, regional and international level that tackle emissions also from international aviation and shipping, and ensure that emissions from these sectors are included in national inventories.

1. Where are we?

- Average global temperature rise has already reached 1°C and the destructive impacts from climate change are already being felt everywhere, including in Europe.
- The global response to climate change to date has been profoundly inadequate.
- Climate change accelerates and multiplies other global threats such as loss of biodiversity, scarcity of natural resources and geopolitical stability.
- The Paris Agreement binds countries to pursue efforts to keep temperature rise 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
- Cumulated emissions define the level of warming. The already emitted emissions combined with current reduction targets and emissions trends put the world on course for temperature rise that will be catastrophic for the planet.
- The UNFCCC Secretariat Synthesis Report assessing the aggregate effect of the INDCs concludes that the current NDCs, if not revised, will consume the entire global carbon budget allowing a 50% chance to keep temperature rise to 1.5°C by 2025, for a higher likelihood the carbon budget will be consumed even earlier. (footnote 1)
- Urgent near term action, at scale, is a precondition to reach the long term goals of the Paris Agreement.
- All countries, businesses, stakeholders and individuals will need to more to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Talanoa Dialogue template questions: Where are we?

1. The commitment (planned and/or announced) as well as the actions taken so far that are in line with aims of Paris Agreement, the 1.5/2 degrees' goal and the transition towards a net-zero emission society by this mid-century.
2. Progress made so far against the above commitments, including success stories, case studies and gaps.
3. Quantitative impact so far with respect to mitigation, adaptation, resilience and/or finance.

2. Where do we want to go?

- This year's special IPCC report on 1.5°C is expected to confirm that keeping warming to 1.5°C is still just about possible, but requires an unprecedented shift away from fossil fuels and other sources of carbon pollution, starting now.
- The report is expected to confirm that the negative impacts of climate change are already very severe at 1.5°C and therefore keeping temperature rise as low as possible is the necessary.
- Global emissions need to be reduced to zero, and countries with higher responsibility and capacity to act need to be leading the way. For the European Union this means that many sectors in Europe will need to reach zero emissions within the next couple of decades.
- Present the European Union's decarbonisation vision, for the EU and the world as a whole. Including a vision on economic development, investment, jobs, just transition, energy security, health, and quality of life that greater and integrated climate action could bring.
- What are the projected quantified emissions from the EU until the EU's emissions are at zero.
- What are the adaptation and resilience actions needed for a safe future.
- What are the transformational changes needed in order to achieve the Paris goals, including shifts in finance and investment, sustainable consumption and production, resilience, etc.
- What does the EU consider to be the enabling policies needed on the EU and national governments to unlock greater ambition and action from other actors, including business, investors, sub-national governments and private individuals.

Talanoa Dialogue template questions: Where do we want to go?

1. Vision of the future for your organization and/or sector in terms of its possible role in achieving the 1.5/2 degrees' goal and a net-zero emission world by this mid-century
2. Possible and potential new commitments and pledges of to achieve the 1.5/2 degrees' goal and a net-zero emission world by this mid-century
3. Foreseen positive impact of these commitments once they are realized, including contributions to the sustainable development agenda

3. How do we get there?

- In order to reach the long term goals of the Paris Agreement nothing is more important than urgent near term action, at scale, already before 2020.
- The next couple of years are crucial. We need to do more of what we know works now: that means reducing and ending the use coal, gas, oil, biomass and biofuels, investing in renewable energy, eradicating energy waste, protecting and expanding the forests and natural systems that are already capturing carbon from the atmosphere, and which may be able to increase that capacity in the future.
- The revision of current 2030 targets before 2020 is inescapable. This needs to be confirmed in a COP23 Decision. Strengthened action in enhanced NDCs, along with national-level implementation and non-state action, are all needed to move the world toward a trajectory in line with the long term goals of the Paris Agreement.
- What sectors or sources of emissions that weren't included in initial NDCs or need strengthening. (e.g. short-lived climate pollutants, oceans and marine ecosystems, urban planning). What their inclusion would mean in terms of greenhouse gas emission reduction and other development or economic benefits (e.g. fiscal benefits of fossil fuel subsidy reform).
- Collaboration among countries through finance, technology and capacity could unlock the potential of those countries, which lead to enhance NDCs. Is the EU planning such initiatives.
- What are the barriers the EU has identified that prevents action on climate change?

Talanoa Dialogue questions: How do we get there? (Also relevant for the EU)

1. Ways in which the UN Climate Change process can help you achieve your vision and goals, and how your actions can help in expediting sustainable transitions to climate neutral societies

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