

# *Engaging with Asia-Pacific on Climate Change*

*European Climate Diplomacy*

4 June 2012

Charlemagne building, room Jean Durieux  
Rue de la Loi 170, Brussels

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## CONCEPT NOTE

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### INTRODUCTION

Climate change **underlines the interdependence** between the EU and its international partners, making it by nature a strong subject for EU diplomacy. These issues are clear and overarching priorities for the EU and the European Commission.

2011 marked significant progress in promoting ambitious climate action. A key milestone was the successful conclusion of the Durban climate negotiations in December 2011 where the EU was able to build alliances with its partners and lead the international community to agree – for the very first time – on a clear roadmap to a deal that will bind all nations legally. The new dynamic provided a welcome departure from past rhetoric. It was also a strong **validation of the strength of EU climate diplomacy** for which a new agenda was set by the joint reflection paper of the EEAS and DG CLIMA at the July 2011 Foreign Affairs Council. Moreover, this alliance formation shows that we are on the right track with initiatives such as the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA), which is designed to deepen dialogue between the EU and the most climate vulnerable developing countries, in particular the Least Developed Countries (LDC) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS); this is in full support of our partners' climate change efforts.

The objective of the proposed roundtable is to examine the Asia-Pacific position in the global climate debate and the relevance of EU relations towards the region. The Asia-Pacific dynamics will be discussed in view of improving our understanding of existing openings in the remit of other related EU policies (such as industrial policy, research, trade, development co-operation).

The roundtable is aimed at increasing the readiness of EU and Asia Pacific stakeholders – diplomats, area experts and policy practitioners – to engage in relevant discussions with each other. The event will bring together senior officials working on Asia Pacific policy in the EU Member States, the European Commission and in the European External Action Service, selected policy institutes experts and invited specialists. The deliberations during the day will provide a useful opportunity to **harness the respective expertise and knowledge to explore ways for effectively in advancing the climate cooperation between Asia, the Pacific and Europe.**

Considering the diversity of country profiles in the region, dedicated sessions will be held on (i) the potential for low carbon cooperation and commercial openings resulting from green growth, and (ii) the addressing of the acute climate adaptation challenge across Asia and the Pacific.

## **KEY THEMES**

The roundtable will be organized in two sessions. **The 1<sup>st</sup> half of the day will focus on the global issues and climate politics.**

Climate change is one of the core challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, identified in the recent deliberations of the UN High level discussions (Sustainable Energy for All and the Global Sustainability Panels and the Rio+20 Summit preparations) – effective multilateralism, unprecedented emergence of the Asian countries, further fragmentation of the economic landscape, competition for natural resources and energy, demographic shifts, and unsustainable consumerism and growth, combined with intensified climate change impacts, are all trends that will have profound impact on our individual and collective future. The presenters and panellists will be invited to reflect on the latest development in the international climate change negotiations and dialogues, the parallel deliberations in the G20 and Regional fora and the scope for intensified and/or more formalized cooperation between the regions.

**The second half of the day will be dedicated to looking closer at the EU and Asia-Pacific agendas** which impact on the relationship and climate action and how these in turn are translated into a response and action.

The thematic sessions will focus 2 distinct but interconnected clusters, notably:

- **Competition Vs Cooperation.**
- **Challenges for the vulnerable**

Specific themes will attempt to emphasise "win-wins" in the context of the low emission development strategies through such topics as technology transfer, innovative carbon market mechanisms, improved delivery methods for climate change assistance, possibilities to turn climate related challenges into development opportunities, innovative financing and barriers to trade.

Future financing modalities will be discussed in this context, particularly the contribution and progress made in the Asia Pacific region through the Global Climate Change Alliance and the opportunities presented by the European financing agencies, investment facilities and climate windows. The roundtable can also help improve our narrative to underline the weight of private financing, stressing how the EU private sector can contribute to adaptation to climate change, including reducing disaster risk and technology development through commercial mechanisms.

Debate on each theme will be set-off by short presentations by expert facilitators who will also act as panellists for the discussions on the theme.