



Submission by the European Union, its Member States and Iceland pursuant to paragraph 9 of decision 1/CMP.8

Athens, 30 April 2014

Introduction

At the Doha climate conference in December 2012, the European Union (EU), its 28 Member States and Iceland agreed to a quantified emission reduction commitment of 80% under the Kyoto Protocol's second commitment period (2013 to 2020). In Doha, the EU, its Member States and Iceland declared that they intended to fulfil this commitment jointly in accordance with Article 4 of the Kyoto Protocol.

Paragraph 9 of decision 1/CMP.8 requests each Party with a quantified emission limitation and reduction commitment for the Kyoto Protocol's second commitment period to submit to the secretariat, by 30 April 2014, information relating to its intention to increase the ambition of its commitment, including progress made towards achieving its quantified emission limitation and reduction commitment, the most recently updated projections for greenhouse gas emissions until the end of the second commitment period, and the potential for increasing ambition.

The EU, its Member States and Iceland welcome the opportunity to submit this information¹ jointly, in accordance with the declaration made in Doha (paragraph 45 of FCCC/KP/CMP/2012/13). This submission contains a summary of the information listed in paragraph 9 of decision 1/CMP.8. Further details and background information are included in the Technical Annex to this submission.

Potential overachievement of commitments

The EU, its Member States and Iceland are will overachieve their reduction targets for the first commitment period and are projected to overachieve their targets for the second commitment period. Preliminary data show that average annual emissions over the period 2008-2012 are 18.8% below base year levels. For the year 2020, total emissions are projected to be 24.5% below base year levels, with average annual emission reductions over the period 2013-2020 projected to be 22.8% below base year levels (based on Member States' projections and taking into account existing measures).

¹ The information in this submission is based on the most recently available data, including the data used for the preparation of the 2014 inventory reports, based on the revised 1996 IPCC guidelines. These data are preliminary only and have not yet been subject to UNFCCC review.



These additional reductions result in the total potential overachievement for the first and second commitment periods (2008-2020), compared to the targets set under the Kyoto Protocol, at an estimated 5.5 Gt CO₂ eq. Around 4.2 Gt CO₂ eq. of this is expected to be accrued between 2008-2012², with a further 1.3 Gt CO₂ eq. projected to be added between 2013-2020. The potential overachievement for the period 2013-2020 is based on scenarios with existing measures, excluding land use, land-use change and forestry and the use of the Kyoto Protocol's market-based mechanisms for compliance during that period. Moreover, a number of additional measures are currently being implemented or planned, both in Member States and at the EU level³. This may result in a further overachievement. Both existing and additional measures (will) entail considerable efforts from the EU Member States and Iceland.

The potential overachievement of 5.5 Gt CO₂ eq. represents more than the total emissions in 2012 in the EU Member States and Iceland.

Closing the pre-2020 emissions gap

The current and projected emission reductions, and the resulting potential overachievement, are a real contribution to closing the pre-2020 emissions gap as identified by the United Nations Environment Programme's annual Emissions Gap Reports.

The EU, its Member States and Iceland continue to be committed to the implementation of policies that are projected to significantly overachieve the reduction commitment for the second commitment period and thereby significantly contribute to closing the ambition gap. The EU, its Member States and Iceland look forward to opportunities to discuss with other Parties any overachievement in their commitments and actions and, therefore, contributions to closing the gap.

The EU, its Member States and Iceland underline their continued interest in exploring options for raising the ambition of all Parties under workstream 2 of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform (pre-2020 ambition, addressing paragraphs 7 and 8 of decision 1/CP.17).

The EU, its Member States and Iceland reiterate their conditional offer to move to a 30 per cent reduction by 2020 compared to 1990 levels, provided that other developed countries commit themselves to comparable emission reductions and developing countries contribute adequately according to their responsibilities and respective capabilities. This offer remains on the table.

² The overachievement for the period 2008-2012 is the sum of: Emission reductions of 3.2 Gt CO₂ eq. below the targets; 0.4 Gt CO₂ eq. from carbon sinks; and 0.6 Gt CO₂ eq. from the use of the Kyoto mechanisms.

³ An overview and further details on existing and planned measures can be found at the European Environment Agency database on climate change mitigation policies and measures in Europe: <http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/pam>.



Successful decoupling of economic growth and GHG emissions

The current and projected emission reductions, and the resulting potential overachievement, are largely the result of structural policies implemented in the field of climate and energy (in particular policies resulting in improvements in energy intensity of the economy and a higher share of renewables). Such policies have contributed to the majority of the emission reductions between 2008 and 2012. The economic crisis has contributed to less than half of the reduction during this period ⁴.

These reductions have been achieved in the context of overall economic growth, demonstrating the ability to successfully decouple economic growth and GHG emissions. Over the period 1990-2012, the combined GDP of the EU Member States and Iceland grew by more than 44%, while GHG emissions decreased by 19%. As a result, the average greenhouse gas emission intensity was reduced by almost half between 1990 and 2012. The average GHG emission intensity (387 tonnes CO₂ eq. per million Euro) is now one of the lowest among major economies in the world.

The reductions achieved so far have also had a significant effect on per capita emissions. In 2012, average emissions per capita in the EU Member States and Iceland were 9 tonnes CO₂-eq. This represents a decrease by a quarter compared to 1990 (down from 12 tonnes CO₂-eq.). This sharp decrease in per capita emissions also comes in a context where the share of global GHG emissions of EU Member States and Iceland have dropped from 15% in 1990 to 12% in 2010 (latest year for which global emissions data are available). The EU, its Member States and Iceland look forward to discussing with other Parties options and opportunities to reduce emissions while maintaining economic growth.

⁴ See forthcoming analysis from the European Environment Agency.