

'Copenhagen' target is coming closer

Copenhagen Accord

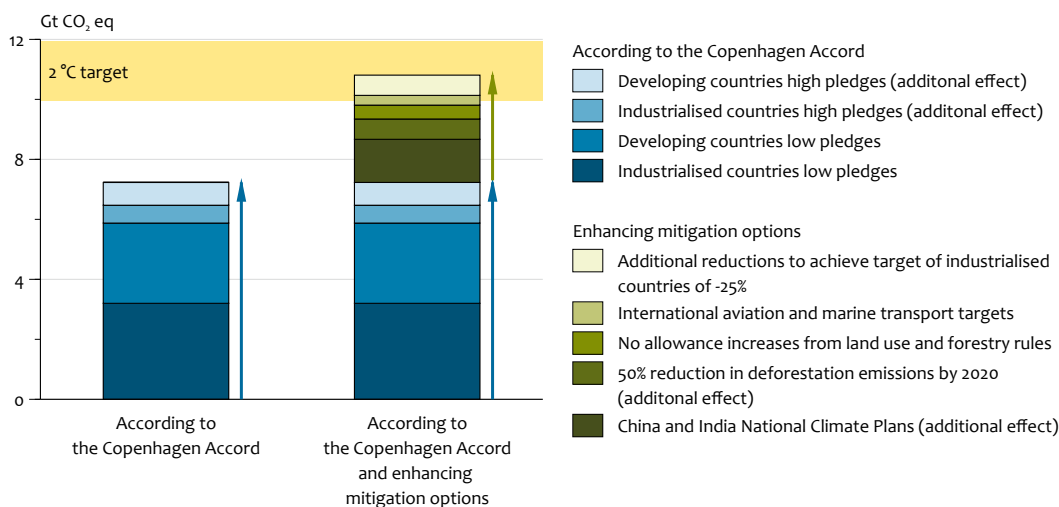
In December 2009, an important United Nations Climate Change Conference took place in Copenhagen, Denmark. This conference resulted in the Copenhagen Accord. As part of this Accord, industrialised countries submitted greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for 2020, and developing countries submitted actions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Two-degree target

The Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL) calculated the combined effect of these pledges, and concluded that this makes up sixty to seventy per cent of the emission reduction required for achieving the target of a maximum temperature rise of two degrees, globally.

Impact of pledged reductions and enhancing mitigation options, 2020

Reduction in global greenhouse gas emissions, including CO₂ from land use and excluding surplus CO₂ emission rights



Chances

There are a number of measures that, added together, would suffice to bridge the gap:

- Industrialised countries would have to up their pledged reductions of 18 per cent to 25 per cent, compared to 1990 levels;
- Emissions would have to be reduced in international shipping and aviation sectors;
- Industrialised countries would be limited in including reforestation in their greenhouse gas reductions;
- Deforestation in developing countries would need to be halved;
- China and India would have to implement their national climate policy, which exceeds their international pledges.

Risks

There are also risks of pledged emission reductions turning out much lower, in actual practice. These risks include:

- The use of old surplus Russian and Ukrainian CO₂ rights (hot air), which could lead to additional emissions of up to 1.5 billion tonnes;
- The unstable political climate in the United States, where the senate still needs to agree to a climate bill;
- The financing required for the agreed to measures, which may not be realised.

The publication "Evaluation of the Copenhagen Accord: Chances and risks for the 2°C climate goal" is available via

<http://www.pbl.nl/en/publications/2010/Evaluation-of-the-Copenhagen-Accord-Chances-and-risks-for-the-2C-climate-goal.html>