

We are ready to be carbon-neutral

By **Jens Stoltenberg**

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Norway is making ambitious pledges to cut and offset emissions – and urges the EU to follow suit.

Norway is working towards an ambitious global climate agreement that will ensure a global mean temperature rise of no more than 2°C from the pre-industrial level. This is essential if we are to avoid dangerous climate change that threatens life on earth.

Developed countries must cut their emissions by 25%-40% by 2020 from 1990 levels, according to figures from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Norway is ready to do its share and exceed our Kyoto commitment by 10 percentage points.

Furthermore, last month, the Norwegian government presented a new political programme for the next four years in which Norway stated that it is prepared to reduce global emissions by the equivalent of 40% of its own 1990 emissions by 2020, if this can contribute to an agreement on an ambitious climate regime that includes specific emissions commitments on the part of the major emitters.

Norway has also made a political pledge to achieve carbon neutrality, undertaking to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of 100% of its own emissions by 2050 at the latest. If the world agrees on an ambitious global climate agreement in which other developed countries also take on extensive obligations, Norway will undertake to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 at the latest.

This means that our emissions of greenhouse gases will be balanced by the amount that we offset globally. The principle of carbon neutrality underpins Norway's ambitious climate policy, and will contribute to overall reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Although a few other countries have pledged carbon neutrality, I would like to urge other developed countries to join Norway in using this principle as a basis for their national climate policy. Achieving carbon neutrality is crucial to our transition to a low-emission world.

Emissions from deforestation in developing countries account for about 20% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Norway is prepared to spend up to roughly €360 million a year on early action to reduce emissions from deforestation until they can be regulated in a post-2012 regime. Norway has presented a proposal for how this could be done.

One of the major challenges in the negotiations is the question of financing. Any deal in Copenhagen will depend on a solution for additional, predictable and sufficient funding for climate change action in developing countries. Norway has proposed a financing system based on international auctioning of emission allowances, which could efficiently complement the traditional systems.

At the moment, progress in the climate negotiations is slow, and too many governments are unwilling to abandon established positions. It is vital to maintain the political pressure. Developed countries must lead by example and pledge ambitious cuts.

This is the purpose of Norway's new national commitment.

Jens Stoltenberg is the prime minister of Norway.

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