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PRESS RELEASE

2006 UNFCCC greenhouse gas data report points to rising emission trends

(Bonn, 30 October 2006) – The secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) today released new data showing an upward trend in emissions of industrialized countries in the period 2000–2004.

The UNFCCC report 'Greenhouse Gas Data, 2006' constitutes the first complete set of data submitted by all 41 industrialized Parties of the Convention to the Bonn-based secretariat.

According to the secretariat, in the period 1990–2004, the overall emissions of industrialized countries decreased by 3.3 per cent. However, this was mostly due to a 36.8 per cent decrease in emissions on the part of economies in transition of eastern and central Europe (EITs).

Within the same time-period, the greenhouse gas emissions of the other industrialized Parties of the Convention grew by 11.0 per cent.

"The worrying fact is that EITs, which were mostly responsible for the overall emissions reductions of industrialized countries so far, as a group have experienced an emission increase of 4.1 per cent in the period 2000-2004," said UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer.

"This means that industrialized countries will need to intensify their efforts to implement strong policies which reduce greenhouse gas emissions," he added.

In particular, transport remains a sector where emission reductions are urgently required but seem to be especially difficult to achieve. Emissions from transportation grew by 23.9 per cent from 1990 to 2004.

According to the released data, the joint emissions of industrialized countries that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol were 15.3 per cent below the 1990 level in 2004, while the individual performance of countries varied.

The Kyoto Protocol presently requires 35 industrialized countries and the European Community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 5% below 1990 levels in its first commitment period between 2008 and 2012.



The UN's chief climate change official pointed out that despite the emission growth in some countries in the period 2000-2004, Parties of the Kyoto Protocol stand a good chance of meeting their individual emissions reduction commitments if they speedily apply the additional domestic mitigation measures they are planning and use the Kyoto Protocol's market-based flexibility mechanisms.

"The challenge is well understood. After its entry into force in 2005, the Kyoto Protocol is now firmly in place and is guiding industrialized countries in identifying and implementing policy options, including the Protocol's flexibility mechanisms, to meet their targets under the treaty," underlined de Boer.

One promising option for meeting the Kyoto Protocol targets is the use of the clean development mechanism (CDM). The CDM permits industrialized countries to invest in sustainable development projects that reduce emissions in developing countries and thereby generate tradable emission credits.

To date, around 375 CDM projects have been registered, with a total estimated emission reduction potential of more than 600 million tonnes. More than 900 more projects are in the pipeline. The total estimated emission reduction potential of all projects currently in the CDM pipeline in the period up to 2012 stands at around 1.4 billion tonnes, which amounts to about 12% of what industrialized Kyoto Protocol Parties emitted in 1990.

Last week, the UNFCCC launched the second project-based mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol: joint implementation (JI), which allows developed countries to acquire carbon credits from greenhouse gas emission reducing projects undertaken in other industrialized countries.

"In the countries that are members of the European Union, the use of the EU emissions trading scheme is growing in importance," UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer said.

"We are looking forward to emissions trading between all countries with emission targets under the Kyoto Protocol when the first commitment period starts in 2008. The United Nations Climate Change Secretariat is presently putting in place the required support infrastructure to make this possible."

"At the same time, it is clear that further global action on climate change is urgently needed to generate significant investment flows into clean technology, making use of existing and new market mechanisms," he added.

At the United Nations Climate Change Conference - Nairobi 2006 (6 to 17 November), negotiations on the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol will continue, along with a dialogue on the future of the climate change process under the UNFCCC.

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