



## Views Regarding Paragraph 1 of the Bali Action Plan

### Submission by SustainUS *in consultation with* The International Youth Delegation April 24, 2009

#### **Introduction:**

This document has been drafted in consultation with the International Youth Delegation, a growing coalition of young people from around the world that are united around a common and shared vision for a bold, just, and long-term global climate treaty that safeguards the survival of all countries and peoples, now and into the future.

This document represents many, though not all, of the views held by the International Youth Delegation. As we grow, we are working to include more voices into this important discussion.

#### **Shared Vision:**

Youth envision a future with a safe and stable climate. In this world, pollution of our shared atmosphere is no longer acceptable. To achieve this, developed countries must pay the full debt of their historical emissions burden on the climate, and facilitate and finance adaptation and sustainable development measures in developing countries.

We are now at a turning point. It is clear that we risk losing entire countries to the impacts of climate change if we fail to act boldly and swiftly. ***Any climate agreement must safeguard the survival of all countries and peoples – this is not negotiable.*** The current level of ambition is unacceptable; we must redefine what is politically possible.

#### **Emission Targets:**

In order to minimize the risk of climate catastrophe, temperature increase due to global warming must be kept below 1.5°C. We must, at the very least, reduce atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases to 350ppm CO<sub>2</sub>-e as quickly as possible, and follow that up with increased efforts to return to pre-industrial levels of greenhouse gases. A 450ppm CO<sub>2</sub>-e target, a key aim of many negotiators, would give us a less than 50-50 chance of staying below 2°C. This level of risk is absolutely unacceptable. We therefore call for an approach based on science and the precautionary principle when setting targets. Do not gamble with our future.

*To achieve our goal of a safe climate future, we believe that:*

- Global emissions must be reduced by at least 85% by 2050 (compared with 1990 levels).
- Developed nations must actively lead by committing to emissions reductions of at least 45% by 2020, and 95% by 2050 (compared with 1990 levels).
- Global emissions must peak and decline by 2015 at the absolute latest.

*What these targets mean:*

45% reductions by 2020, 85% reductions by 2050, and 350ppm CO<sub>2</sub>-e are not just numbers that would be nice or convenient to see in a global treaty. They are not numbers that have been randomly created. They are numbers that symbolize safety, security, and the need for drastic changes in how the world works. To ensure global safety and survival for all countries and peoples, 350ppm is where we need to be. Anything less ambitious poses far too great a risk to future generations and to the most vulnerable among us. When faced with challenges over the course of history, humanity has been able to rise to the occasion to find solutions. This is one of those moments.

**Technology Transfer:**

Poverty is intimately linked with a lack of access to energy and other forms of technology. This means that by financing and supporting sustainable development globally, developed nations will be helping to end inequity. Developed countries must commit to research, develop, and distribute renewable and energy efficient technologies, sufficient to transition global infrastructure to a zero-carbon future. These technologies must be equitably distributed throughout the world, facilitating clean, efficient and sustainable development in developing countries. Developing countries, through capacity building, joint-ventures, and the transfer of intellectual property, should be empowered with the ability to further expand this development.

**Adaptation:**

The impacts of climate change are often disproportionately felt by countries and communities that have contributed least to the problem. In addition, these countries and communities often have the least capacity to adapt. Developed countries need to pay the full debt of their historical responsibility by facilitating and financing adaptation measures in developing countries. Action must be taken to create new and additional funds that are separate from existing development assistance. The current amount of funding available for adaptation measures in developing countries is completely inadequate, being only a fraction of that required.

**Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD):**

Forests are more than just trees and carbon. It is essential that deforestation and forest degradation are dramatically reduced in developing countries both equitably and rapidly. Degradation is any activity that reduces a forest's carbon carrying capacity and/or harms biodiversity. Additionally, any definition of deforestation and forest degradation should distinguish between native forest ecosystems and agricultural tree crops, noting that the former has a far greater carbon carrying capacity.

Developed countries have a responsibility to provide finance and support for developing countries to take immediate action to avoid deforestation, permanently protect, and sustainably manage native forests. Priority must be given to protect ancient, biodiverse, and carbon-rich forests. REDD accounting must accurately reflect the actual carbon carrying capacity of these forests. Accountability, transparency, and good governance including all relevant stakeholders such as local and indigenous people, women and

young people must be required of all participating parties. In addition, developing nations have a responsibility to prevent emissions leakage and to directly engage impacted communities in all levels of decision-making. The centrality of secure land rights under a REDD program cannot be understated. An equitable and effective REDD regime must ensure the security of the land and property of local and Indigenous peoples.

Critically, REDD must be a mechanism for forest protection for the sake of climate stabilization, not a mechanism for profit or avoiding national emission reduction commitments. Countries must first and foremost undertake domestic emissions reductions and not depend or rely upon an offset scheme to achieve their targets. Domestic emissions reductions is the most direct, efficient, and long-term strategy to decrease carbon emissions and ensure a safe and livable future for this planet. By extension, we reject REDD as an offset mechanism for Annex-I countries.

**Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry:**

Land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) accounting and reporting must be mandatory, to ensure that all emissions are accounted for when assessing mitigation progress. LULUCF accounting must accurately reflect the actual carbon carrying capacity of standing forests. Also to improve accuracy, there needs to be a distinction between native forest ecosystems and agricultural tree crops, noting that the former has a far greater carbon carrying capacity.

LULUCF accounting must be structured to provide strong incentives for protecting natural, bio-diverse, pristine ecosystems. Accountability, transparency, and good governance are essential, as is an inclusive decision-making processes. All land use and forestry measures must engage and empower local and indigenous people to sustainably manage their local resources and maximize benefits from ecosystem services and biodiversity.

**Youth involvement in COP:**

Young people offer hope, optimism and vision. International youth delegates are the human face of the United Nations, as we will fully experience the future consequences of the actions taken today. At every COP, we remind governments that they are bargaining with our future, and that their calls for action on climate change must be bold.

In order to guarantee a safe climate for generations - present and future - governments worldwide must act, and act now. Future generations will either suffer or benefit from decisions made today. It is crucial that young people are involved in shaping these decisions. To help facilitate this, we ask that all governments include youth representatives as members of their delegations to all intersessionals and COPs, both now and into the future. If this is not possible, then government delegations must engage youth both domestically and internationally in the policy planning and implementation processes.

**Conclusion:**

The problem of climate change we now face is a direct result of unsustainable lifestyles and the global model of production and consumption. The ecologically and socially destructive means of existing can no longer be tolerated. The current economic crisis presents an opportunity for us to choose to do things differently. We must seize the opportunity to cut emissions globally and invest in clean and renewable energy technologies, massively support adaptation funding and ensure its fair and equitable distribution, train global citizens to operate and maintain renewable energy technology, protect local and indigenous land tenure and security rights, and ensure that polluters pay for the pollution and danger that they impose upon all of us. If we do this, the dangers of both climate change and the economic crisis will be a thing of the past.

And remember, not only will nations be investing in clean technology and equitable policies, but they will be investing in their children and future generations. We will still be here in 2050, living with the decisions made today. Use this opportunity to invest in us, involve us in your decisions, and ask us for ideas and assistance. We are committed to working over the coming decades to de-carbonize society. Please, give us the policies we need to do this.

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