

## Minutes CBN-E Core Group Meeting held on October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2009

**Project:** EECN Secretariat

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**Location:**

Forum International de la Météo, Paris

**Participants:**

CBN-E Core Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tomàs Molina, President (Spain)</li><li>• Gerald Fleming (Ireland)</li><li>• Jaroslaw Kret (Poland)</li><li>• Jesper Theilgaard (Denmark)</li><li>• Rob McElwee (UK)</li><li>• Marina Raibaldi (France)</li></ul>
EC DG ENV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Carina Vopel</li><li>• Katarzyna Wolos</li></ul>
EECN Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Brice Böhmer (BIO IS)</li><li>• Rita Schuster (BIO IS)</li></ul>

## 1. Communication initiatives of DG Environment of the EC in the run-up to Copenhagen

Katarzyna Wolos welcomed everybody to the meeting. Carina Vopel then gave an overview of the communication initiatives of DG Environment in the run-up to Copenhagen. She mentioned the importance of the meeting in Barcelona (2-6 November) representing the last round of negotiations before COP15 and informed the audience that press releases would be published after the meeting.

As to COP15 itself, she stated that in a nutshell, the political objective was a positive commitment of all parties involved in Copenhagen. She admitted that it was difficult to anticipate how the negotiations would turn out between the Western world and developing countries but that it was of prime importance to get the latter on board. She said that the EU would not want to leave Copenhagen without a binding agreement but that it was not likely that everyone would share this objective.

A lively discussion followed about the difficulty of the negotiations, the 2°C objective, the emissions trading scheme and the current state of awareness of climate change among the general public.

### Informational Material

Carina Vopel stated that the objective of communications in the run-up to Copenhagen was to catch the attention of the general public and stakeholders and to inform on the position of the EU. She then presented the informational material that will be made available by the EC:

- **‘Copenhagen Express’**: a newsflash that will be published on a weekly basis on what is happening, prepared by the negotiation team and the communication team.
- **Press Pack**: published before the beginning of December and also available online
- **Web presence**:
  - the climate action website for the general public  
<http://ec.europa.eu/climateaction/>
  - Internal presentation kits (Power Point presentations) that can be shared
  - Audiovisual productions (“video news releases”): policy videos (containing explanations in images plus expert interviews)  
[www.tvlink.org/media.php?type=video&chid=11&titleleft=Environment](http://www.tvlink.org/media.php?type=video&chid=11&titleleft=Environment)
  - Stavros Dimas will blog regularly on climate change  
<http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/dimas>
- **‘Europe by Satellite’** (EC's TV information service):
  - Audiovisual material
  - Stock shots of the venue (by a team that will be on-site in Copenhagen)

### Fringe Events in Copenhagen

Carina Vopel then presented some fringe events taking place during COP15:

- **Copenhagen Climate Exchange Exhibition**: by the Danish Society for Nature Conservation, the EC will be present
- **Climate Express**: railway initiative with presentations, publicity and a major media event on December 5<sup>th</sup>



- **Concert:** organised by DG Comm in collaboration with MTV Europe and aiming to reach young people, the concert will be broadcast from Copenhagen on December 7<sup>th</sup>
- **Icecube:** from December 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>, symbolic action that has already taken place in Poznan

Katarzyna Wolos also mentioned the website World Climate Community on which the EC has its own Forum. 27 most appealing and interesting statements from citizens from the EU countries will be handed over to the EC negotiators at the event on December 5<sup>th</sup> in Brussels (Climate Express). Carina Vopel stated that it was not yet clear how communication on climate change would continue after Copenhagen but that it would remain one of the top communication priorities of the Commission next year.

## 2. Activities and CBN-E members involvement in the awareness raising activities in the run-up to UNFCCC COP15 in Copenhagen

### Provision of material

Carina Vopel suggested that the EC could provide the CBN-E members with material they could then use to explain climate change to their audiences. The graphic designers of the television channels could adapt them for use. In this way, perhaps thirty seconds of shows could be devoted to the science of climate change.

The members discussed which concrete graphs could be useful (forecast versus observation, cost of non-action etc.) and agreed that the information would have to be adapted to local audiences as they often have very different levels of background knowledge and the information could therefore be too simple or too complicated for certain audiences. Jesper Theilgaard pointed out that it was of prime importance to have very simple graphs. The format should be jpg. Carina Vopel therefore suggested accompanying the graphs with simple bullet point explanations that could provide a basic understanding of the science on which negotiations are based. She wanted to know if anyone was talking about the relation between Climate change and ecosystems to their audience; Jesper Theilgaard confirmed that he was.

Gerald Fleming stated that many people were not able to read graphs at all and that they needed to identify with a message, adding that real impacts had to be shown (cities in the world that might be flooded, migrating animals, alien species, for example).

Jesper Theilgaard reminded the group that not only negative, but also positive stories had to be told: that we know what has to be done, and we can take positive steps towards this.

Tomàs Molina explained which three sets of information should be shown in the programmes in his opinion:

1. Facts (on climate and weather)
2. COP15 (general information and some science, depending on the programme and television station)
3. Impacts (using simple facts that should be related to something, e.g. personal energy consumption)

As to the latter point, Carina Vopel agreed but raised the question of where these facts and figures could come from.

Katarzyna Wolos addressed the problem that in some countries (Poland, for example) people do not believe in climate change. Jaroslaw Kret agreed and explained that it would therefore be quite difficult to integrate these graphs into television programmes. He added that the Polish media who were spreading the belief of the non-existence of climate change had a very strong influence in Poland and that there were even weather forecasters who were making fun of it.

Carina Vopel concluded by addressing what could be done in terms of communication before COP15, namely producing graphs to be reused by broadcasters, and added that further suggestions as to the types of graphs to use were welcome, but only if they came from confirmed scientific sources.

Katarzyna Wolos asked finally if the graphs would actually be used by the members. Jesper Theilgaard answered that they might be used by at least 20% of the network.

#### **CBN-E members at COP15?**

Tomàs Molina asked if there were any advantages that could be offered to CBN-E members for COP15. Katarzyna Wolos clarified that there would be no badges for members, but that they could get journalist badges, though registrations would have to be made with UNFCCC well in advance. She also mentioned the option of coming with a national delegation, and explained this would have to be discussed with the local governments.

Carina Vopel also stressed that the advantage of being on-site was limited, given that press releases would be made available on-line rapidly anyway and that further details of interest to the general public were not likely to become available in the course of the negotiation.

### 3. CBN-E Annual Meeting 2010

Carina Vopel mentioned that from the beginning of 2010 onwards, there might be a new DG for climate. The future of CBN-E was therefore not clear and it had not been clarified on which DG the network would then possibly depend and who would financially support it. But she also stated that the network is greatly valued by the EC. She hopes that the preparations for the Annual Meeting 2010 will be able to start despite these reservations. She also stated that more concrete information as to the (re)organisation of the DGs will be given at the latest as of the beginning of next year. She stated that at worst, the EC would not be able to be as supportive as it is now, but she assured the group that the Secretariat would support the network until at least August 2010.

As to a possible location for the Annual Meeting 2010, the 'Deutsche Welle Global Media Forum', taking place between June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> in Bonn, was suggested. It was agreed that if another city/location were chosen, the meeting could be another time. Carina Vopel suggested organising the meeting in Brussels, which would entail less organisational effort. The CG members agreed that if the meeting does not take place during another conference or event, it would not be necessary to meet anywhere other than Brussels.

### 4. Further development of the website and other materials

Jesper Theilgaard's suggestion, made before the meeting, to create a space on the CBN-E website permitting an exchange on weather phenomena, temperature records etc. was discussed. His suggestion was based on the idea of getting access to useful meteorological data that cannot be found or obtained anywhere else. Rob McElwee replied that every country has a national MET service that compiles this data but admitted together with the other members that there are sometimes difficulties accessing it (due to linguistic barriers, restricted access etc.). Carina Vopel therefore suggested making a call around the members to find out who retains this data in the different countries and then to further proceed according to the results of this enquiry.

The production of a new network brochure was discussed. The Secretariat explained that a large supply of brochures remained (produced in June 2009) and suggested therefore, as they are not yet outdated, to keep using them in 2010 to avoid wasting resources. Gerald Fleming suggested producing a leaflet for the general public as well. Carina Vopel replied that they would then have to be in different languages to be useful. The Core Group finally decided to wait until December when more information would be available before making a decision.

## 5. Synergies with other networks and organisations active in the field of communicating climate change

The question of synergies with other networks and organisations brought up during the Annual Meeting 2009 was only briefly touched upon. The Core Group agreed that it would be interesting to get in contact with the Chinese, who are already working on climate change, and the Americans, which would however be much more difficult.

Brice Böhmer asked if anyone had been in touch with UNESCO on this subject after the International Conference on Broadcast Media and Climate Change held at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris in September. Gerald Fleming, who was present at the Conference, answered that he didn't know how active they really were in this field and where or not the conference was an isolated event.

Katarzyna Wolos suggested having a closer look at possible synergies and thinking practically about how they could be forged.