

# Strategies To Fight Climate Change

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**W**E CAN no longer dispute the reality of climate change and its dramatic consequences. We are increasingly conscious of mounting evidence that our energy models are unsustainable. Throughout the world, a genuine awareness of the need to reduce our ecological footprint is finally manifesting itself.

Despite this growing consciousness, the international community still gropes for common ground and unified action. The recipe of a 'global public good' is yet to be found. Nevertheless, we can assume that its ingredients will include technical solutions, customised financing, and a good dose of global action. It is also clear that some conditions must be met for the recipe to succeed.

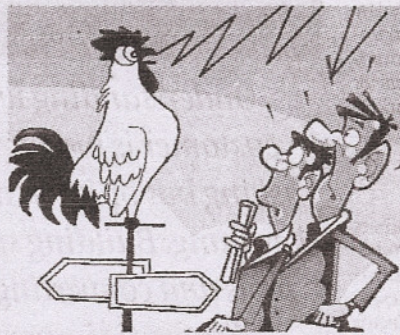
The first is that industrialised countries make efforts to become exemplary protectors of the environment as this is the only way to persuade other countries to follow suit. In that respect, the EU 'Energy and Climate Packet', with its commitment to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions by at least 20%, (a reduction that could be increased to 30% if other developed countries committed themselves) is very good news.

The second is to include the emerging and developing countries within any solution. They will be the first to suffer from environmental degradation linked to climate change. Since China is about to become the largest emitter of GHG, any global initiative will have to fully integrate it along with India, Brazil and Indonesia. The efforts by these economies in their fight against GHG need to be enhanced to place them on a path of sustainable development. The signs given by these countries at the Bali conference on climate change in 2007

were encouraging.

But we should not focus our attention exclusively on the emerging economies. In fact, the African population will more than double between 2008 and 2050, its standard of living will rise, and these conditions will have a similar effect on the carbon consumption of an entire continent. These countries need to be encouraged and assisted to adopt cleaner methods of energy production and consumption.

An obvious way forward is to support



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public energy efficient policies and to promote the use of renewable energy. Mobilisation at the local level will depend on the ability to refocus the debate on long-term energy strategies. With its capacity to support public policies in the long run, development assistance will play a key role.

Widespread use of these new energy models will require important technology transfers for a global impact. Current leading-edge technologies (low-priced solar energy, carbon stockpiling) and demand-control strategies should be made available on a large scale. Although an agreement encouraging these trans-

fers was signed at the Bali conference, incentives to foster their production and use by all parties are yet to be found.

Finally, economic incentives will play a key role in finding answers to these problems. While the preservation of global public goods is an increasingly widespread concern, the current thinking on possible financing options offers only partial answers. Climate protection requires stable and sustainable resources. In order to preserve the "lungs of the planet" (the Amazon forests, the Congo and Indonesian basins) and translate our shared responsibility for their preservation into practical action, we must find ways to finance environmental protection. Current compensation plans at the local level, which provide payment for ecological services, could be scaled up. Designing a compensation plan to reward "deforestation avoidance" would motivate the countries concerned to benefit from the value of their natural resources. Only by using such mechanisms will we demonstrate that our priority is the future.

There are a number of practical solutions we can implement to protect our climate. Development assistance, which can support essential technology transfers, facilitate financing and be an instrument of collective action, could be the perfect ingredient for this good 'recipe.' Let us be realistic: without it, it would be futile to expect to achieve results, given the extent of poverty in non OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development) countries. There will be no improvement in the environment without growth, nor will there be any sustainable growth without radical change in the underlying environmental paradigms. Ultimately, it's a matter of changing our ways of producing and consuming on a planetary basis.

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