



Italian Presidency
of the Council
of the European Union



Informal Meeting of EU Environment Ministers

Background document

Session “Approaching Ban Ki-Moon Summit ”

Milan, 16 July 2014 – 9:30-11:15

Objectives of the Summit

The UN SG Summit, 23.09,2014, is the first time since the Copenhagen Climate Summit in 2009 that world leaders will come together to discuss climate change. The objectives of the Summit are to build political momentum for multilateral action and a new climate agreement in 2015 at leaders' level, and to provide the opportunity for different world leaders, international organisations, as well as private sector representatives, to make bold announcements on action and alliances to tackle climate change. The EU and its Member States need to consider how best to take full advantage of this gathering to secure meaningful commitment from all world leaders towards delivering the 2015 agreement.

Although there will not be a negotiated outcome, the UN SG has promised that the chair's summary to be produced will capture the essence of the announcements. From the EU perspective, the chair's summary should reaffirm the commitment of all world leaders to reaching agreement in Paris in 2015 and to meeting the below 2 degrees target. In addition, reaffirmed, public commitment by all leaders to table their national contributions according to the timeframe agreed at the Warsaw negotiations in November 2013, would be desirable to provide the broader public reassurances of continued commitment of the UN Parties, and the value-added of the UNFCCC process. Messaging by the EU and other Major Economies that would allow the Secretary General to conclude accordingly should be encouraged through outreach.

To build confidence with our developing country partners ahead of Lima and Paris, the Summit outcome will also need to signal a political understanding on climate finance and the challenges related to adaptation, in particular in the most vulnerable countries. Providing reassurances on capitalisation of the Green Climate Fund, and reference to the wide range of other existing finance vehicles that are already underway will need to be part of the messaging from the side of the industrialised economies.

Visibility and presence of the EU and its Member States at the Summit

The Summit will be organised in a series of parallel sessions. UN SG plans are currently for the morning plenary session to be restricted to Heads of State/Government, with Ministers able to participate in the parallel afternoon climate action areas and thematic discussions. It is not yet

clear what role Ministers can have in the Global Compact lunch on climate finance, which will be organised during the day.

Given the significance and timing of the Summit, the EU and its Member States should work decisively to ensure its visibility and presence. Securing a high level of attendance by EU Heads of State / Heads of Government at the Summit will be key to demonstrate the EU and its Member States' role as the strongest proponent of global climate action – indications are now that some 100+ Heads will participate, including from most major economies such as China, India, Brazil, Mexico [and the US].

Ensuring coherence of external messaging by developing some headline EU level messages that can be used throughout the Summit, in addition to national messages and showcasing of Member State specific climate action, will help in profiling a strong and united EU. These messages should in particular: stress the benefits of low carbon transition and the EU success in decoupling growth from emissions; underline our readiness for ambitious action in the context of the new climate agreement; and provide reassurances of our strong commitment in continued support to our international partners' efforts.

Member states have already agreed to informal coordination of the preparations for the Summit, and to exchanging further the content of some headline EU level messages. The Italian Presidency will continue overseeing this informal coordination in close cooperation with the Commission.

Discussion

The Ministers are invited to discuss and agree:

- 1. What key points should be included in the EU messaging to help the Secretary General to arrive at meaningful conclusions for the Summit in the Chair's summary? What in particular could be captured on climate finance?**

- 2. Ensuring EU and Member States' visibility and presence across the Summit tracks:**
 - **What commitments and/or announcements are Member States planning to make during the Summit?**
 - **What should be the overarching EU messages for the Summit in the Statements by the leaders, and other communications during the Summit's action platforms?**
 - **What are the specific climate action areas where Member States plan to signal their support, and how to ensure the most effective overall participation of the EU and its Member States across the Summit sessions?**