

“Different types of pledges and their implications in the context of the ambition gap”

Gonçalo Cavalheiro
Mitigation Partnership Summer School
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THIS PRESENTATION

- **Buying my chocolate cake**
- **What are pledges?**
- **What pledges have countries been doing?**
 - Developed countries (EU/US)
 - Developing countries (Brazil, India, China)
- **The challenges brought by different types of pledges**
- **Can we help?**

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WHO PAYS FOR MY CAKE?



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CONTRIBUTIONS

- Write down in a piece of paper, how much you are willing to contribute to the acquisition of my birthday cake.
- Please be fair to others and to yourself (make sure you do not under-contribute, but also take into account that others must do their part).
- Announce your contributions in your national currency.
- The perfect chocolate cake costs USD100!

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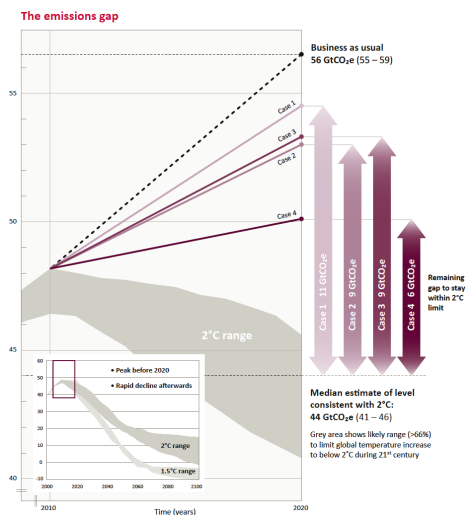
CONTRIBUTIONS

- Please announce your contribution in USD (use your last known exchange rate).

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This is what happens when we use different measures to announce our contribution to the 2°C goal



Source: UNEP - <http://www.unep.org/newscentre/default.aspx?DocumentID=2659&ArticleID=8955>

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BUT WHAT ARE THOSE DIFFERENT MEASURES, DIFFERENT PLEDGES

- Since Copenhagen, countries have pledged to reduce GHG emissions according to their national circumstances.
- Developed countries were requested to pledge economy wide targets
- Developing countries were invited to announce voluntary goals and NAMAs.

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WHAT DID COUNTRIES PLEDGE? DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

- **Absolute emission reductions up to 2020 compared to a base year**

PLUS

- **A significant amount of additional details which show a variety of approaches in relation to what the target includes and towards achieving them.**

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WHAT DID COUNTRIES PLEDGE? DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PLEDGES

- **The absolute reduction target (%)**
 - Ranges, assumptions and conditions
- **The base year**
- **The coverage of sectors (economy wide?)**
- **The coverage of gases and methodologies**
- **Use of LULUCF and approach (land or activity based)**
- **Use of Carbon markets**

(Source: UNFCCC Technical Paper – FCCC/TP/2012/5)

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WHAT DID COUNTRIES PLEDGE? DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. THE ABSOLUTE REDUCTION TARGET

EU

Target: -20%

Range: up to 30%

Base year: 1990

Conditions for high end: global agreement, comparable effort by others

US

Target: -17%

Range: n.a.

Base year: 2005

Conditions: global agreement; enactment of national legislation

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WHAT DID COUNTRIES PLEDGE? DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. COVERAGE OF SECTORS; GASES; METHODS

EU

Sectors: Excludes LULUCF, includes civil aviation

Gases: consistent with current reporting guidelines (no NF₃)

Methods: GWP from SAR (evaluating GWP from AR4 as per 15/CP.17)

US

Sectors: All IPCC sectors and sources

Gases: According to 15/CP.17 (CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, HFCs, PFCs, SF₆ and NF₃)

Methods: IPCC AR4

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WHAT DID COUNTRIES PLEDGE? DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. USE OF AND APPROACH TO LULUCF

EU

No LULUCF in Convention target

US

Comprehensive land-based approach, making use of the broadest array of mitigation actions.

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WHAT DID COUNTRIES PLEDGE? DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. CARBON MARKETS

EU

Important role for carbon markets (namely emissions trading and higher quality standards CDM)

US

No current legislation allowing for the use of carbon markets / international offsets (despite some initiatives at state level)

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WHAT DID COUNTRIES PLEDGE? DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

- **List of NAMAs (with and without ex-ante quantification of potential emissions reduction)**
- **Emissions reduction goal**
 - % reduction below a baseline (approach by majority of countries announcing a reduction goal)
 - % reduction in carbon intensity of economy
- **Emissions reduction goal + list of NAMAs to meet such goal**

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WHAT DID COUNTRIES PLEDGE? DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

- **Brazil**
 - Reduction of 36.1 to 38.9 below projected emissions in 2020
 - A reduction in deforestation in the Amazon (range of estimated reduction: 564 Mt carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂eq) in 2020);
- **China**
 - Lower CO₂ emissions by unit of GDP by 40-45% by 2020 compared to 2005.
- **India**
 - Lower CO₂ emissions by unit of GDP by 20-25% by 2020 compared to 2005 (excluding agriculture).

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WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Challenges in two fronts:

- Can efforts be compared?
- **Is this enough to bring us to a safe place?**

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WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? COMPARABILITY OF EFFORTS.

Just one example: choice of base year for developed countries

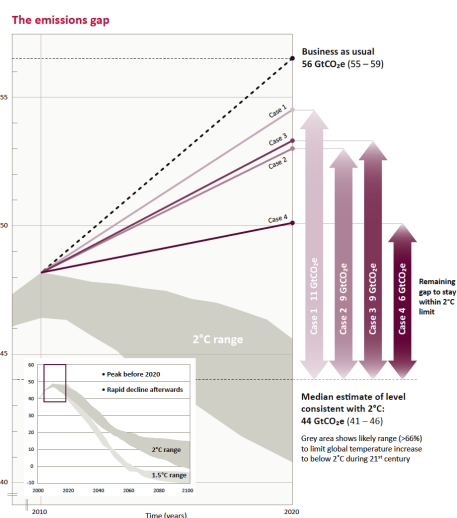
- Those choosing 1990 as base year, want credit for early action; i.e. efforts have been taking place for the last 2 decades.
- Those choosing 2000 or 2005, have not been successful in reducing emissions in the 90s.
- Those with 1990 base year should have a smoother path until 2020, while those with 2000 or 2005 as base year will have more intense efforts as the deadline nears.
- **Can we compare past efforts with current and future efforts?**

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WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? THE GAP.

- At best, the gap is as large as 6G tCO₂ (range: 3- 11 tCO₂)
- i.e. ~50% away from 2°C compared to BAU



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Source: UNEP - <http://www.unep.org/newscentre/default.aspx?DocumentID=2659&ArticleID=8655>

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CONCLUSION

Different types of pledges are a reality and they are not necessarily a bad thing.

In order to accurately assess the gap and to close it, the uncertainties in relation to the pledges need to be reduced as soon as possible.

A set of minimum criteria need to be defined to which all countries should answer.

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DISCUSSION

Can we compare past, present and future reduction effort? How to consider them in attributing to each country the right contribution to the global effort?

**What may the use of the
carbon markets or
the inclusion of LULUCF in the target
mean in terms of effort?**

(Should effort only be considered in relation to domestic reductions, or reductions achieved via the carbon market are equally relevant? Do emission reductions in the forestry sector represent a smaller effort than in the other sectors?)

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