



CLIMATE CHANGE

The L'Aquila Summit has given an essential impulse to international negotiations on climate change, bringing G8 positions closer and setting the stage for an effective global agreement at the UN Conference to be held in Copenhagen

THE CHALLENGE

- **Greenhouse gas emissions** caused by human activities have increased by 70% since 1970 and that the concentrations of these gases are causing global warming, with **potentially devastating consequences for present and future generations** (data from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fourth Evaluation Report, 2007).
- This issue must be addressed in a decisive and comprehensive manner, as recent analysis has clearly shown that the **costs of inaction** far outweigh the costs of moving towards low-carbon societies.
- The **Kyoto Protocol of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**, which was signed in 1997 and entered into force in 2005, contains quantified commitments for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (for the period 2008-2012) for the industrialised countries that have acceded to it but no quantified commitments by developing countries. In the long term it is necessary to overcome this distinction to take into account the increase in emissions also in developing countries.
- At the Bali Conference of the Parties in 2007, the States Party to the UNFCCC committed to **reach an agreement by the end of 2009 for the post-2012 period**. That agreement should be reached at the **Conference in Copenhagen** in December.

G8 RESPONSE

- The G8 has shown **unity** and sent a strong signal of **leadership** in the fight against climate change. There has been an important convergence in G8 positions, which has provided a strong impulse to the upcoming negotiations to reach an ambitious and effective global agreement in Copenhagen.
- First and foremost, in the light of the recommendations of the international scientific community, the G8 has recognised the importance of limiting the rise in global temperatures to **2°C** (above pre-industrial levels), in order to avoid the risk of serious economic consequences and irreversible damage to the environment and the climatic system.
- In this context, the G8 countries have committed to **reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 80% or more by 2050** with reference to 1990 or more recent years.

- They also strongly reiterated the global long-term goal, adopted in Toyako, to share with the other major emitting countries the objective of **reducing global emissions by 50% by 2050**.
- Furthermore, G8 countries committed to undertake **significant comparable mid-term reductions**, coherent with the long term objectives.
- The G8 affirmed the need for global greenhouse gas emissions to reach their **peak as soon as possible**, and then decrease rapidly.
- The G8 countries confirmed their willingness to **contribute their fair share of the financing**, in the context of an ambitious, global and effective agreement in the UN framework, to ensure the necessary actions to combat climate change also in developing countries.
- These commitments constitute a solid basis to actively involve the countries of the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate (MEF) in the efforts to combat climate change and to reach a global agreement for the post 2012 period at the Copenhagen Conference.