



# Fact sheet 1

Friday, 1 September 2006

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## Issues at Stake at the International Conference on Climate Change in Nairobi

The Kyoto Protocol has been in force since 16 February 2005. It has been ratified by the industrialised countries, apart from the United States of America and Australia, and by a large number of developing countries. According to the Protocol, only industrialised countries have to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases. However, their efforts will not be sufficient to stabilise atmospheric concentrations at a level that is not dangerous, as required by Article 2 of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change. By 2015-2020, the developing countries will emit as much as the industrialised countries.

During the last international conference on climate change (Montreal, December 2005), discussions were launched with a view to involving all developing countries in the efforts to reduce emissions. It is particularly important to consider the emerging countries, and countries whose emissions comprise a considerable part of global emissions, especially the United States of America and Australia, who have not ratified the Kyoto Protocol. The other important area of the Convention is adaptation to climate change.

### Reducing emissions of greenhouse gases

The discussions concerned with reducing emissions comprise two aspects:

#### **1. Long-term collaboration in the context of the Convention**

In the general context of the Convention, a dialogue has been launched on long-term collaboration between countries in order to examine strategies that would enable all countries, in particular developing countries that are major emitters, to take part in the efforts to reduce greenhouse gases.

This dialogue takes account of four main aspects:

- sustainable development,
- measures to adapt to climate change,
- technologies to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases

- mechanisms regulated by the market.

During a first workshop, in May 2006, the industrialised countries stressed the necessity for efforts to reduce emissions by developing countries. These countries insisted on reinforcing the implementation of the Convention, by financial and technological assistance from industrialised countries.

The next workshop will take place during the twelfth Conference of the Parties to the Convention, in Nairobi. The Parties will attempt to focus the discussion on concrete action, in the area of technologies and market instruments for the protection of the climate.

## **2. Negotiation for the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol**

In the context of the Kyoto Protocol, the process of negotiation for the second commitment period of the Protocol has begun. It has to determine the commitments of the Parties to reduce emissions for the period after 2012.

The working group in which future commitments for the period after 2012 will be negotiated met for the first time in May 2006. The industrialised countries (Annex 1 countries) indicated that they could not give a quantified objective for reduction before knowing a number of conditions in which these objectives will be implemented (use of flexibility mechanisms, carbon sinks, duration of the commitment period, modifications to other articles of the Protocol, which would imply in particular the involvement of non-industrialised countries in the context of the Protocol).

The developing countries asked that Annex I countries immediately indicate their quantified objective. The next meeting of the group will be in Nairobi in November, during the second Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. The process will last for several years.

**Switzerland**, like other industrialised countries, is working to establish the national objective for the period after 2012, but some time is needed to do that, and above all we have to wait to know how the future international climate regime will be structured.

## **Adapting to climate change**

In addition to measures to reduce emissions, all countries have to face the negative effects of climate change. Therefore, they have to adopt adaptation measures to minimise the effects of climate change. In Nairobi, COP 12 must make progress in the implementation of the action plan for the next five years, in order to deal with scientific, technical and socio-economic issues concerning adaptation, to exchange experience in this area, to make data and climate models available and to assess the vulnerability of countries to the effects of climate change.

**Switzerland** asks in this discussion that adaptation measures be part of climate policy for all countries, industrialised and developing.

### **From Rio to the present day**

The Earth Summit in Rio (1992) marked our becoming aware of the need for sustainable development on our planet. Three major conventions were launched: the United Nations Convention on Climate Change, The United Nations Convention on Biodiversity, and the United Nations Convention on Desertification. These conventions have now come into force. They have very concrete effects:

- integration of the objectives of the conventions in national policy, for instance in the area of climate change, the Swiss Law on CO<sub>2</sub> and the measures taken by industrialised countries and numerous developing countries to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases.
- reinforcement – at the international level – of cooperation between industrialised countries and developing countries for sustainable development. The fund for the global environment (Global Environment Facility, GEF) finances more than 1600 projects in 140 pays. The 6.2 billion US dollars that have been invested since its foundation (1991) have generated an additional 20 billion dollars in the form of co-financing.

However, compared with the objectives of the conventions, much remains to be done.