

**PRESS RELEASE embargoed until Tuesday, 6 December 13.00 (+2GMT)**

## **Pressure mounts for COP President to exclude coal power projects from UN offsetting scheme**

*Durban, South Africa, 6 December. As countries are negotiating the global climate crisis, an open letter sent by a broad coalition of green groups including Greenpeace, WWF and Friends of the Earth to the COP Presidency today calls for an exclusion of coal power projects from the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). Groups claim such projects undermine the integrity of the CDM and the already weak climate targets.*

More than 90 signatories from 34 countries warned that carbon credits from coal power offset projects divert scarce climate finance and undermine climate targets while locking-in billions of tons of CO<sub>2</sub> and causing severe human health and ecosystems damage.

*“Coal is the fossil fuel with the highest greenhouse gas emissions and the anathema of “clean development” comments Bas Eickhout, a member of the European Parliament. “While the clock is ticking to get a much needed climate deal done, it is hard to believe that the UNFCCC allows coal power projects to receive climate finance.”*

Under the UN’s offsetting scheme multi-billion-dollar coal power projects can receive carbon credits if they show they would have been built less efficient in the absence of the carbon revenue. But building highly efficient coal power plants makes economic and strategic sense because coal prices have been rising rapidly over the past years, and governments are mandating more efficient technologies.

*“Carbon credits from business as usual projects fundamentally undermine already insufficient pledges to reduce emissions” said Eva Filzmoser from CDM Watch, the initiator of the letter “In order to avoid hundreds of millions of carbon credits from unsustainable coal projects that deliver neither emission reductions, nor sustainable development benefits, we call on countries to exclude coal power projects from the CDM here in Durban.”*

Last week, the UN’s CDM Executive Board suspended the crediting rules for coal power projects after an investigation found that the flawed rules could lead to over-issuance of millions of carbon credits that do not reflect real and additional emission reductions. An independent study found that it is not feasible to correct the flaws in the rules because they are inherent to this project type.

The emissions reductions pledged by countries so far set the world on a trajectory for a 4.3° C temperature increase by 2100. Emissions must peak by 2015 and sharply decline thereafter in order to reach the 2° C goal agreed in Cancun. The IEA explicitly states that many coal power plants will have to be shut down before the end of their lifetime, if the world is to have a chance to avoid catastrophic climate impacts.

*“We can’t afford to wait any longer to begin serious mitigation efforts. That means it is time to move the CDM beyond coal,” comments Justin Guay from Sierra Club.*

ENDS.

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**Additional Information**

- [Open Letter](#) to COP-17 Presidency
- Download the [SEI Policy Brief](#)
- Download the [SEI study and executive summary](#)
- Download the [Methodologies Panel report](#)
- Download [CDM Watch Policy Brief on Coal](#)

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