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EU Leaders Push For Climate Change

Last year, EU leaders set a goal of cutting so-called greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent from 1990 levels by 2020.

Because of economic difficulties emanating from the worldwide banking crisis, some EU members such as Poland and Italy have stated that they cannot afford to enforce the stringent emissions targets on their industrial sector.

But the global economic difficulties have not caused EU leaders to abandon their advocacy of carbon controls. BBC reported President Sarkozy's statement: "The climate package is so important that we cannot simply drop it, under the pretext of a financial crisis." And European Commission chief Jose Manuel Barroso said at the close of the summit: "We are not going to let up on the battle against climate change."



Sarkozy said he would continue to press for an agreement on climate change and energy regulation by the end of 2008, stating: "On the climate package, we have obtained unanimity.... It is now for President Barroso and myself to find solutions for those countries which have expressed concerns."

Several Eastern European nations led by Poland stated that they were able to negotiate a reduction of their share of the EU's regulatory burden. Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk was quoted by Reuters as saying: "We have regained real influence on the shape of the package." The other nations supporting the Polish position included Hungary, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, and Slovakia.

Tusk said that establishing standards that were feasible for poorer countries were an important factor in persuading nations outside Europe to follow the EU's example.

"If the climate package is unbearable for the Polish economy, how can we convince a hundred poor countries it is alright for them," he said. "The rich, especially in Europe, want to protect the climate, but the poor are afraid."

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi was less enthusiastic and reportedly threatened to exercise a veto to demand less of a burden on Italian industry.

The EU's proposed actions still did not satisfy environmental extremists, however, and they accused Sarkozy and his associates at the EU with creating loopholes in the legislation to protect Europe's domestic industries.

As Reuters quoted Greenpeace spokesman Mark Breddy: "Mr. Sarkozy and others are showing that they are unwilling to walk the walk when it comes to decisive action."

Ironically, Greenpeace has long been a leading opponent of clean, environmentally friendly nuclear



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power, with which France generates 80 percent of its electricity.

A statement on the EU's website summed up this summit's work as follows:

The European Council reaffirmed the objective of reaching an overall agreement on the energy-climate change package for the December European Council and agreed on the Presidency and the Commission intensifying work towards this end.

Many leading scientists have disagreed publicly with the more widely publicized position that made-made emissions have had a warming effect on the Earth's climate. These include John Coleman, the founder of the Weather Channel; S. Fred Singer, a top environmental scientist and former director of the U.S. Weather Satellite Service; Dr. Patrick Michaels, a research professor of environmental sciences at the University of Virginia; and Professor Benny Peiser of Liverpool's John Moores University.

Other respected sources have published contradictory reports. For example, in November 1976, a report in *National Geographic* warned of global *cooling*, stating: "Most scientists agree that today's ice movement may reflect a worldwide cooling trend, but their explanations vary widely." However, in its September 2004 issue, *National Geographic* reversed itself by reporting: "From Alaska to the snowy peaks of the Andes the world is heating up right now, and fast," The journal continued: "Globally, the temperature is up 1° F over the past century, but some of the coldest, most remote spots have warmed much more. The results aren't pretty. Ice is melting, rivers are running dry, and coasts are eroding, threatening communities."



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