



EU-CELAC Climate Diplomacy can help tip the balance in Paris

*by Guy Edwards and Marcela Jaramillo**

Peruvian and French leaders, ministers and diplomats are working closely together in the run up to the United Nations climate change conference in Paris. This constructive diplomacy, if matched by other EU and CELAC countries, could tip the balance in Paris in favor of a transformative new global agreement on climate change.

This Peruvian and French cooperation is a timely demonstration that developing and developed countries can cooperate on climate change. The UN climate negotiations have often stalled as divisions between the global North and global South dominant the proceedings. However if Paris is to be successful a North versus South stand-off must be avoided. With a total of 61 countries spanning the global North and South, the EU and CELAC countries can attempt to locate areas of convergence and compromise, and form an alliance for an equitable, fair and ambitious legally binding agreement.

At the last EU -CELAC Summit in June, countries expressed their willingness to adopt a legally binding agreement applicable to all parties and in accordance with the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR+RC). The summit declaration also refers to limiting the increase in the global average temperature to below 2° C or below 1.5° C and the importance of the commitment by developed countries to mobilize USD 100 billion per year from 2020.

EU and CELAC cooperation in Paris

At previous UN climate change conferences, the EU and some CELAC countries have come together at pivotal moments to ensure progress is made to reach ambitious outcomes. Despite some important differences between CELAC countries, the EU and CELAC should draw on these positive experiences.

The EU and CELAC can make progress on the central issue of finance as both recognize the importance of moving towards low carbon and resilient development pathways. The EU must “show the money” and provide greater assurances on how the \$100 billion per year will materialize by 2020. It can also synchronize finance commitments with the 5-year ambition cycles to regularly provide financial support, and contribute to building effective and transparent national climate action plans compatible with building prosperity.



Adaptation and Loss and Damage are top issues for CELAC countries as the impacts of climate change become increasingly intense. Although the EU has been supportive of a Loss and Damage Mechanism as well as strengthening adaptation, it has recently been less vocal ceding ground to countries less willing to support the inclusion of Loss and Damage. The EU cannot hope to work closely with CELAC if climate risk is not taken more seriously with adaptation and mitigation being treated in a balanced manner, and the inclusion of a Loss and Damage in a new agreement.

Considerable support is building to include a long-term mitigation goal in the agreement to either decarbonize the global economy, achieve net zero emissions or carbon neutrality in order to keep global temperature increases below 2°C or 1.5°C. The EU and CELAC can ensure that the goal is sufficiently ambitious by backing a long-term goal to phase out fossil fuels and achieve a 100% renewable-powered world by 2050, which can send the necessary signals to society, business and industry. To ensure national climate plans are continuously upgraded until the long term goal is realized, a new agreement should include 5-year ambition cycles to ensure action is continuously improved.

Boosting EU-CELAC climate action in 2016 and beyond

A new global climate agreement can usher in a new phase of EU-CELAC cooperation, which can offer important examples of climate action between developing and developed countries. Europe and CELAC countries can increase climate action this decade laying the groundwork for the implementation of the INDCs from 2020 and looking ahead to the long-term mitigation goal.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, various countries have set impressive renewable energy targets. Given Latin America and the Caribbean's awesome potential for increased deployment of renewable energy especially solar, wind, and geothermal and the need to electrify the transport sector, the EU can play an instrumental role to support these efforts.

Energy demand in Latin America and the Caribbean is rising fast and emissions from transportation and power generation are also growing significantly as cities expand and the number of private vehicles on the road increases. These sectors, which are susceptible to infrastructure and technological lock-ins, need to transition toward low-emission alternatives as soon as possible to allow emissions to peak and then drop considerably.

The EU can play a leading role in promoting renewable energy cooperation, in part by transferring technology, which would support CELAC countries' efforts to reduce pollution and create jobs. Europe's financial tools and actors including the Latin America Investment



Facility and the European Investment Bank in addition to bilateral donors can increase climate-related financing especially during Latin America's economic downturn. There are also promising opportunities for EU and CELAC financial sectors to leverage finance and investment especially for energy efficiency, clean energy and sustainable transport systems.

In June this year, the former presidents of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Chile's Ricardo Lagos urged the EU and CELAC to form a [high-ambition](#) alliance on climate calling for leaders to send their negotiators to Paris to push for a fair, equitable, and ambitious outcome. Citizens across both regions are very concerned by climate impacts and demand action. Together both regions can push for a new agreement that sends a clear and authoritative message to the private sector and industry that the transition to a low-emission and climate resilient future is necessary, feasible and beneficial to us all.

***Guy Edwards** is Research Fellow at the Institute at Brown for Environment and Society and Codirector of the Climate and Development Lab, Brown University, and an associate at the global sustainability group, Nivela. He has a MA degree in Latin American Areas Studies from the University of London and has worked for the Overseas Development Institute, the consultancy River Path Associates and as the resident manager of the Huaorani Ecolodge in the Ecuadorian Amazon. He is the co-author of a new book (with Timmons Roberts) called *A Fragmented Continent: Latin America and the global politics of climate change* with MIT Press (November, 2015).

***Marcela Jaramillo** is Policy Advisor on Climate Finance at E3G, and an associate at the global sustainability group, Nivela. She specialises in strategic climate finance approaches that drive transformational change at national and international level, in particular within Latin America. She has a BSc in Mechanical Engineering, specialising in the field of energy, from the Universidad Nacional of Colombia and an MSc with distinction in Sustainable Energy Technologies from the University of Southampton. In the past Marcela worked within the energy sector leading research, design and implementation of renewable energy systems.

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