

**For the attention of G20 Secretariat
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
London SW1A 2AS**

Open letter to G-20 Heads of State from an international global coalition for a green economy, comprising environment, development, business and labour groups.ⁱ

Open letter to G-20 Heads of State:

The world is facing multiple challenges: a global recession, a broken financial system, job losses, food and fuel shocks, persistent poverty, mounting ecological problems that include an incipient freshwater crisis, loss of species, and dangerous climate change. These interrelated challenges must be tackled swiftly, effectively and in a co-ordinated way. The world has reached a critical tipping point.

Our organisations met recently in Switzerland, to build a shared view on the key decisions that need to be made in a 'global green new deal'. We come from very different backgrounds, but share a common sense of the necessity for clear and decisive action and the unprecedented opportunity that now exists for change.

We call for G-20 moral and practical leadership in making the right decisions on financial reform and the deployment of the stimulus packages when you meet in London in early April. Investments being made now need to address the sustainability of post-recession growth as well as the present recession.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" of the early 1930s offered a comprehensive package of measures for the USA. Today, our problems are global and our key challenge is to ensure the sustainability of any solution, and prosperity for all. Hence today's need is for a "*global*" and "*green*" New Deal.

Premier Wen Jiabao of China recently asserted that ethics must be at the heart of business practice for the well-being of all people. UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown, in addressing the US Congress, also said that markets should be free but never value-free, and that the risks people take should never be separated from the responsibilities they meet.

The G-20 represent 66% of the world's population; 90% of global GDP, 80% of global Green House Gas emissions and much of the world's annual \$150-250 billion fossil fuel subsidy, so what you decide as a group affects the entire world. The G-20 governments have already marshalled over \$2.5 trillion of fiscal stimulus for economic recovery.

We urge you to ensure that the *entirety* of the G20 emergency package supports three goals: (1) building economic resilience; (2) social justice and distributional equity by promoting decent work for all; (3) protection and sustainable use of the environment.

We further recommend that you allocate \$750 billion of this stimulus package, which is around 1% of global GDP, to investments that will build an inclusive and green economy, notably by:

- Investing in green infrastructure, such as renewable energy, sustainable transport systems, and environmentally friendly buildings – which would also stimulate the creation of high quality, stable employment across a range of sectors;
- Investing in equitable and sustainable natural resource use, supplemented by education and health care – which would improve the livelihoods of poor people (especially the rural poor);
- Protecting critical habitats, and improving the provision of ecosystem services – which would mitigate systemic ecological risks and build resilience amongst rich and poor alike;

- Introducing new ways of assessing progress of human and environmental well-being (beyond merely financial measures) which would also improve accountability systems.

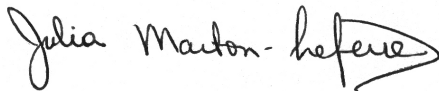
Many of the above investments can make a significant contribution to short-term job creation and economic recovery in addition to their longer term benefits.

In addition to expenditure, comprehensive international and domestic policy reforms are urgently needed in all G-20 countries to address structural failures. This includes a thorough review of perverse incentives (such as fossil fuel subsidies) that crush the green shoots of recovery; taxing 'bads' such as pollution, and subsidising 'goods' such as employment and local enterprise; renewed efforts to conclude the WTO's Doha Development Round of trade negotiations, accompanied by adequate guarantees that labour, development and environmental issues will be fully addressed; together with a robust and visionary deal on climate change in Copenhagen later this year.

We ask you to ensure that such investment and reforms support a fair and well-managed transition to a sustainable growth path, rather than simply re-starting "business as usual", which has caused the current economic and environmental crises. This requires the full support of G-20 leaders and immediate, co-ordinated action by member governments, together with concerted efforts to enlist and support the other 172 UN member states. We also urge you to engage the energies and resources of responsible business, and the ideas and passions of civil society who share this fragile planet, on which we all depend.



James P. Leape, Director General, WWF International



Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director General, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)



Pavan Sukhdev, Study Leader: The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB), & Project Leader: Green Economy Initiative, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)



Camilla Toulmin, Director, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)



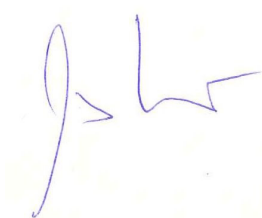
Ola Engelmark, Chair, Bellagio Forum for Sustainable Development



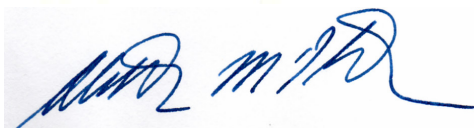
John Evans, General Secretary of the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC)



Mark Halle, Executive Director, IISD-Europe



R. Andreas Kraemer, Director, Ecologic
Institute



Professor Alastair McIntosh, Centre for Human
Ecology, Scotland



Guy Ryder, General Secretary of The
International Trade Union Confederation
(ITUC)



Jan-Olaf Willums, Chair, Inspire Foundation for
Business and Society

References:

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Gordon Brown: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/mar/04/gordon-brown-speech-to-congress>

G 20: <http://www.g20.org/index.aspx>

ⁱ A newly formed international coalition for an inclusive and green economy met for the first time in Switzerland 2-3 March 2009. The meeting was convened by IUCN in partnership with WWF International UNEP, and IIED. Participants also included representatives from the Bellagio Forum for Sustainable Development, DFID, IISD, ILO, ITUC, Royal Philips Electronics, WBCSD, and The Centre for Human Ecology.