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Copenhagen climate summit

December 7-18



Copenhagen climate summit in disarray after 'Danish text' leak

Developing countries react furiously to leaked draft agreement that would hand more power to rich nations, sideline the UN's negotiating role and abandon the Kyoto protocol

- [Read the 'Danish text'](#)
- [In pictures: Copenhagen day two](#)

John Vidal in Copenhagen
guardian.co.uk, Tuesday 8 December 2009 14.09 GMT



The UN Copenhagen climate talks are in disarray today after developing countries reacted furiously to leaked documents. Photograph: Attila Kisbenedek/AFP/Getty Images

The UN Copenhagen climate talks are in disarray today after developing countries reacted furiously to leaked documents that show world leaders will next week be asked to sign an agreement that hands more power to rich countries and sidelines the UN's role in all future [climate change](#) negotiations.

The document is also being interpreted by developing countries as setting unequal limits on per capita [carbon emissions](#) for developed and developing countries in 2050; meaning that people in rich countries would be permitted to emit nearly twice as much under the proposals.

The so-called [Danish text](#), a secret draft agreement worked on by a group of individuals known as "the circle of commitment" – but understood to include the UK, US and Denmark – has only been shown to a handful of countries since it was finalised this

week.

The agreement, leaked to the Guardian, is a departure from the Kyoto protocol's principle that rich nations, which have emitted the bulk of the CO₂, should take on firm and binding commitments to reduce greenhouse gases, while poorer nations were not compelled to act. The draft hands effective control of climate change finance to the World Bank; would abandon the Kyoto protocol – the only legally binding treaty that the world has on emissions reductions; and would make any money to help poor countries adapt to climate change dependent on them taking a range of actions.

The document was described last night by one senior diplomat as "a very dangerous document for developing countries. It is a fundamental reworking of the UN balance of obligations. It is to be superimposed without discussion on the talks".

A confidential analysis of the text by developing countries also seen by the Guardian shows deep unease over details of the text. In particular, it is understood to:

- Force developing countries to agree to specific emission cuts and measures that were not part of the original UN agreement;
- Divide poor countries further by creating a new category of developing countries called "the most vulnerable";
- Weaken the UN's role in handling climate finance;
- Not allow poor countries to emit more than 1.44 tonnes of carbon per person by 2050, while allowing rich countries to emit 2.67 tonnes.

Developing countries that have seen the text are understood to be furious that it is being promoted by rich countries without their knowledge and without discussion in the negotiations.

"It is being done in secret. Clearly the intention is to get [Barack] Obama and the leaders of other rich countries to muscle it through when they arrive next week. It effectively is the end of the UN process," said one diplomat, who asked to remain nameless.

Antonio Hill, climate policy adviser for Oxfam International, said: "This is only a draft but it highlights the risk that when the big countries come together, the small ones get hurting. On every count the emission cuts need to be scaled up. It allows too many loopholes and does not suggest anything like the 40% cuts that science is saying is needed."

Hill continued: "It proposes a green fund to be run by a board but the big risk is that it will run by the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility [a partnership of 10 agencies including the World Bank and the UN Environment Programme] and not the UN. That would be a step backwards, and it tries to put constraints on developing countries when none were negotiated in earlier UN climate talks."

The text was intended by Denmark and rich countries to be a working framework, which would be adapted by countries over the next week. It is particularly inflammatory because it sidelines the UN negotiating process and suggests that rich countries are desperate for world leaders to have a text to work from when they arrive next week.

Few numbers or figures are included in the text because these would be filled in later by world leaders. However, it seeks to hold temperature rises to 2C and mentions the sum of \$10bn a year to help poor countries adapt to climate change from 2012-15.

- For news and analysis of the UN climate talks in Copenhagen [sign up for the Guardian's environment email newsletter Green light](#)

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peopleperson

8 Dec 2009, 2:21PM

Come on UK, US, 'the West'... the age of bullying is over... we HAVE to reduce our emissions and allow the developing countries to grow theirs... we MUST do more, and the poor countries aren't just going to sit and watch as we screw them over.
Argh!

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Maentwrog

8 Dec 2009, 2:29PM

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cotswoldsedge

8 Dec 2009, 2:29PM

well that probably just about screws it..well done all ;-) jesus my dog could do a better job than this lot...

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grubbedout

8 Dec 2009, 2:31PM

George will need a stiff drink to steady himself at this rate.

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Cosmo2

8 Dec 2009, 2:32PM

... wait a moment: you state the talks are in "disarray" and that developing nations are "reacting furiously" ... yet you can't get a single named source in your piece and can only cite "a senior diplomat" and "an unnamed diplomat" (the same one? a different one? from a developing nation? from an NGO? who knows?!?!!) ...

Woodward & Bernstein would be so proud ...

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concrut

8 Dec 2009, 2:33PM

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concrut

8 Dec 2009, 2:34PM

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eviln3d

8 Dec 2009, 2:34PM

This comment has been removed by a moderator. Replies may also be deleted.



MissOrange

8 Dec 2009, 2:36PM

What's the whining for? Nothing will happen in Copenhagen, thank God, except that a lot of private jets will get some exercise, some caviar will be consumed, and some Danish sex workers will get some nice tips.

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EveryoneHatesGordon

8 Dec 2009, 2:37PM

Gordon's only interest in the environment is ECO-TAXES.

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DorianHawkmoon

8 Dec 2009, 2:37PM

I want to know which country was responsible for the LAST ice age, and all the previous extinctions of animals from the dinosaurs to the mammoths.

My bet is it was the United States, damn them.

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student1776

8 Dec 2009, 2:38PM

This is all about using fake data to create a state of fear in the public in the wealthy (but gullible) countries to allow the enlargement of government - and has nothing to do with the third world. If you want to understand the motives of the deceivers follow the money.

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decipher

8 Dec 2009, 2:39PM

How does this bunch of rubes maintain any credibility with anyone? I look at this summit and I see graft on an unprecedented scale. And solutions!?! Laughable! Give billions to poor countries to fight climate change. I'm sure that none of that money will end up as an AK-47 for a 10 year old. Not that the seas are rising, but if they did over COP15 and swallow these clowns up with their limos and Gulf Streams, it would be serendipitous.

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JButcher

8 Dec 2009, 2:39PM

I somehow think that this is nothing more than a crude attempt to derail the talks. Nobody in their right minds would dream something like this up and expect it to not piss anybody off.

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tatter

8 Dec 2009, 2:39PM

These are the real battle lines being drawn. It is no longer about whether or not warming is occurring, it's about the actions we take - or don't - that is the real issue. And we can say with certainty that the military/industrial/entertainment machine will do everything in its power to maintain the status quo in every which way it can.

This is going to get nasty.

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fabiusmaximus

8 Dec 2009, 2:39PM

They are going to send the developing countries back to the stone age while they sup champagne and drive electric porsches. Millions of people in third world countries will die of starvation.

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r. i.

Ruralidiocy

8 Dec 2009, 2:39PM

Same old same old you can believe in.

[Recommend? \(30\)](#)

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fabiusmaximus

8 Dec 2009, 2:41PM

Burn the poor.

It is illegal to use this type of fuel. It produces CO2.

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VincentBlackShadow

8 Dec 2009, 2:41PM

This is the way the world ends, not with a bang but a text.

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[britononthemitten](#)

8 Dec 2009, 2:42PM

The professional negotiators have had two years to build up to this showcase rubber-stamping and it turns out that with only a week to go the very basis of any agreement is still in play.

So we can now confidently add incompetence and chicanery to the waste, excess, and fraud that have already been on display.

Has this conference got a single redeeming feature?

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[leadballoon](#)

8 Dec 2009, 2:42PM

Remember the golden rule? Whoever has the gold makes the rules.

No amount of collective responsibility is going to over-rule the self interest of those who already have the money and power or have a reasonable prospect of some (BRICs). it's not the science, it's the politics that mean emission controls are not going to amount to more than a lot of finger pointing.

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[kiwiinlondon](#)

8 Dec 2009, 2:43PM

Hubble, bubble, boil and trouble... MacBet's witches have got nothing on this lot!

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[Mark550](#)

8 Dec 2009, 2:44PM

Genius ... Copenhagen is damned on day two!

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crydda

8 Dec 2009, 2:45PM

It's no surprise that us Brits are involved in a carve up, cop out, failure to face up our responsibilities, deal like this.

We've been talking the talk, but always failing to walk the walk for years on this.

While other European nations have been actually doing something, we've been constantly claiming action, while actually renegeing on promises or failing to do anything at all.

I agree with cotswoldbridge; it's probably screwed up our last chance.

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FinneyontheWing

8 Dec 2009, 2:46PM

Couldn't actually make it up.

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scoobysnacks

8 Dec 2009, 2:46PM

Something rather sinister about this? Does anyone else feel that some group of people/organisations are trying to scupper this whole event?

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bikedude

8 Dec 2009, 2:46PM

It looks like the lady in the picture has a terrible hangover.

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davidsouthafrican

8 Dec 2009, 2:47PM

There must be universal parity

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Defotoe

8 Dec 2009, 2:48PM

Great start guys - all goes to show the benefits of 'freedom and democracy' (at least so long as you're big enough, free enough and [maybe] democratic enough to be morally fit to bully all the others). I wonder how much worse it's going to get before they all get into their special non-polluting jets to fly home again, leaving the poor countries to - as it were - sink or swim. Jesus, what a shower!

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dauidsouthafrican

8 Dec 2009, 2:48PM

there must be universal parity

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DGirl

8 Dec 2009, 2:49PM

hmmm... so 'the west' can carry on polluting, but the 'thrid world' must constrain itself. never gonna happen.

i suspenct that poor countries that get treated unfairly and unreasonably will choose to act outside of international law and take their chances with the consequences.

here's hoping that the climate change deniers are right. cos if not, it looks like we're all f*cked.

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IngSoc

8 Dec 2009, 2:49PM

Some good news at last!

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Self

8 Dec 2009, 2:50PM

'Has this conference got a single redeeming feature?'

Yes, Brown will be out of the country for a day or two.

More seriously, what do you expect from the sort of people who brought you the endless and, ultimately, fruitless round upon round of Doha talks? It is not in their interest to agree because they want to have another tax-funded trip to wherever the next jolly is.

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radicalpete

8 Dec 2009, 2:51PM

Why am I not in the least surprised by this, big business and crooks for politicians run this stinking corrupt world, a pox on all their houses.

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globalburning

8 Dec 2009, 2:51PM

If the third world are going to quibble about a few tonnes of carbon they should be expelled from the process. It is we in the west who set up the UN and proposed solutions to the global warming issue. We can tackle global warming without them if need be. I am now leading a boycott of goods from obstructionist nations.

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Optymystic

8 Dec 2009, 2:51PM

There is only one defensible target and that must be the same for all. That should be practical within twenty years let alone forty. It is being argued that the developed world needs to maintain its advantages for forty years and the developing world is seriously expected to sign up to that. The rich, developed countries have the resources to get their emissions down rapidly while the poor are better placed to steer their development along low emission lines. Its a bit late for the developed countries to undo the industrial revolution.

There are some obvious solutions like bringing down rail charges to below those of flights in the UK, like replacing a million mopeds in Bangkok with bicycles (Bangkok is flat and has a pollution problem so the Dutch solution ought to be a winner. The

weather is so much more congenial to cycling than Holland. The only puzzle is why Bangkok ended up with such a barmy solution)

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walterkovacs

8 Dec 2009, 2:52PM

Principal Skinner to school Model UN:

"Do you kids want to be like the real UN, or do you just want to squabble and waste time?"

What a hilarious shambles. UN, piss-up, brewery etc...

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climberdave

8 Dec 2009, 2:53PM

Fucked. Totally fucked.

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tham6000

8 Dec 2009, 2:53PM

So we're still pretending Global Warming is a real issue. What are they going to do about all the purple unicorns flying around. I think developed countries need to pay their fair share to eradicate purple unicorns from our environment. We should tax every person \$100 for every gram of salt they consume to help stop the spread of purple unicorns causing earthquakes. The money can go to the UN and third world countries to purchase private jets and new BMWs for their political leaders. I wonder which private jet Al Gore will be using to get to the meeting?

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bigfacedog

8 Dec 2009, 2:54PM

mmmmmmmm,

Now there's a suprise, people of white european extraction finding another convaluted way to control the world.....(oh right its an **'ism'** so that's ok then).

Plus ca change

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kicken18

8 Dec 2009, 2:56PM

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riggas

8 Dec 2009, 2:59PM

I am ashamed of my country. Despicable.

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AMeyer

8 Dec 2009, 2:59PM

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easterhay

8 Dec 2009, 2:59PM

seeing as the graun is so staunchly behind the copenhagen process, why treat the document, "leaked to the guardian", in such a hysterical and unsourced way? the talks are only in disarray because you say they are. please, be a little more responsible, otherwise it just looks like you talked the summit up solely to have something to shoot down.

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RHuxster

8 Dec 2009, 2:59PM

The discussions have obviously hit the first Road Block. That means it could be the end of the World as we know it with A) Rising Tides B) Melting Ice Sheets C) Castrophic rise in Sea Temperatures from 0 - 6 Degrees by 2030. New York, New Orleans under water, and Eastern Sea Board Coasts, The Thames flooded as well as the Houses of Parliament. D) Mass extinctions of Whales, Orangtuans E) Reversal in the Gulf Stream or switching off completely with -30 Degress Temperatures and other Ocean Currents F) Desertification of Africa, Australia shortages of Water . G) Maldives under water and many Asia Pacific Atolls, Tonga, Vanuato disappearing.

I hope seriously all negotiating parties go back to the Table. I worry that while Kyoto was n't ideal it may be the only viable one. If countries are allowed to form there own separate deals, they risk not achieving the targets of 30 per cent Cut in Emissions from Europe. It is up to the USA, China and India the worlds biggest polluters to cut emissions, developing world, and Developed.

I am guessing that a Global treaty to tackle Climate Change within UN framework is idealised, and not really going to happen. I hope that someone locks them into negotiations, until they get a workable deal. I do not want to have to build an Ark like Moses.

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radicalpete

8 Dec 2009, 3:00PM

As the Brother of G W Bush in- famously said before he won the election "Its a done deal, Jeb" so this treaty is done and dusted already,greed will see to that

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alisdaircameron

8 Dec 2009, 3:00PM

Oh, **well done**, Gordon.

Your need for control-freakery, your self-importance and posturing and your infatuation with the USA bugger things up *again*.

And this man is going to tell us how he's a class warrior, while shitting on the world's poorest nations from a great height?

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MiaErdmann

8 Dec 2009, 3:01PM

It would be utterly appalling to go outside the UN on climate change. I know the UN's not very powerful, but it's an outstanding idea.

I think the headline on this article is rather an over-reaction, however. It hasn't happened yet - please don't try to make the news, just report it. We don't need people saying the talks are in "disarray" when they're not. They're on a knife-edge enough as it is. Of course this sort of this is around, but it hasn't come into force yet, let's hope it doesn't, rather than predict that it will.

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Rilleron

8 Dec 2009, 3:02PM

WTF! Can this be true or just more scandal-mongering? Don't the US, UK etc try to teach everyone else about Democracy but do they have any idea of the meaning of the word?

And how is it that so-o many documents are leaked these days, only to de-rail conferences..is it stupidity that causes them to be written and not protected? Or is the intention to have them leaked and thus sabotage the proceedings?

Defend the UN, support the Kyoto process, and support the development goals of poorer nations at risk of devastation by climate change. But agreed, more should be done to limit population, and by the only credible, proven method so far, educating girls. Then hugely reduce the numbers of cattle, too while we all eat meat more seldom.

Cheers everyone, nice writing to you.

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BruceF

8 Dec 2009, 3:02PM

Instead of selling us credits to heat our huts, maybe this aptly named "committee of parties" has an angle here with all the free sex at their global warming gala's.

So how about they start selling sex credits instead. They could start with the premise that we must cap the amount of sex available and the professional girls could then sell "emission rights" to their climate soiree johns....er "ministers"

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