Title

In just a few hours thousands of delegates will begin bussing their way to the Moon Palace Hotel in Cancún to resume negotiations on probably **the** most important legal international agreements this century ? on how the world should mitigate and adapt to climate change. Expectations were high for an agreement to be reached in Copenhagen but this failed and the mood is somewhat different amongst delegates and media one year on. There is the realisation that a fair, ambitious and legally binding agreement will take longer to negotiate, there remain many complex issues on which positions are starkly divided, and sights are on the next COP in South Africa at the end of 2011 for consensus. However we cannot keep waiting ? Cancun must be a significant stepping stone for an agreement next year. COP decisions should bank the positive elements of what governments have already agreed and move away from the mentality that ?nothing is agreed until everything is agreed? as this may simply never happen. So what are some of the real high level sticking points? ? all significant and complex in nature. Foremost are the emission reduction targets to be by countries after 2012 after the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol ? the science is clear on the minimum that is needed but existing pledges fall well short of this. Hotly debated are how emission reductions from the major emerging economised should be treated and whether targets should be legally binding. Equally important is the issue of money ? fast start finance to developing countries needs to be mobilised, pledges made to date acted upon, with a climate fund established for developing countries to support low carbon development and enable adaptation to climate change. How these actions and finance are measured, verified and reported (referred to as MRV) is also key ? under what circumstances and to whom is this acceptable? BirdLife has summarised its main asks into a policy briefing. The main issues we will be tracking are REDD, LULUCF adaptation, shared vision and we have detailed asks on all of these ? not least to ensure that the solutions to climate change must be environmentally and socially sound and recognise the role that ecosystems and biodiversity plays in achieving the overall aims of the convention ? to effectively mitigate and adapt to climate change. We hope the process will learn from recent meeting of the CBD COP in Nagoya. After over 10 years of negotiating an agreement on Access and Benefit Sharing the Nagoya Protocol was born ? demonstrating that multilateral UN processes can reach a fair, ambitious and legally binding deal. Cancun needs to rebuild trust post Copenhagen and move towards compromise and agreement ? much is at stake and the world, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, cannot afford to wait any longer.