

COP 15, plenary
National Statement
Lykke Friis, Denmark

Excellencies,
ministers,
ladies and gentlemen!

It is a great honour to address this conference on
behalf of the Kingdom of Denmark.

“The world was made round, so we don’t see too far
down the road”.

This observation was made by the Danish author
Karen Blixen (also known as Isak Dinesen)
in her classic *Out of Africa*
from just before the The Second World War.

However, in today’s globalized world,
science has given us ample and convincing reasons
for looking as far down the road as possible.

Climate impacts in Denmark

In every part of our kingdom,
climate change is leaving its footprints.

In Denmark, seasons are changing and rainfall is
getting stronger.

In the Faroe Islands, temperature is rising.

And in Greenland,
melting glaciers are changing living conditions for
the inuit people.

But climate change knows no national borders.
Impacts of glacier melting are spreading globally
through sea-level rise.

And the vital role of the oceans
for the climate and for sustainable development
is under pressure
with serious consequences for island states and
coastal nations worldwide.

The challenge ahead

Tonight, the task right in front of us will of course be at the center of attention.

But when this conference draws to a close,
we face an equally daunting task:

Then we must begin to turn our words into deeds.

Denmark is ready to take on the task.

The government has a clear goal:

Denmark must become entirely independent of fossil fuels.

And let me stress:

It is not a pipe dream!

It is not an illusion!

And it doesn't take rocket science!

Next year, we are presenting a plan for how it can be done.

And already,

we are showing that with political will,
we can move from pollution to solution.

In Denmark,
renewable energy provides 30 percent of our
electricity.
And each year,
we raise the bar.

In the Faroe Islands,
the parliament has adopted a comprehensive climate
policy that will reduce emissions in existing sectors
by at least 20% from 20-10 to 20-20 from a 2005
baseline.

And in Greenland,
a systematic expansion of hydro power
will reduce emission levels.

By 2020, 60% of the electricity consumption in
Greenland's civil society
will be based on renewables.

The spirit of engagement

For the citizens of Copenhagen and the rest of
Denmark,
these weeks,
and especially this night,
will no doubt remain in memory for many years to
come.

More than 115 heads of state and government,
ministers,
Negotiators,
civil society leaders, and students
have come to our capital.

And in these very hours,
ministers from all countries,
are struggling to forge an ambitious and truly global
response to the key challenge of our time.

But in order for the world to remember Copenhagen
Not only for The Little Mermaid, bicycles, and
Danish design,
But also as a tribute to global cooperation and
commitment,
all parties must give their best.

And in the name of compromise probably go even
further than they had planned.

We are unavoidably side by side.
So we must side up
and find common solutions to our common
problems.

So let me close
by quoting a Greenlandic saying as a call to all
parties:

“When you have gone so far
that you can’t manage one more step,
then you have gone just half the distance
that you are capable of.”

Thank you!