

## Europe's climate policy may be more about appearances

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*From Prof Roger Pielke, Jr.*

Sir, Johannes Laitenberger, spokesman for the European Commission, takes [issue](#) (Letters, December 22) with the FT's characterisation of Europe's recent agreement on climate change.

He suggests that the FT was wrong to "imply that the European Council deal brings the CO 2 cut into question – in fact, what has been agreed will guarantee that cut". In fact, the agreement provides many loopholes which call the 20 per cent reduction target into serious question.

For instance, each country is allowed to exceed its permitted emissions by 5 per cent annually; exceptions to the reductions in emissions are granted for unusually warm or cold weather; the entire agreement is subject for revision in light of next year's United Nations climate meeting in Copenhagen; and there is even more.

The FT was right to question European climate policies. Mr Laitenberger's vigorous defence of the agreement indicates that the policy may be more about appearances than reality.

**Roger Pielke, Jr,**  
**Professor,**  
**University of Colorado,**  
**Boulder, CO, US**

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