United Nations Climate Change conference

The United Nations Climate Change Conferences are yearly conferences held in the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

They serve as the formal meeting of the UNFCCC parties (Conference of the Parties, COP) to assess progress in dealing with climate change, and beginning in the mid-1990s, to negotiate the Kyoto Protocol to establish legally binding obligations for developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.[1] Starting in 2005 the conferences have also served as the "Conference of the Parties Serving as the Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol" (CMP);[2] also parties to the convention that are not parties to the protocol can participate in protocol-related meetings as observers. From 2011 to 2015 the meetings were used to negotiate the Paris Agreement as part of the Durban platform, which created a general path towards climate action. Any final text of a COP must be agreed by consensus.[3]

The first UN Climate Change Conference was held in 1995 in Berlin.[4][5] *According to Saleemul Huq, speaking during COP26 having attended every COP, the conferences tend to be more successful when held in sunny locations.[6]*

Contents

11-COP 10, Buenos Aires, Argentina :2004

12-COP 11/CMP 1, Montreal, Canada :2005

13-COP 12/CMP 2, Nairobi, Kenya :2006

14-COP 13/CMP 3, Bali, Indonesia :2007

15-COP 14/CMP 4, Poznań, Poland :2008

16-COP 15/CMP 5, Copenhagen, :2009 Denmark

17-COP 16/CMP 6, Cancún, Mexico :2010

18-COP 17/CMP 7, Durban, South Africa :2011

19-COP 18/CMP 8, Doha, Qatar :2012

20-COP 19/CMP 9, Warsaw, Poland :2013

21-COP 20/CMP 10, Lima, Peru

22-COP 21/CMP 11, Paris, France :2015

23-COP 22/CMP 12/CMA 1, Marrakech, :2016 Morocco

24-COP 23/CMP 13/CMA 1-2, Bonn, Germany :2017

25-COP 24/CMP 14/CMA 1-3, Katowice, Poland :2018

26-SB50, Bonn, Germany :2019

27-COP 25/CMP 15/CMA 2, Madrid, Spain :2019

28-COP 26/CMP 16/CMA 3, Glasgow, United :2021 Kingdom

29-COP 27, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt :2022

30-COP 28, United Arab Emirates :2023

The Kyoto Protocol

What is the Kyoto Protocol?

The Kyoto Protocol was adopted on 11 December 1997. Owing to a complex ratification(permission) process, it entered into force on 16 February 2005. Currently, there are 192 Parties to the Kyoto Protocol.

In short, the Kyoto Protocol operationalizes the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by committing(binding) industrialized countries and economies in transition to limit and reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions in accordance with agreed individual targets. The Convention itself only asks those countries to adopt(accept) policies and measures on

The Kyoto Protocol is based on the principles and provisions of the Convention and follows its annex-based structure. It only binds developed countries, and places a heavier burden on them under the principle of “common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities”, because it recognizes that they are largely responsible for the current high levels of GHG emissions in the atmosphere.

In its Annex B, the Kyoto Protocol sets binding emission reduction targets for 37 industrialized countries and economies in transition and the European Union. Overall, these targets add up to an average 5 per cent emission reduction compared to 1990 levels over the five year period 2008–2012 (the first commitment period.

Doha Amendment

In Doha, Qatar, on 8 December 2012, the Doha Amendment(Improvement) to the Kyoto Protocol was adopted for a second commitment(assurance) period, starting in 2013 and lasting until 2020. However, the Doha Amendment has not yet entered into force; a total of 144 instruments of acceptance are required for entry into force of the amendment(improvement).

The amendment (improvement)includes:

New commitments for Annex I Parties to the Kyoto Protocol who agreed to take on commitments in a second commitment ;period from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2020

A revised list of GHG to be reported on by Parties in the second commitment period; and Amendments to several articles of the Kyoto Protocol which specifically referenced issues pertaining to the first commitment period and which needed to be updated for the second commitment period.

On 21 December 2012, the amendment was circulated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting in his capacity as Depositary, to all Parties to the Kyoto Protocol in accordance with Articles 20 and 21 of the Protocol.

During the first commitment period, 37 industrialized countries and economies in transition and the European Community committed to reduce GHG emissions to an average of five percent against 1990 levels.

During the second commitment period, Parties committed to reduce GHG emissions by at least 18 percent below 1990 levels in the eight-year period from 2013 to 2020; however, the composition of Parties in the second commitment period is different from the first.

*The Kyoto mechanisms

One important element of the Kyoto Protocol was the establishment of flexible market mechanisms, which are based on the trade of emissions permits. Under the Protocol, countries must meet their targets primarily through national measures. However, the Protocol also offers them an additional means to meet their targets by way of three market-based mechanisms:

1-International Emissions Trading

2-Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)

3-Joint implementation (JI)*

These mechanisms ideally encourage GHG abatement to start where it is most cost-effective, for example, in the developing world. It does not matter where emissions are reduced, as long as they are removed from the atmosphere. This has the parallel benefits of stimulating green investment in developing countries and including the private sector in this endeavour to cut and hold steady GHG emissions at a safe level. It also makes leap-frogging—that is, the possibility of skipping the use of older, dirtier technology for newer, cleaner infrastructure and systems, with obvious longer-term benefits—more economical.

Monitoring emission targets

The Kyoto Protocol also established a rigorous(hard) monitoring, review and verification(proof) system, as well as a compliance system to ensure transparency and hold Parties to account.

Under the Protocol, countries' actual emissions have to be monitored and precise(correct) records have to be kept of the trades carried out.

Registry systems track and record transactions by Parties under the mechanisms.

The UN Climate Change Secretariat, based in Bonn, Germany, keeps an international transaction log(record) to verify that transactions are consistent with the rules of the Protocol.

Reporting is done by Parties by submitting annual emission inventories(lists) and national reports under the Protocol at regular intervals.

A compliance system ensures that Parties are meeting their commitments and helps them to meet their commitments if they have problems doing so.

*Adaptation

The Kyoto Protocol, like the Convention, is also designed to assist countries in adapting to the adverse effects of climate change. It facilitates the development and deployment of technologies that can help increase resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The Adaptation Fund was established to finance adaptation projects and programs in developing countries that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. In the first commitment period, the Fund was financed mainly with a share of proceeds from CDM(Clean Development Mechanism) project activities. In Doha, in 2012, it was decided that for the second commitment period, international emissions trading and joint implementation would also provide the Adaptation Fund with a 2 percent share of proceeds.*

The Paris Agreement

What is the Paris Agreement?

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016.

Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.

**To achieve this long-term temperature goal, countries aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century.*

The Paris Agreement is a landmark(significant) in the multilateral(multidimensional) climate change process **because**, for the first time, a binding agreement brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat(fight) climate change and adapt(modify) to its effects.

How does the Paris Agreement work?

Implementation(Application) of the Paris Agreement requires economic and social transformation, based on the best available science. The Paris Agreement works on a 5-year cycle of increasingly ambitious climate action carried out by countries. By 2020, countries submit(present) their plans for climate action known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

*NDCs

In their NDCs, countries communicate actions they will take to reduce their Greenhouse Gas emissions in order to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement. Countries also communicate in the NDCs actions they will take to build resilience to adapt to the impacts of rising temperatures.*

Long-Term Strategies

To better frame the efforts towards the long-term goal, the Paris Agreement invites countries to formulate and submit by 2020 long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies (LT-(LEDS).

LT-LEDS provide the long-term horizon to the NDCs. Unlike NDCs, they are not mandatory. Nevertheless, they place the NDCs into the context of countries' long-term planning and development priorities, providing a vision and direction for future development.

How are countries supporting one another?

The Paris Agreement provides a framework for financial, technical and capacity building support to those countries who need it.

Finance

The Paris Agreement reaffirms that developed countries should take the lead in providing financial assistance to countries that are less endowed and more vulnerable(helpless), while for the first time also encouraging voluntary contributions by other Parties. *Climate finance is needed for mitigation, because large-scale investments are required to significantly reduce emissions. Climate finance is equally important for adaptation, as significant financial resources are needed to adapt to the adverse effects and reduce the .impacts of a changing climate*

Technology

The Paris Agreement speaks of the vision of fully realizing technology development and transfer for both improving resilience to climate change and reducing GHG emissions. It establishes a technology framework to provide overarching guidance to the well-functioning Technology Mechanism. The mechanism is accelerating technology development and transfer through it’s policy and implementation arms

*Capacity-Building

Not all developing countries have sufficient capacities to deal with many of the challenges brought by climate change. As a result, the Paris Agreement places great emphasis on climate-related capacity-building for developing countries and requests all developed countries to enhance support for capacity-building actions in developing countries.*

*How are we tracking progress?

With the Paris Agreement, countries established an enhanced transparency framework (ETF). Under ETF, starting in 2024, countries will report transparently on actions taken and progress in climate change mitigation, adaptation measures and support provided or received. It also provides for international procedures for the review of the submitted reports.

The information gathered through the ETF will feed into the Global stocktake which will assess the collective progress towards the long-term climate goals.

This will lead to recommendations for countries to set more ambitious plans in the next round.*

About COP 28

COP 28 refers to the United Nations Climate Change Conference taking place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 30 November until 12 December 2023.

Negotiations
What will be discussed at COP 28?

Discussions at COP 28 need to make progress in several workstreams: hammering out the details of the loss and damage finance facility to help vulnerable communities deal with immediate climate impacts; driving towards a global goal on finance that would help fund developing countries' efforts in addressing climate change; accelerating both an energy and a just transition; closing the massive emissions gap, just to name a few.

In addition, the first-ever global stock take will conclude at COP 28.

The global stock take is a process for countries and stakeholders to see where they're collectively making progress towards meeting the goals of the Paris Climate Change Agreement – and where they're not. The global stocktake has showed us we are not on track to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The window for meaningful change is closing, and the time to act is now.

Governments will take a decision on the global stocktake at COP 28, which can be leveraged to accelerate ambition in their next round of climate action plans due by 2025.

The global stocktake showed us where progress is too slow. But it also laid out the vast array of tools and solutions put forward by countries.

COP 28 must be a “can-do COP” where countries show how these tools will be put to work in the crucial next two years, to urgently pick up the pace.

A person holds up a sign asking the world not to fail them at COP27 in Egypt.
Why is COP 28 important?

With the most important details of the Paris Climate Change Agreement negotiated and agreed over the last few years, COP 28 is all about implementing the Agreement and ramping up ambition and action.

We are in a decisive decade for climate action.

The latest science from the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicates that greenhouse gas emissions need to be cut 43% by 2030, compared to 2019 levels. This is critical to limit temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius by the end of this century and avoid the worst impacts of climate change, including more frequent and severe droughts, heatwaves and rainfall.

COP 28 is an opportunity to identify global solutions for limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees, inform countries' preparations for revised and more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (national climate plans) due by 2025, accelerate the green transition that is already happening and ultimately achieve the delivery of the Paris Agreement goals.

Which meetings are taking place during COP 28?

The conference comprises the annual meetings of the three decision-making bodies of the Convention, the Paris Agreement and the Kyoto Protocol. In these bodies, delegates of all member states discuss and decide on a wide variety of climate-related agenda items.

Meetings at the 2023 UN Climate Change conference in Dubai include the 28th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28) – the supreme decision-making body of the Convention – as well as the fifth session of the decision-making body of the Paris Agreement (CMA 5) and the 18th session of the decision-making body of the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 18), discussing workstreams under the Paris Agreement and the Kyoto Protocol, respectively.

Furthermore, the two subsidiary bodies under the UNFCCC, the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), will convene for SBI 59 and SBSTA 59. These two bodies do not pass decisions themselves, but provide technical information and advice to COP, CMA and CMP.

What is the difference between the blue zone and the green zone at COP 28?

The blue zone

All of the official sessions, meetings, side events and press conferences are taking place in the “blue zone”, the formal conference and negotiation space managed by UN Climate Change. Only Party delegations, Heads of State, admitted observers and the accredited press can enter the blue zone.

The green zone

Beyond the official UN-organized part of the conference, COP 28 is also a platform to showcase solutions and pathways from the global community and civil society. The “green zone”, managed by COP28’s host country of UAE, is a space for youth representatives, artists, businesses, regional and local decision-makers and many other civil society actors to discuss, present and exchange ideas and solutions for a net-zero future in a more informal setting – for example in the form of presentations, podium discussions, poster sessions and exhibitions.

Participants at COP

Who can attend COP 28?

A total of approximately 70,000 participants is expected in Dubai for COP28.

Participation to COP28 and access to the blue zone is restricted to delegates, admitted observer organizations and accredited members of the press and media. Delegations from all 199 Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change will attend the conference.

While the public cannot attend the conference in person, many events in the blue zone, such as the plenary sessions of the bodies, the high-level segment with heads of states, many press conferences and side events will be webcast live for the public on unfccc.int. COP TV is another opportunity for the public to follow the conference and watch interesting interviews and themed segments.

While access to the blue zone is strictly limited, the green zone, managed by COP 28's host country UAE, is more widely accessible. More information can be found on the host country's website.

What have we achieved so far?

Although climate change action needs to be massively increased to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement, the years since its entry into force have already sparked low-carbon solutions and new markets. More and more countries, regions, cities and companies are establishing carbon neutrality targets. Zero-carbon solutions are becoming competitive across economic sectors representing 25% of emissions. This trend is most noticeable in the power and transport sectors and has created many new business opportunities for early movers.

By 2030, zero-carbon solutions could be competitive in sectors representing over 70% of global emissions.

*وشكرا
لإصغائكم