

## Thematic digest – Stock of Knowledge on COP 1-17 on Climate Change

### Resources:

*IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, Summary for Policymakers, p. 5*

*United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*

*National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) - Global Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet*

*Report of the Conference of the Parties on its sixteenth session, held in Cancun from 29 November to 10 December 2010 Addendum*

The Earth's climate is a historical phenomenon and has changed throughout history. According to NASA there have been seven cycles of glacial advance and retreat in the last 650,000 years, with the abrupt end of the last ice age about 7,000 years ago marking the beginning of the modern climate era — and of human civilization. Most of these climate changes are attributed to very small variations in Earth's orbit that change the amount of solar energy our planet receives. Glaciers are retreating almost everywhere around the world — including in the Alps, Himalayas, Andes, Rockies, Alaska and Africa<sup>i</sup> exception in the western Himalayas and

northern Pakistan in Karakoram Range where the glaciers are increasing (ICIMOD 2011).

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC or FCCC) is an international environmental treaty produced at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro from June 3 to 14, 1992. The objective of the treaty is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate systems. It entered into force on March 21, 1994. As of May 2011, UNFCCC has 194 parties. The Secretariat, augmented through the parallel efforts of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), aims to gain consensus through meetings and the discussion of various strategies. The parties to the convention have met annually from 1995 in Conferences of the Parties (COP) to address with climate change. In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was drafted and established legally binding obligations for developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>ii</sup>

Concerning the Conference of the Parties here is an outline of what had been the fate of climate change in the present and past negotiations.

## COP, 17 Durban South Africa



**COP17/CMP7**  
UNITED NATIONS  
CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2011  
DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

The most awaited United Nation climate change conference (COP 17/CMP 7) started in Durban, South Africa on 28 November 2011 with the slogan working Together Today, Saving Tomorrow.<sup>iii</sup>

Second commitment period of Kyoto Protocol and design of Green Climate Fund along with legal architecture of decisions are hot topics everyone is waiting to hear about in the COP17 besides others.

The decision on the second commitment of Kyoto is crucial as the the first commitment period will be over by early next year. Major parties to Kyoto, including Japan, Russia, and Canada, have already signaled that they will not take on a second commitment because China and the United States—the world’s top two polluters—are not included in it. The European Union (EU) is

### *Regular updates on COP 17*

- [\*ENB daily updates\*](#)
- [\*NGO/CAN newsletter: ECO\*](#)
- [\*UNFCCC website:\*](#)
- [\*CCNN website\*](#)

prepared to sign up for a second round, but it insists that major developing countries, whose emissions are surging as their economies grow, must embrace and follow through on real commitments.

The EU’s preference is to negotiate “a single global and comprehensive legally binding instrument” including all emitters, though it would countenance an “interim” solution whereby major emerging countries would accept a “road map” and timetable for treaty commitments. Even this fall-back position faces resistance from the so-called “BASIC” caucus—Brazil, South Africa, India, and China—who are disinclined to accept binding targets that might jeopardize their domestic growth and development goals.

The recent news is that China has just accepted a binding commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emission which is a major blow to India questioning the unity of BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China) grouping current round of climate negotiations<sup>iv</sup>.

Beside these Durban will also discuss on modalities and structure of committees under Adaptation Framework and Technology mechanism. Criteria of selection and detail work plan of Climate Technology Center (CTC) and diverse views on National Adaptation plan (NAP) are other challenges to be finalized by Durban.<sup>v</sup>

The Summary of the Conference of the Parties Stock of declarations for COP 16 and below is as follows:



## 2010 – COP 16/MOP 6, Cancún, Mexico

The meeting produced the basis for the most comprehensive and far-reaching international response to climate change the world had ever seen to reduce carbon emissions and build a system which made all countries accountable to each other for those reductions. Here is the overview of the Cancun Agreements, and here are the Cancun Agreements decisions in full.

Among the highlights, Parties agreed: to commit to a maximum temperature rise of 2 degrees Celsius above pre-Industrial levels, and to consider lowering that maximum to 1.5 degrees in the near future; to make fully operational by 2012 a technology mechanism to boost the innovation, development and spread of new climate-friendly technologies; to establish a Green Climate Fund to provide financing to projects, programmes, policies and other activities in developing countries via thematic funding windows; on the Cancun Adaptation Framework, which included setting up an Adaptation Committee to promote the implementation of stronger, cohesive action on adaptation.

On the mitigation front, developed countries submitted economy-wide emission reduction targets and agreed on strengthened reporting frequency and standards and to develop low-carbon national plans and strategies. Developing countries submitted nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs), to be implemented subject to financial and technical support. Work continued on shaping the form and functions of a registry for NAMAs to enable the matching of such actions with finance and technology. Developing countries were also encouraged to develop low-carbon national plans and strategies.

Work also progressed on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD), boosting capacity-building in developing countries, and how to deal with any consequences of response measures to action on climate change. Governments also agreed to include carbon

### ORGANIZATIONS

- *American Society of Landscape Architects*
- *American Wind Energy Association*
- *Association for the Study of Peak Oil*
- *Carbon Disclosure Project*
- *Climate Matters @Columbia*
- *Environmental Defense*
- *Friends of the Earth*
- *Independent Energy Producers Association*
- *Interstate Renewable Energy Council*
- *Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future*
- *National Biodiesel Board*
- *Natural Resources Defense Council*
- *Rocky Mountain Institute*
- *Solar Energy Industries Association*
- *Sustainable Buildings Industry Council*
- *The Pew Center on Global Climate Change*
- *The Post Carbon Institute*
- *United States Energy Association*

capture and storage (CCS) in the projects under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), subject to technical and safety standards.



### **2009 – COP 15/MOP 5, Copenhagen, Denmark**

The overall goal for the COP 15/MOP 5 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Denmark was to establish an ambitious global climate agreement for the period from 2012 when the first commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol expires. As many Annex 1 industrialized countries are now reluctant to fulfill commitments under the Kyoto Protocol, a large part of the diplomatic work that lays the foundation for a post-Kyoto agreement was undertaken up to the COP15.

The conference did not achieve a binding agreement for long-term action. A 13-paragraph 'political accord' was negotiated by approximately 25 parties including US and China, but it was only 'noted' by the COP as it is considered an external document, not negotiated within the UNFCCC process. The accord was notable in that it referred to a collective commitment by developed countries for new and additional resources, including forestry and investments through international institutions that will approach USD 30 billion for the period 2010–2012. Longer-term options on climate financing mentioned in the accord are being discussed within the UN Secretary General's High Level Advisory Group on Climate Financing, which is due to report in November 2010. The negotiations on extending the Kyoto Protocol had unresolved issues as did the negotiations on a framework for long-term cooperative action. The working groups on these tracks to the negotiations are now due to report to COP 16 and MOP 6 in Mexico.



### **2008 – COP 14/MOP 4, Poznań, Poland**

More image and news: 2008 United Nations Climate Change Conference COP 14/MOP 4 took place from December 1 to 12, 2008 in Poznań, Poland. Delegates agreed on principles for the financing of a fund to help the poorest nations cope with the effects of climate change and they approved a mechanism to incorporate forest protection into the efforts of the international community to combat climate change. Negotiations on a successor to the Kyoto Protocol were the primary focus of the conference.



### **2007 – COP 13/MOP 3, Bali, Indonesia**

COP 13/MOP 3 took place between December 3 and December 15, 2007, at Nusa Dua, in Bali, Indonesia. Agreement on a timeline and structured negotiation on the post-2012 framework (the end of the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol) was achieved with the adoption of the Bali Action Plan (Decision 1/CP.13). The Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) was established as a new subsidiary body to conduct

the negotiations aimed at urgently enhancing the implementation of the Convention up to and beyond 2012. Decision 9/CP.13 is an Amended to the New Delhi work programme.[34] These negotiations took place during 2008 (leading to COP 14/MOP 4 in Poznan, Poland) and 2009 (leading to COP 15/MOP 5 in Copenhagen).



### **2006 – COP 12/MOP 2, Nairobi, Kenya**

COP 12/MOP 2 took place between November 6 and 17, 2006 in Nairobi, Kenya. At the meeting, BBC reporter Richard Black coined the phrase “climate tourists” to describe some delegates who attended “to see Africa, take snaps of the wildlife, the poor, dying African children and women”. Black also noted that due to delegates concerns over economic costs and possible losses of competitiveness, the majority of the discussions avoided any mention of reducing emissions. Black concluded that was disconnecting between the political process and the scientific imperative.

Despite such criticism, certain strides were made at COP12, including in the areas of support for developing countries and clean development mechanism. The parties adopted a five-year plan of work to support climate change adaptation by developing countries, and agreed on the procedures and modalities for the Adaptation Fund. They also agreed to improve the projects for clean development mechanism.



### **2005 – COP 11/MOP 1, Montreal, Canada**

COP 11 (or COP 11/MOP 1) took place between November 28 and December 9, 2005, in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. It was the first Meeting of the Parties (MOP-1) to the Kyoto Protocol since their initial meeting in Kyoto in 1997. It was therefore one of the largest intergovernmental conferences on climate change ever. The event marked the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol. Hosting more than 10,000 delegates, it was one of Canada's largest international events ever and the largest gathering in Montreal since Expo 67.

The Montreal Action Plan is an agreement hammered out at the end of the conference to "extend the life of the Kyoto Protocol beyond its 2012 expiration date and negotiate deeper cuts in greenhouse-gas emissions. Canada's environment minister, at the time, Stéphane Dion, said the agreement provides a "map for the future.

## 2004 – COP 10, Buenos Aires, Argentina



Not to be confused with Convention on Biological Diversity, also called COP 10 (10th Conference of Parties) leading to the Nagoya Protocol in 2010. December 6 – 17, 2004. The Program on the Ethical Dimensions of Climate Change COP10 discussed the progress made since the first Conference of the Parties 10 years ago and its future challenges, with special emphasis on climate change mitigation and adaptation. To promote developing countries better adapt to climate change, the Buenos Aires Plan of Action was adopted. The parties also began discussing the post-Kyoto mechanism, on how to allocate emission reduction obligation following 2012, when the first commitment period ends.

### INSTITUTIONS

- *DOE: Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy*
- *Energy Star*
- *European and Chicago Climate Exchanges*
- *European Commission Directorate General for Environment*
- *European Federation for Transport and Environment*
- *International Energy Agency*
- *National Renewable Energy Laboratory*
- *United Nations Environment Program*
- *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*
- *US Department of Energy*
- *World Meteorological Association*



## 2003 – COP 9, Milan, Italy

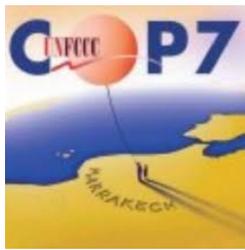
The parties agreed to use the Adaptation Fund established at COP7 in 2001 primarily in supporting developing countries better adapt to climate change. The fund would also be used for capacity-building through technology transfer. At COP9, the parties also agreed to review the first national reports submitted by 110 non-Annex I countries.



## 2002 – COP 8, New Delhi, India

COP8 adopted the Delhi Ministerial Declaration that, amongst others, called for efforts by developed countries to transfer technology and minimize the impact of climate change on developing countries. It is also approved the New Delhi work programme on Article 6 of the Convention. The COP8 was marked by Russia's hesitation, stating that the government needs more time to think it over. The Kyoto Protocol's fine print says it can come into force only once it is ratified by 55 countries, including wealthy nations responsible for 55 per cent of the developed world's 1990 carbon dioxide emissions. With the United States – and its 36.1 per cent slice of developed-world

carbon dioxide – out of the picture and Australia also refusing ratification, Russia was required to make up the difference, hence it could delay the process.



### **2001 – COP 7, Marrakech, Morocco**

At the COP 7 negotiators wrapped up the work on the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, finalizing most of the operational details and setting the stage for nations to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. The completed package of decisions is known as the Marrakech Accords. The United States delegation maintained its observer role, declining to participate actively in the negotiations. Other parties continued to express hope that the United States would re-engage in the process at some point and worked to achieve ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by the requisite number of countries to bring it into force.

The main decisions at COP 7 included:

Operational rules for international emissions trading among parties to the Protocol and for the CDM and joint implementation; A compliance regime that outlined consequences for failure to meet emissions targets but deferred to the parties to the Protocol, once it came into force, the decision on whether those consequences would be legally binding; Accounting procedures for the flexibility mechanisms; A decision to consider at COP 8 how to achieve a review of the adequacy of commitments that might lead to discussions on future commitments by developing countries.

### **2001 – COP 6 bis, Bonn, Germany**

COP 6 negotiations resumed July 17–27, 2001, in Bonn, Germany, with little progress having been made in resolving the differences that had produced an impasse in The Hague. However, this meeting took place after George W. Bush had become the President of the United States and had rejected the Kyoto Protocol in March 2001; as a result the United States delegation to this meeting declined to participate in the negotiations related to the Protocol and chose to take the role of observer at the meeting. As the other parties negotiated the key issues, agreement was reached on most of the major political issues, to the surprise of most observers, given the low expectations that preceded the meeting. The agreements included:

**Flexible Mechanisms:** The "flexibility" mechanisms which the United States had strongly favored when the Protocol was initially put together, including emissions trading; Joint Implementation (JI); and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) which allow industrialized countries to fund emissions reduction activities in developing countries as an alternative to domestic emission reductions.

**Carbon sinks:** It was agreed that credit would be granted for broad activities that absorb carbon from the atmosphere or store it, including forest and cropland management, and re-vegetation,

with no over-all cap on the amount of credit that a country could claim for sinks activities. In the case of forest management, an Appendix Z establishes country-specific caps for each Annex I country. Thus, a cap of 13 million tons could be credited to Japan (which represents about 4% of its base-year emissions). For cropland management, countries could receive credit only for carbon sequestration increases above 1990 levels.

Compliance: Final action on compliance procedures and mechanisms that would address non-compliance with Protocol provisions was deferred to COP 7, but included broad outlines of consequences for failing to meet emissions targets that would include a requirement to "make up" shortfalls at 1.3 tons to 1, suspension of the right to sell credits for surplus emissions reductions, and a required compliance action plan for those not meeting their targets.

Financing: There was agreement on the establishment of three new funds to provide assistance for needs associated with climate change: (1) a fund for climate change that supports a series of climate measures; (2) a least-developed-country fund to support National Adaptation Programs of Action; and (3) a Kyoto Protocol adaptation fund supported by a CDM levy and voluntary contributions.

## **2000 - COP 6, The Hague, Netherlands**

The discussions evolved rapidly into a high-level negotiation over the major political issues. These included major controversy over the United States' proposal to allow credit for carbon "sinks" in forests and agricultural lands, satisfying a major proportion of the U.S. emissions reductions in this way; disagreements over consequences for non-compliance by countries that did not meet their emission reduction targets; and difficulties in resolving how developing countries could obtain financial assistance to deal with adverse effects of climate change and meet their obligations to plan for measuring and possibly reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In the final hours of COP 6, despite some

compromises agreed between the United States and some EU countries, notably the United Kingdom, the EU countries as a whole, led by Denmark and Germany, rejected the compromise positions, and the talks in The Hague collapsed. Jan Pronk, the President of COP 6, suspended

### *RELATED ARTICLES*

- *Climate Change And Global Warming Introduction*
- *Global Dimming*
- *UN Framework Convention On Climate Change*
- *Reactions To Climate Change Negotiations And Action*
- *Global Warming, Spin And Media*
- *Climate Justice And Equity*
- *Climate Change Flexibility Mechanisms*
- *Carbon Sinks, Forests And Climate Change*
- *Climate Change Affects Biodiversity*
- *Global Warming And Population*
- *WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control*

COP-6 without agreement, with the expectation that negotiations would later resume. It was later announced that the COP 6 meetings (termed "COP 6 bis") would be resumed in Bonn, Germany, in the second half of July. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the parties to the UNFCCC – COP 7 – had been set for Marrakech, Morocco, in October–November 2001.

### 1999 – COP 5, Bonn, Germany

It was primarily a technical meeting, and did not reach major conclusions. Parties continued negotiation efforts with a focus on “the adoption of the guidelines for the preparation of national communications by [developed] countries, capacity building, transfer of technology and flexible mechanisms.”



### 1998 – COP 4, Buenos Aires, Argentina

It had been expected that the remaining issues unresolved in Kyoto would be finalized at this meeting. However, the complexity and difficulty of finding agreement on these issues proved insurmountable, and instead the parties adopted a 2-year "Plan of Action" to advance efforts and to devise mechanisms for implementing the Kyoto Protocol, to be completed by 2000. During COP4, Argentina and Kazakhstan expressed their commitment to take on the greenhouse gas emissions reduction obligation, the first two non-Annex countries to do so.<sup>vi</sup>

### 1997 – COP 3, the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change<sup>vii</sup>

After intensive negotiations, it adopted the Kyoto Protocol, which outlined the greenhouse gas emissions reduction obligation for Annex I countries, along with what came to be known as Kyoto mechanisms such as emissions trading, clean development mechanism and joint implementation. Most industrialized countries and some central European economies in transition (all defined as Annex B countries) agreed to legally binding reductions in greenhouse gas emissions of an average of 6 to 8% below 1990 levels between the years 2008–2012, defined as the first emissions budget period. The United States would be required to reduce its total emissions an

#### NEWS SOURCES

- *Alternative Energy Investments*
- *Alternative Energy News*
- *BBC News: Global Climate Change*
- *Clean Edge, Inc.*
- *Climate Biz*
- *Climate Change News Digest*
- *CNet: Green Tech*
- *Consumer Reports: Greener Choices*
- *Environmental News Network*
- *Green Business News*
- *Green: From the Washington Post*
- *GreenBiz.com*
- *Greentech Media*
- *Greenwire*
- *Grist*
- *High Country News*
- *Point Carbon*
- *Renewable Energy World*
- *The Environment Report*
- *The Green Blog*
- *Yale Environment 360*

average of 7% below 1990 levels; however Congress did not ratify the treaty after Clinton signed it. The Bush administration explicitly rejected the protocol in 2001.

### **1996 – COP 2, Geneva, Switzerland**

It reflected a U.S. position statement presented by Timothy Wirth, former Under Secretary for Global Affairs for the U.S. State Department at that meeting, which Accepted the scientific findings on climate change proffered by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its second assessment (1995); Rejected uniform "harmonized policies" in favor of flexibility; Called for "legally binding mid-term targets."<sup>viii</sup>

### **1995 – COP 1, the Berlin Mandate**

It voiced concerns about the adequacy of countries' abilities to meet commitments under the Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI). Parties agreed that mechanisms under the UNFCCC were inadequate and agreed to what would be called the Berlin Mandate, which allows parties to make specific commitments. Non-Annex 1 countries are exempted from additional obligations.<sup>ix</sup>

---

<sup>i</sup> <http://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>

<sup>ii</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Nations\\_Framework\\_Convention\\_on\\_Climate\\_Change](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Framework_Convention_on_Climate_Change)

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.earthtimes.org/Climate/3rd-cop-17-cmp-7-chronology-talks-papers-action/1654/>

<sup>iv</sup> <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/durban-china-accepts-climate-deal-puts-india-in-a-spot/1/162926.html>

<sup>v</sup> [http://knowledge.allianz.com/?1680/climate-politics-durban-climate-talks-part-one-the-big-picture&mcg=2499221812\\_7929062332&kwg=Broad\\_2499221812\\_kyoto+protocol](http://knowledge.allianz.com/?1680/climate-politics-durban-climate-talks-part-one-the-big-picture&mcg=2499221812_7929062332&kwg=Broad_2499221812_kyoto+protocol)

<sup>vi</sup> <http://www.globalissues.org/article/182/cop4-buenos-aires-climate-conference>

<sup>vii</sup> <http://www.globalissues.org/article/183/cop3-kyoto-protocol-climate-conference>

<sup>viii</sup> [http://www.eesi.org/international\\_climate](http://www.eesi.org/international_climate)

<sup>ix</sup> <http://www.law.fsu.edu/journals/landuse/Vol153/guruswamy.pdf>