

Bonn Climate Change Conference: 30 April – 10 May 2018

The Bonn Climate Change Conference opens today and will continue until 10 May 2018. During this conference, three bodies will convene: the 48th sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 48) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 48), and the fifth part of the first session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA 1-5).

Expectations for the Meeting

While the agenda of the three bodies covers a range of important issues, this meeting will focus on the Paris Agreement Work Programme (PAWP) and a set of decisions required to operationalize the Paris Agreement. This work is to be completed at the Katowice Climate Change Conference in December 2018. Good technical progress will be required in Bonn to achieve this objective.

Some of the main issues under negotiation in Bonn relate to the Paris Agreement's cyclical and iterative nature, whereby parties update their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) at five-year intervals, regularly report on progress under a transparency and accountability framework, and convene a global stocktake every five years to assess collective progress towards the Paris Agreement's goals. Related discussions in the negotiations focus on:

- Information that could improve the clarity, transparency, and understanding of NDCs (APA);
- Features of the NDCs (APA);
- Accounting for the NDCs (APA);
- The transparency framework for action and support, which includes reporting of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and financial support provided to developing countries (APA);
- Matters relating to the global stocktake (APA);
- Common timeframes for NDCs (SBI); and
- Modalities and procedures for the NDC registry (SBI).

Other important themes in the PAWP that will be discussed in Bonn include:

- The committee to facilitate implementation and promote compliance under the Paris Agreement (APA);
- Accounting of financial resources provided and mobilized through public interventions (SBSTA);

- Recognizing developing countries' adaptation efforts (SBI and SBSTA);
- Adaptation communication (APA);
- The forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures (SBI and SBSTA); and
- Cooperative approaches under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, which include market and non-market based approaches (SBSTA).

Another important issue in Bonn will be the Talanoa Dialogue, a global conversation about the efforts to combat climate change involving both parties and non-party stakeholders. The Dialogue focuses on three questions related to countries' efforts to combat climate change: Where are we? Where do we want to go? How do we get there? Its preparatory phase started in January 2018 and will last until December, followed by a political phase at the UN Climate Change Conference in Katowice.

Origins of the UNFCCC Process

The international political response to climate change began with the 1992 adoption of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which sets out the basic legal framework and principles for international climate change cooperation with the aim of stabilizing atmospheric concentrations of GHGs to avoid "dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system." The Convention, which entered into force on 21 March 1994, has 197 parties.

In order to boost the effectiveness of the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted in December 1997. It commits industrialized countries, and countries in transition to a market economy, to achieve quantified emissions reduction targets for a basket of six GHGs. The Kyoto Protocol entered into force on 16 February 2005 and has 192 parties. Its first commitment period took place from 2008 to 2012. The 2012 Doha Amendment established the second commitment period from 2013 to 2020. It will enter into force after reaching 144 ratifications. As of March 2018, 111 parties had ratified the Doha Amendment.

In December 2015, parties adopted the Paris Agreement. Under the terms of the Agreement, all countries will submit NDCs, and aggregate progress on mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation will be reviewed every five years through a global stocktake. The Paris Agreement entered into force on 4 November 2016 and, as of 29 April 2018, 175 parties had ratified the Agreement.

Key Turning Points

Durban Mandate: The negotiating mandate for the Paris Agreement was adopted at the UN Climate Change Conference in Durban, South Africa, in 2011. Parties agreed to launch the *Ad hoc* Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) with a mandate “to develop a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties” no later than 2015, to enter into force in 2020. In addition, the ADP was mandated to explore actions to close the pre-2020 ambition gap in relation to the 2°C target.

Lima: The UN Climate Change Conference in Lima, Peru, in 2014 adopted the “Lima Call for Climate Action,” which furthered progress on the negotiations towards the Paris Agreement. It elaborated the elements of a draft negotiating text and the process for submitting and synthesizing intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs), while also addressing pre-2020 ambition.

Paris: The 2015 UN Climate Change Conference convened in Paris, France, and culminated in the adoption of the Paris Agreement on 12 December. The Agreement includes the goal of limiting the global average temperature increase to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. It also aims to increase parties’ ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and make financial flows consistent with a pathway towards low GHG emissions and climate resilient development. The Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in light of different national circumstances.

Under the Paris Agreement, each party shall communicate, at five-year intervals, successively more ambitious NDCs. By 2020, parties whose NDCs contain a time frame up to 2025 are requested to communicate a new NDC and parties with an NDC time frame up to 2030 are requested to communicate or update these contributions.

Key features of the Paris Agreement include a transparency framework, as well as a process known as the global stocktake. Starting in 2023, parties will convene this process at five-year intervals to review collective progress on mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation. The Agreement also includes provisions on adaptation, finance, technology, loss and damage, and compliance.

When adopting the Paris Agreement, parties launched the PAWP to develop the Agreement’s operational details, including through the APA, SBI, and SBSTA. They agreed to convene in 2018 a facilitative dialogue to take stock of collective progress towards the Paris Agreement’s long-term goals. This process is now known as the Talanoa Dialogue.

In Paris, parties also agreed the need to mobilize stronger and more ambitious climate action by all parties and non-party stakeholders to achieve the Paris Agreement’s goals. Building on the Lima-Paris Action Agenda, several non-party stakeholders made unilateral mitigation pledges in Paris, with more than 10,000 registered actions. Attention to actions by non-party stakeholders has continued through the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action, launched in 2016.

Marrakech: The UN Climate Change Conference in Marrakech took place from 7-18 November 2016, and included the first Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 1). Parties adopted several decisions related to the PAWP, including: that the work should conclude by 2018; the terms of reference for the Paris Committee on Capacity-building; and initiating a process to identify the information to be provided in accordance with Agreement Article 9.5 (*ex ante* biennial finance communications by developed countries). Other decisions adopted included approving the five-year workplan of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM), enhancing the Technology Mechanism, and continuing and enhancing the Lima work programme on gender.

Fiji/Bonn: The Fiji/Bonn Climate Change Conference convened from 6-17 November 2017 in Bonn, Germany, under the COP Presidency of Fiji. The COP launched the Talanoa Dialogue and established the “Fiji Momentum for Implementation,” a decision that gives prominence to pre-2020 implementation and ambition. The COP also provided guidance on the completion of the PAWP and decided that the Adaptation Fund shall serve the Paris Agreement, subject to decisions to be taken by CMA 1-3. Parties also further developed, or gave guidance to, the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform, the Executive Committee of the WIM, the Standing Committee on Finance, and the Adaptation Fund.

Intersessional Highlights

Cities and Climate Change Science Conference: The Cities and Climate Change Science Conference took place from 5-7 March 2018, in Edmonton, Canada. The objectives of the conference included to: take stock of scientific literature, data, and other sources of knowledge on cities and climate change since the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fifth Assessment Report (AR5), and build ongoing work as part of the AR6 cycle; identify key gaps with the aim of stimulating new research to be assessed by an AR7 special report on climate change and cities; and develop novel assessment frameworks that take into account the systemic linkages, synergies, and trade-offs between urban systems and climate change. The discussions will inform a research agenda to better understand climate change, its impacts on cities, and the critical role localities play in addressing climate change, and, in turn, feed into a future IPCC Special Report on cities and climate change.

IPCC-47: The 47th session of the IPCC met 13-16 March 2018 in Paris, France. During IPCC-47, the Panel adopted decisions, including: establishing a task group on gender; the terms of reference of a task group on the organization of the future work of the IPCC in light of the global stocktake under the Paris Agreement; and enhancing developing country participation in IPCC activities. The Panel heard presentations on the selection of Coordinating Lead Authors, Lead Authors, and Review Editors for the Working Groups’ contributions to the Sixth Assessment Report.

IPCC-47 also heard progress reports on additional sixth assessment cycle products, including the: Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C; Special Report on Climate Change and Land; Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate; and Methodology Report to refine the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories.