

2019 Climate Change Conference 2-13 December 2019

The 2019 Climate Change Conference will open under exceptional circumstances. Four weeks before the start of the meeting, Chile, the meeting's host and President, announced that it would suspend the conference due to ongoing social unrest in the country. Spain offered to host on short notice, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Bureau accepted the offer.

Expectations for the Meeting

As a result of the last-minute venue change, the expectations for the meeting may be tempered. Many hoped that a high-profile meeting would continue and build momentum after the UN Secretary-General's Climate Summit held in September 2019 and include new announcements of updated climate pledges or financial contributions ahead of the 2020 start of Paris Agreement implementation.

Delegates will take stock of the implementation and ambition of climate action before 2020 through a series of technical meetings during the first week, and a high-level event for delegates to discuss mitigation, adaptation, support provided, and the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action, during the second week.

There are several agenda items that merit attention. It is the first time that that governing body of the Paris Agreement, the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA) will meet with a full agenda of substantive issues for discussion and decision. It will consider, among other items, the special needs and circumstances of developing countries, particularly in Africa and Latin America.

One of the key outcomes expected from this meeting is the conclusion of negotiations for the rules of the Paris Agreement's Article 6. Work on this article includes internationally transferable mitigation outcomes (ITMOs), a market mechanism, and non-market approaches. Left unfinished at the 2018 Katowice Climate Change Conference, the Article 6 negotiations represent the final part of the Paris Agreement rulebook to complete.

Parties are also expected to complete a review of the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts. Other key issues include guidance to the Global Environment Fund (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

The 2019 Climate Change Conference convenes in Madrid, Spain, from 2-13 December 2019. During the meeting, all governing and subsidiary bodies will meet, including the 25th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP

25), the 15th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 15), the 2nd Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 2), and the 51st sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI).

Origins and Treaties of the UNFCCC Process

The international political response to climate change began with the 1992 adoption of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which sets out the basic legal framework and principles for international climate change cooperation with the aim of stabilizing atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases (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 18 October 2019, 134 parties have ratified the Doha Amendment.

In December 2015, parties adopted the Paris Agreement. Under the terms of the Agreement, all countries will submit nationally determined contributions (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, to date, 187 parties have ratified the Agreement.

Recent 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, and 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 Paris Agreement Work Programme (PAWP) to develop the Agreement's operational details. 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 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 meeting of the CMA. 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 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.

Katowice: The Katowice Climate Change Conference convened from 2-14 December 2018 in Katowice, Poland,

concluding a busy year that featured an additional negotiation session to advance work on the PAWP. At COP 24, parties adopted the Katowice Climate Package. The Package finalized nearly all of the PAWP, including decisions to facilitate common interpretation and implementation of the Paris Agreement on the mitigation section of NDCs, adaptation communications, transparency framework, global stocktake, and financial transparency, among others. Work on cooperative approaches, under Article 6 of the Agreement, was not concluded and parties agreed that COP 25 in 2019 would serve as the deadline for this work. The COP was also unable to agree whether to "welcome" or "note" the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming.

Intersessional Highlights

IPCC-49: The 49th session of the IPCC met from 8-12 May 2019 in Kyoto, Japan. Among other issues, the IPCC adopted the Overview Chapter of the 2019 Refinement to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (2019 Refinement) and accepted the underlying report. A small number of delegates registered their objection to what they considered inconsistent treatment in the report of fugitive emissions from oil and gas exploration on the one hand and coal exploration on the other.

Bonn Climate Change Conference: Convening from 17-27 June 2019, delegates at the Bonn Climate Change Conference completed the terms of reference for the WIM review, advanced the Article 6 negotiations, and began consideration of the reporting formats for the Paris Agreement transparency framework. Negotiators were unable to make progress on the Adaptation Fund Board membership and common timeframes, and there was frustration that the SBSTA was unable to welcome the IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C Global Warming.

IPCC-50: IPCC-50 took place from 2-7 August 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland. On the final day, the IPCC adopted the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of the Special Report on Climate Change and Land (SRCCL) and accepted the underlying report. The SRCCL represents the first ever comprehensive look at the whole land-climate system, addressing land as a critical resource, desertification and land degradation, food security, and land and climate change responses.

UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit: UN Secretary-General António Guterres convened a Climate Action Summit on 23 September 2019. The Climate Action Summit was attended by 65 Heads of State and Government, in addition to leaders of sub-national governments and the private sector. Thematic sessions were held on: Plans for a Carbon Neutral World; Climate Finance; Powering the Future from Coal to Clean; Unlocking the Potential of Nature in Climate Action; Towards a Resilient Future; Small Island Developing States; Live, Work and Move Green; Cutting Greenhouse Gas Emissions Now with Cooling and Energy Efficiency; Adapting Now: Making People Safer; Least Developed Countries; People Centered Action Now; and the Economy Moving from Grey to Green.

IPCC-51: IPCC-51 met from 21-24 September in Monaco and adopted the SPM of the Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (SROCC), and accepted the underlying report. The SROCC assesses the latest scientific knowledge about the physical science basis for, and impacts of, climate change on ocean, coastal, polar, and mountain ecosystems, and the human communities that depend on them. The report underscores the urgent need to address "unprecedented" and enduring changes in the ocean and cryosphere.