The Paris Agreement: Substance, Politics, and Forecast

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IPIECA Low-Emissions Pathways Workshop
Paris: How did we get here?

- COP17 (Durban, 2011) created process that culminated in Paris
- Change in approach from “top-down” to “bottom-up”
- Leading up to Paris, 186 of 195 member countries offered “Intended Nationally Determined Contributions”
2015 Paris Agreement

• What it is – a framework and structure for ongoing action to address climate change
• What it is not – a treating creating binding regulatory obligations for all nations
Paris Agreement: Key Features

• Changed paradigm of differentiated treatment
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• Created “pledge and review,” and regular revisitation of targets
Timeline: How countries plan to raise the ambition of their climate pledges

The Paris `ratchet mechanism` is designed to steadily increase ambition over time, ensuring that the world reaches net zero emissions in the second half of the century and keeps temperature rise `well below 2C`.

1. **Climate plans submitted**
   - Countries submit their first round of climate pledges (NDCs). Some cover the period up to 2025, some up to 2030.

2. **Facilitative dialogue**
   - To take stock of collective efforts of countries in relation to the long-term goal of the agreement and to inform the preparation of the next round of pledges.

3. **By 2020**
   - Countries with 2025 targets communicate their second round of climate pledges, while countries with 2030 targets communicate or update their pledge.
   - New climate pledges will then be submitted every 5 years.

4. **Global stocktake**
   - On mitigation, adaptation and finance.

5. **By 2025**
   - Countries submit their third round of climate pledges.

6. **Second stocktake**

[Link to timeline page](http://www.carbonbrief.org/timeline-the-paris-agreements-ratchet-mechanism)
Paris Agreement: Key Features

• Changed paradigm of differentiated treatment
• Created “pledge and review,” and regular revisitation of targets
• Change in level of ambition to 1.5 degrees C
Paris Agreement, Article 2

“Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change.”
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- Created “pledge and review,” and potential for regular revisitation of targets
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- **Commitment of finance, especially for adaptation**
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- Provisions retained for forest and agricultural mitigation
**REDD+**

- Article 5 reaffirms commitment to “results-based payments” for “reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation”
- Paragraph 55 calls for the development and deployment of reliable sources of finance including performance-based payments for REDD+
- Article 6 permits REDD+ to be financed by carbon markets, although mechanism yet to be designed
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• Needed language provided for international linkage
Article 6 enables C markets

- “Voluntary cooperation” allowed in implementation of the NDCs
- Parties may use “internationally transferred mitigation outcomes”
  – “ITMO’s”!
- Agreement creates a “mechanism to contribute to the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and support sustainable development”
  – “the MCMGGESSD”?

Duke
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• Transparency provisions
Transparency

• Essential for Paris Agreement’s approach to accountability

• All countries must submit inventory and data necessary to “track progress”

• All submittals will undergo “expert technical review”
What has happened since?

• U.S. made good on GCF pledge
  – $500 million last week

• U.S./Canada agreement explicitly moves forward on several Paris commitments
  – Market mechanisms
  – Plan for net zero by 2050

• Clean Power Plan litigation has created uncertainty about U.S. ability to deliver
  – White House statements downplaying CPP’s essential role in NDC
Thank you.

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