

## UNFCCC - COP process and its documents (Sept 2019)

Negotiations related to climate have several parts and details can be found here: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings>. Some of the information has been copied from this website. I will try and summarize the areas of negotiations and their status. The various governing elements fall under several areas: Overall Agreements (the Kyoto and Paris Agreements) , Financing; Implementation and Reporting, and Science and Technology Advice.

### Overall Agreements (including the Kyoto and Paris Agreements)

**The Convention:** This is the 1997 agreement that set up the UN to work on the climate problem. The goal is to "Prevent "dangerous" human interference with the climate system". This is one of 3 "conventions" agreed to at the Rio Earth Summit. The other two are a convention on biodiversity and combat desertification. There are 7 parts to the convention - recognizes the problem, sets a goal, states that Annex I (developed) countries must lead the way, directs funds to climate change for developing countries, monitors the state of climate and how states are progressing towards goal, strives to have an economic balance, and addresses adaptation issues. *Status of the convention:* 197 countries have ratified. The US signed it in June of 1992 and ratified it in October of 1992 under GHW Bush.

**Kyoto Agreement:** Commits countries to set binding emission targets. The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in Kyoto, Japan, on 11 December 1997 and entered into force on 16 February 2005. The detailed rules for the implementation of the Protocol were adopted at COP 7 in Marrakesh, Morocco, in 2001, and are referred to as the "Marrakesh Accords." Its first commitment period started in 2008 and ended in 2012. In Doha, Qatar, on 8 December 2012, the "[Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol](#)" was adopted by those who ratified the Kyoto Protocol. *Status:* 192 parties have ratified the protocol (191 states and one regional economic integration organization). The United States has not; it dropped out in 2001.

**Paris Agreement:** The Paris Agreement builds upon the Convention and for the first time brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. As such, it charts a new course in the global climate effort. *Status:* 185 Parties have ratified of 197 Parties to the Convention. The US signed the agreement (under Obama) in April 2016. It was never ratified by the US Senate. In 2017, Trump notified UN that the US would be withdrawing from the agreement in 2020.

### Governing bodies

Under the above 3 agreements, various institutional bodies have been set up to manage the outcomes for the agreements. Each agreement has/had a supreme governing body.

1. The **Conference of the Parties for the Convention** (COP). The US is a participant.
2. The **Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol** (CMP). The governing body for the parties that signed the Kyoto protocol. The US is not party to this body.
3. The **Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement** (CMA). The US is still a participant in this body.

**Administration** of the 3 governing bodies are handled by the "**Bureau**". The Bureau supports the work of the governing bodies through the provision of advice and guidance regarding the ongoing work under the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement, the organization of their sessions and the operation of the secretariat. The Bureau serves during

the sessions and also between session. The Bureau consists of 11 officers, the President, seven Vice-Presidents, the Chairs of the SBSTA and the SBI and the Rapporteur, elected from representatives of Parties nominated by each of the five United Nations regional groups and Small Island Developing States. **The Secretariat** provides organizational support and technical expertise to the UNFCCC negotiations and institutions and facilitates the flow of authoritative information on the implementation of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement. The secretariat is institutionally linked to the United Nations without being integrated into any program and is administered under United Nations rules and regulations.

## **Subsidiary Bodies**

The **Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice** (SBSTA) assists the governing bodies through the provision of timely information and advice on scientific and technological matters as they relate to the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement. In addition, the SBSTA cooperates with relevant international organizations on scientific, technological and methodological questions. This is the body that is the link between the IPCC and the policy making COP.

The **Subsidiary Body for Implementation** (SBI) assists the governing bodies in the assessment and review of the implementation of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement as well as providing the strategic direction on how the secretariat can best serve the Parties and the UNFCCC process towards greater ambition of climate change action.

**Constituted Bodies** (see <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/bodies/the-big-picture/what-are-governing-process-management-subsidiary-constituted-and-concluded-bodies> for more information.

**Adaptation Committee (AC)** (established by COP)

**Adaptation Fund Board (AFB)** (accountable to CMP, Kyoto Agreement)

**Advisory Board of the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN)** (established by COP)

**CDM EB - Executive Board of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)** (established by Kyoto)

**Compliance Committee** (established by Kyoto)

**Consultative Group of Experts (CGE)** (established by Paris)

**Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage**

**Global Environment Facility (GEF)** (established by COP)

**Green Climate Fund (GCF)** (established by COP)

**Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** established by World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). It is independent of the COP.

**Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee (JISC)** (established by Kyoto)

**Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG)** (established by COP)

**Facilitative Working Group (FWG) of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform** (established by COP)

**Standing Committee on Finance (SCF)** (established by COP)

**Technology Executive Committee (TEC)** (established by COP)

**The Paris Committee on Capacity-building (PCCB)** (established by COP)

**Special Climate Change Fund** The Global Environment Facility (GEF) manages the fund.

**Least Developed Countries Fund** (established by COP), The Global Environment Facility (GEF) manages the fund.

## Documents & Negotiations:

At this website - <https://unfccc.int/documents> - the official documents under discussion will be found. Use the above set of acronyms to help figure out which area a document belongs in. For example this document: <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/2019.09.17%20List%20of%20nominations.pdf> gives the proposed countries that have been nominated to serve in various capacities during COP25.

## Party Designation:

**Annex I** Parties include the industrialized countries that were members of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) in 1992, plus countries with economies in transition (the EIT Parties), including the Russian Federation, the Baltic States, and several Central and Eastern European States.

**Annex II** parties consist of the OECD members of Annex I, but not the EIT Parties. They are required to provide financial resources to enable developing countries to undertake emissions reduction activities under the Convention and to help them adapt to adverse effects of climate change. In addition, they have to "take all practicable steps" to promote the development and transfer of environmentally friendly technologies to EIT Parties and developing countries. Funding provided by Annex II Parties is channelled mostly through the Convention's financial mechanism.

**Non-Annex I** Parties are mostly developing countries. Certain groups of developing countries are recognized by the Convention as being especially vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change, including countries with low-lying coastal areas and those prone to desertification and drought. Others (such as countries that rely heavily on income from fossil fuel production and commerce) feel more vulnerable to the potential economic impacts of climate change response measures. The Convention emphasizes activities that promise to answer the special needs and concerns of these vulnerable countries, such as investment, insurance and technology transfer.

The 49 Parties classified as **least developed countries (LDCs)** by the United Nations are given special consideration under the Convention on account of their limited capacity to respond to climate change and adapt to its adverse effects. Parties are urged to take full account of the special situation of LDCs when considering funding and technology-transfer activities.

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## The LWVUS & UN Climate

The first week of negotiations consists of discussions over wording options and for parties (i.e. countries) to suggest optional wording and negotiate final wording of various documents. (I am putting together a document to try to explain the the various documents the UN is negotiating about). We will have input into this process ONLY via the interest groups that we are apart of the Women and Gender Group and the Environmental Group. The negotiators are from the member states - but not the ambassadors, but rather their underlings. It is important to take notes during these negotiations about which member states are saying what and report that back to the interest groups. Also during this first week, there are many, many, side events both in the official UN area and in the public area. Within the official UN area, all the side events are sponsored by a member state.

During the second week, the language options in the UN documents are finalized - to be approved by the member states. During this week, many UN ambassadors or a country's "environment" secretary will be in attendance. Side events continue to be held during this second week.

During both weeks, NGOs may self organize "spontaneous" protests, meetings, etc to put pressure on delegates to do something. Last year - there were several events to push for recognizing the 1.5°C limit after some member states pushed back about recognizing this as a goal. (FYI - the UN did NOT fully endorse the limit and its importance.)

We are a member of the Women and Gender Constituency and the Environmental Constituency. The former has morning strategy sessions that are very helpful to find out what is going on. I'll be attending these and anyone is welcome also. The Environmental constituency also has strategy meetings although more varied and a lot of time is devoted to actions in the public areas.

Public demonstrations are highly orchestrated within these constituencies and most have some sort of approval by the Secretariat if they are held within the official UN area. These have included sit-downs, skits to draw attention to some topic (e.g. gender equity), and public shaming of some company/country (Fossil of the day).