

20th UN Climate Change Conference in Lima

The upcoming UN climate conference in Lima (COP20, 1-12 December 2014) will be an important milestone in the negotiations towards a new global climate agreement. Its outcome should be a draft negotiating text for the new agreement, due to be finalised in December 2015 in Paris.

Background: climate agreements from Kyoto to Paris

To keep global warming below a rise of 2 degrees Celsius, worldwide carbon emissions must be cut by 40 to 70% between 2010 and 2050, and become zero or negative by the year 2100, according to the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC). This requires efforts in all regions of the world. Since 2000, Europe has reduced its carbon emissions by almost 10% but global emissions have risen by 36% in the same period.

A global effort to tackle climate change was launched in 1992 with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The 1997 Kyoto Protocol commits developed nations to reducing carbon emissions, but currently affects only around 14% of global emissions. After failure to reach a global agreement in 2009, the 2011 Durban conference resolved to conclude an agreement by 2015, to enter into force in 2020. In September 2014, world leaders met in New York for a [UN climate summit](#) and laid out their visions for future climate action. They reaffirmed that COP20 in Lima should result in the draft text of a new agreement, to be adopted at the following conference (COP21 in Paris, December 2015).

Elements of the next climate agreement

In contrast to the Kyoto Protocol, which commits only developed nations, the new agreement should apply to all countries. It will be based on a bottom-up approach, under which countries submit Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). These can include emissions targets, policies and projects. Countries are expected to communicate their INDCs by March 2015.

Under the 'common but differentiated responsibility' principle, greater efforts are expected of developed nations, which are responsible for most of the greenhouse gases accumulated in the atmosphere. Financing reductions of carbon emissions and adaptation efforts in developing nations will be an important element.

Besides nation states, cities, regions and industry will all have an important role to play in future climate action. Carbon markets are also expected to play a role in distributing efforts among different actors.

EU approach

The EU has a well-developed climate policy, based on targets for 2020 (20% less carbon emissions, 20% market share of renewable energy sources, and 20% improvements in energy efficiency), supported by various instruments such as the Emissions Trading System and the Energy Efficiency Directive. In October 2014, the European Council agreed on climate and energy targets for 2030 (at least 40% less carbon emissions, 27% renewables, 27% energy efficiency). In October 2014, the Council adopted [conclusions on COP20](#).

Role of the European Parliament

The European Parliament (EP) supports an ambitious climate policy. Its February 2014 resolution called for at least 30% market share and individual national targets for renewables, and a 40% improvement in energy efficiency by 2030. EP delegations regularly participate in the UN climate change conferences.

On 5 November 2014, the Environment Committee adopted a motion for resolution on COP20, recommending that the new agreement aim at a 50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2050. MEPs stressed that funding, technology transfer and capacity building are essential to help developing countries. They called on the EU and Member States to increase contributions to the UN Green Climate Fund. The plenary vote is scheduled for the November II session.