

# Study in focus:

## International Climate Negotiations

### In view of COP 24 and beyond

In view of the 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) under the United Nations Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018, the [study](#) by Neier et al. 2018<sup>1</sup> provides an overview of the current state of play of International Climate Negotiations. While it introduces the UNFCCC, its bodies and key terms, as well as milestones and key players in international climate negotiations, it summarises the negotiation process under the UNFCCC, related international developments as well as the key issues ahead of COP24 and beyond.

### Key issues in Katowice

Since the adoption of the Paris Agreement Parties have been faced with the difficult task of having to agree on a **large number of details**, in order to ensure its effective implementation. With so much still to be agreed upon until the end of 2018, a considerable amount of work awaits the Parties' delegates in Katowice.

The focus of the negotiations in Katowice will be on the **technical implementation** of the **Paris Agreement**, i.e. on **guidance, rules** and the **modalities** for the various topics covered by the Agreement. The main topics of the so-called **Paris Agreement Work Programme (PAWP)**, sometimes also referred to as 'Paris Rulebook' include:

- The information to be contained in **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**
- **Climate finance**
- Modalities, procedures and guidelines for the **enhanced transparency framework**
- Modalities for the **global stocktake**
- The type of information to be contained in the **adaptation communication**
- Modalities for the committee to **promote compliance**.



Delegates will have to coordinate a number of negotiation strands and face the challenge of having to find common ground between diverging interests. They will have to do so under considerable **time pressure**, as the year **2018** has been set as the **deadline** for finalising the various guidelines, modalities and rules for the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Apart from time constraints, **finance** issues – financial support to developing countries remains below expectations – will be of crucial importance as will the topic of **differentiation** between the requirements for developing versus developed country Parties.

The political phase of the **Talanoa Dialogue** where Parties take stock of their efforts will be an important part of COP 24.

Additionally the Parties need to demonstrate their commitment to **pre-2020 action** and send out signals that ambition will be stepped up with enhanced or new Nationally Determined Contributions by 2020.

### UN Climate Change Conference



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## Developments beyond UNFCCC

Beyond the UNFCCC process, there are international organisations with close links to climate negotiations, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) or the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the **Montreal Protocol**.

The IPCC had been invited to prepare a **Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 degrees C (SR1.5)**. The report, published on 6 October 2018, validates concerns that **limiting global warming at 2 degrees C** rather than 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial levels **will entail substantial additional impacts on ecosystems and humanity's safety and well-being**. While the report concludes that staying within 1.5 degrees C is still possible, authors stress that it would require rapid and far-reaching transitions in all sectors of the global economy. It is important to note that **existing national climate pledges** under the Paris Agreement **would lead to a 3 to 4 degree C temperature rise** by the end of the century. Hence, more extensive mitigation efforts are required to bring the world in line with the Paris Agreement.



Since the adoption of the Paris Agreement, momentum had been building up to achieving a sector-wide strategy to deal with greenhouse gas emissions from **international shipping**, a sector excluded from the Paris Agreement. In April 2018 the **IMO** adopted its '**Initial strategy**' representing the first global framework for regulating emissions from international shipping.

In October 2016, the ICAO assembly adopted a resolution on the '**Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation**' (**CORSIA**), a sector also not regulated under the Paris Agreement. This Global Market-Based Measure aims at offsetting the increase in greenhouse gas emissions from **international aviation** by mitigation projects. In the same month, an amendment to the Montreal Protocol – the **Kigali Amendment** – was adopted, committing Parties to a stepwise phase-down of the potent greenhouse gas **hydrofluorocarbons**.

## Beyond Katowice



It seems unlikely that all details with respect to the complex **technical issues** will be sorted out in Katowice. The work of negotiators will not end there, as some technical details, such as reporting tables, may be finalised in work programmes afterwards.

In 2019 a big debate on **loss and damage** is to be expected when the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss And Damage (WIM) is on the agenda.

There is still **reluctance by some Parties to ratify the Paris Agreement**. If large emitters such as the Russian Federation or Iran do not share the efforts under the Paris Agreement, it will be harder for the remaining Parties to fulfil its goals. However, a large majority of the emissions (approx. 88.8%) is currently covered by countries that have ratified the Agreement.

Another continuing talking point will be the **role of the United States** that intends to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. There is a risk that other Parties decrease their ambition as they are not willing to take on a higher burden. In addition, developing countries and international organisations such as the Green Climate Fund or the IPCC are affected by a decrease in financial support.

Also on the agenda for 2019 and beyond, will be, depending on the developments in Katowice, a **new financial goal** for post-2025. A main challenge for Parties in 2019 will be to **update their NDCs**. This will be especially important because global efforts are currently not sufficient to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

<sup>1</sup> Neier, H., Neyer, J. and Radunsky, K., *International Climate Negotiations – Issues at stake in view of the COP 24 UN Climate Change Conference in Katowice and beyond*, Study for the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, European Parliament, Policy Department for Economic, Scientific and Quality of Life Policies, Luxembourg, 2018

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