

COP24 climate change conference: Outcomes

The COP24 climate change conference, held in Katowice, Poland, from 3 to 15 December 2018, agreed detailed rules for the implementation of the Paris Agreement, with the exception of rules on market mechanisms, a subject on which international negotiations will continue throughout 2019.

Background

In December 2018, three years after the conclusion of the [Paris Agreement](#), the 24th conference of the parties (COP) to the United Nations (UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change was held in Katowice -- the third COP hosted by Poland. In October 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had released a [special report](#) on global warming of 1.5 degrees, as requested by COP21 in 2015. It concluded that global emissions would need to drop rapidly during the next decade to avoid the worst consequences of global warming exceeding 1.5 degrees. Delegates at COP24 argued over how to acknowledge the IPCC report. They decided to welcome its timely completion, but stopped short of endorsing its contents.

Outcomes

The [Katowice decisions](#) constitute the 'rulebook' for the Paris Agreement. They give an operational interpretation to the Agreement and top-down direction to complement the bottom-up approach of 'nationally determined contributions' (NDCs). A key issue in the negotiations was the long-standing differentiation between developed and developing countries. The rulebook binds all parties to the same reporting standards, but allows flexibility (time limited) for countries that need it. Moreover, developed countries are expected to have economy-wide absolute emission reduction targets. The agreed rulebook:

- gives guidance on the content and format of NDCs, including a structured summary which forms the basis for regular reporting;
- sets out a regime for transparency and accountability, with common rules for measuring and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions, finance and adaptation;
- defines processes for the five-yearly global stocktake of the effectiveness of climate action, which includes information-gathering, a technical assessment and a consideration of the outputs;
- establishes a committee to review non-performance of parties (such as failure to submit NDCs or reports or not acting on technical reviews), with the consent of the concerned party.

However, no agreement was reached on rules for international cooperation in achieving national pledges, such as voluntary carbon markets. Draft rules to avoid double counting of emission cuts were opposed by Brazil. Negotiations on this issue will continue in 2019, with a view to reaching agreement at the next COP.

Concluding the [Talanoa dialogue](#), the presidents of COP23 and COP24 issued a non-binding [call for action](#).

Role of the EU and the European Parliament

A delegation of MEPs attended the conference, backed by a plenary [resolution](#) calling for net-zero global greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, an enhancement of NDCs by 2020 and a more ambitious EU target of a 55 % emission reduction by 2030. In November 2018, the European Commission presented a [strategy](#) for a climate-neutral future, aiming to achieving a modern, prosperous EU economy with net zero emissions by 2050.

Next steps

A [UN climate summit](#) with the theme 'A race we can win. A race we must win.' will be held in September 2019 in New York. COP25 will take place in Chile in November 2019, with a pre-COP meeting in Costa Rica. In 2020, discussions about post-2025 climate finance will start, and parties will have to update their NDCs.

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