

COP25 climate change conference: Outcomes

The COP25 climate change conference took place from 2-15 December 2019 in Madrid, Spain, under the presidency of the Chilean government. It addressed outstanding issues relating to the rulebook for implementation of the Paris Agreement, notably the rules on cooperative approaches. Despite a two-day prolongation, the parties failed to reach an agreement and postponed the decision until 2020. The conference did however make progress on implementation of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage, and adopted an enhanced gender action plan. A European Parliament delegation attended the conference.

Outcomes of the conference

The [COP25](#) took decisions to strengthen implementation of the [Warsaw International Mechanism](#) for Loss and Damage by establishing the Santiago Network for averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage by offering technical assistance to vulnerable developing countries. It also adopted an enhanced [gender action plan](#) to promote gender-responsive climate action and climate finance.

However, the [conference](#) failed once again to finalise the rulebook for the Paris Agreement. Just like at [COP24](#) in Katowice, the parties were unable to agree on rules to implement [Article 6](#) on cooperative approaches. The points of contention were the accounting rules to prevent double counting of emission reductions and the validity of pre-2020 international carbon credits, which pose risks to [environmental integrity](#) by failing to promote additional emission reductions. Negotiations on this issue continue in 2020.

European Parliament position

On 28 November 2019, Parliament declared a [climate and environment emergency](#) and adopted a [resolution on COP25](#). The resolution supports an update of the EU's nationally determined contribution (NDC) with a target of a 55 % reduction in EU emissions by 2030, and calls on other global economies to strengthen their NDCs as well. It highlights the importance of strict and robust international rules relating to Article 6. A delegation led by Bas Eickhout (Greens/EFA, the Netherlands) took part in the conference.

Reactions

Reflecting the general mood, UN Secretary-General [António Guterres](#) expressed his disappointment with the results and spoke of an important lost opportunity. Although the issue of individual parties' ambitions was not on the formal COP25 agenda, [NGOs and activists](#) deplored the fact that no major economy apart from the EU had committed to achieving the deep [emission cuts](#) required to keep global warming under control. The EU announced its plans for the [European Green Deal](#) during the conference, aiming for carbon-neutrality by 2050, with an intermediate emission reduction target for 2030 of 50 % to 55 %.

Regarding Article 6, some [negotiators](#) argue that no agreement is better than an agreement with loopholes that lacks environmental integrity and does not contribute to ambition. Economist [Robert Stavins](#) points out that countries may establish their own rules for international linkages to create high-integrity carbon markets, following the examples of [California and Québec](#), and the [European Union and Switzerland](#).

Next steps

The intersessional climate change conference from 1-11 June 2020 in Bonn, Germany, will continue work on Article 6 with a view to reaching an agreement at [COP26](#), which is due to take place from 9-20 November 2020 in Glasgow, UK. The COP26 agenda will include enhanced ambition. The Paris Agreement requires parties to update their NDCs and present their long-term low-carbon development strategies by 2020.

The [United States' decision](#) to withdraw from the Paris Agreement will take effect on 4 November 2020. This is the day after the US presidential elections, the results of which could result in a policy U-turn.

