



Local & Regional
Europe

Climate change negotiations

Glossary

Council of European Municipalities and Regions
Brussels, November 2013

Based on the UNFCCC Glossary of climate change acronyms

CLIMATE CHANGE NEGOTIATIONS

Glossary

Ad hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP)

Subsidiary body established at the 2011 UNFCCC Conference in Durban to develop, by 2015, an agreed outcome with legal force applicable to *all* Parties of the Convention from 2020 onwards. The process of negotiations through which this future agreement is discussed is called the “ADP process”.

Adaptation (to climate change)

Adaptation means anticipating the negative effects of climate change and taking appropriate action to prevent or minimise the damage they can cause, or taking advantage of opportunities that may arise.

Examples: using scarce water resources more efficiently; adapting building codes to future climate conditions and extreme weather events; building flood defences and raising the levels of dykes; choosing tree species and forestry practices less vulnerable to storms and fires; etc.

Adaptation strategies are needed at *all* levels of administration: local, regional, national, EU and international. Due to the varying severity and nature of climate impacts in Europe, most adaptation initiatives will be taken at the regional or local levels.

Adaptation Fund

Launched in 2007, the Adaptation Fund is designed to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable *and* that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The Fund is financed with a share of proceeds from Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project activities and funds from other sources. It is operated by the Adaptation Fund Board.

Website: www.adaptation-fund.org

Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)

Coalition of small island and low-lying coastal countries that share similar development challenges and concerns about the environment, especially their vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change.

Annex I Parties

List of industrialised countries set in the Annex I of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. They include the 24 original OECD members, the European Union, and 14 countries with economies in transition (mainly Central and Eastern European states). Most of them have now agreed to reduce their greenhouse gases emissions below an average of 20% below 1990 levels.

Annex II Parties

List of industrialised countries set the in Annex II of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change which have a special obligation to provide financial resources and facilitate technology transfer to developing countries to fight climate change. They include the 24 original OECD members and the EU.

Bali Action Plan

Two-year process launched at the COP 13 in Bali, in 2007, aimed at reaching a new binding agreement in Copenhagen in 2009 for the post-2012 period (post-Kyoto). It is divided into 5 pillars: a shared vision for long-term cooperation, enhanced action on mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer and financing.

The Bali Action Plan is part of the broader Bali Road Map which encompasses other decisions and mechanisms essential to reaching a secure climate future, for instance on deforestation.

Cancun Agreements

Set of decisions taken at the COP 16 Conference in Cancun in 2010 – a year after the failure of the Copenhagen Summit – which addresses a series of key issues in the fight against climate change. Among the most prominent agreements is the establishment of a Green Climate Fund to transfer money from the developed to developing world to tackle the impacts of climate change.

carbonn Cities Climate Registry (cCCR)

Global mechanism that enables local governments to regularly and publicly report on their greenhouse gas reduction commitments, their emissions inventories and their climate mitigation/adaptation actions. The cCCR was developed by local governments for local governments in 2010.

Website: <http://citiesclimateregistry.org>

Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)

Mechanism established under the Kyoto Protocol through which developed countries (Annex I) may finance greenhouse gases emissions reduction or removal projects in developing countries, and receive credits for doing so which they may apply or trade to meet the limits set on their own emissions.

COP – Conference of the Parties (COP)

Supreme decision-making body of the Convention. It meets once a year to review the Convention's progress. The word "conference" is not used here in the sense of "meeting" but rather of "association". The "Conference" meets in sessional periods, for example, the "4th session of the Conference of the Parties" or "COP4".

Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP)

Supreme decision-making body of the Kyoto Protocol. It reviews the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and takes decisions to promote its effective implementation.

The sessions of the COP and the CMP are held during the same period to reduce costs and improve coordination between the Convention and the Protocol. All States that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol are represented at the CMP, while States that are not Parties may participate as observers.

Doha Climate Gateway

Set of decisions taken at the COP 18 meeting in Doha in 2012 which paved the way for a new agreement to be reached in Paris in 2015. Among the most prominent decisions is an agreement on a second commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol (2013-2020).

Emissions trading

Mechanism established under the Kyoto Protocol that allows countries that have "emission units" to spare to sell this excess capacity to countries that are over their targets.

As far as the EU is concerned, it launched in 2005 a trading system (EU ETS) to reduce GHG from companies. Working on the 'cap and trade' principle, it now covers more than 11,000 power stations and manufacturing plants in the 28 EU Member States as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Aviation operators flying within and between most of these countries are also covered.

The EU ETS covers around 45% of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions. It is also the world's biggest emissions trading market, accounting for over three-quarters of international carbon trading. It is however in a current process of reform to address the imperfections of its market-oriented approach.

Check the EU ETS Factsheet: http://ec.europa.eu/clima/publications/docs/factsheet_ets_en.pdf.

European climate adaptation platform (Climate-ADAPT)

EU platform launched in 2012 providing resources to support adaptation policy and decision making, including a toolset for adaptation planning; a projects and case studies' database; and information on adaptation action at all levels, from the EU through regional and national to the local level.

Website: <http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/>

Flexible mechanisms / Kyoto mechanisms

Three mechanisms defined under the Kyoto Protocol that enable Parties to achieve emission reductions or to remove carbon from the atmosphere cost-effectively in other countries: a) Emissions Trading, b) Clean Development Mechanism and c) Joint Implementation.

Friends of Cities Group

Group of countries Parties to the UNFCCC that are sensitive to and support local and regional governments' advocacy and implementation efforts in the fight against climate change.

This group includes Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, the EU, France, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, the US and the Alliance of Small Island States.

Greenhouse gases (GHG)

Gases present in the atmosphere and responsible for causing global warming and climate change. The main ones are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O). Less prevalent but still powerful are hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆).

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Independent financial organisation that provides grants to developing countries and economies in transition for projects related to biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and persistent organic pollutants.

Established in the early 1990s, it unites 183 countries, international institutions, civil society and the private sector to address global environmental issues while supporting *national* sustainable development initiatives. Local climate action is confined to a particular national context.

Website: www.thegef.org

Green Climate Fund

Established at the COP 16 in Cancun in 2010, the Green Climate Fund will serve as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC. It will support projects, programmes, policies and other activities in developing country Parties. It will adopt a country-driven approach and strengthen engagement at the country level through effective involvement of relevant institutions and stakeholders – including local and regional governments.

Website: <http://gcfund.net>

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

International association of local and metropolitan governments dedicated to sustainable development, ICLEI provides technical consulting, training, and information services to build capacity, share knowledge, and support local government in the implementation of sustainable development at the local level. It is also the focal point of the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency for the UNFCCC.

Website: www.iclei.org

Group of 77 (G-77) and China

Large negotiating alliance of developing countries that focuses on numerous international topics, including climate change. Founded in 1964 under the auspices of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the G-77 seeks to harmonise the negotiating positions of its 131 Member States. Fiji holds the Chairmanship for 2013.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Established in 1988 under the auspices of the United Nations, the IPCC reviews and assesses the most recent scientific, technical and socio-economic information produced worldwide on climate change caused by human activity, its consequences and possible solutions. The IPCC assessment reports are widely recognised as the most credible existing sources of information on climate change.

Although independent from the UNFCCC, it also works on methodologies and responds to specific requests from the Convention's subsidiary bodies.

Membership of the IPCC is open to all countries members of the World Meteorological Organisation and the United Nations Environment Programme, which established the Panel originally.

Website: www.ipcc.ch

Joint Implementation (JI)

Mechanism established under the Kyoto Protocol to help countries with binding greenhouse gas emissions (Annex I) meet their obligations by allowing them to invest in an emission reduction project in any other Annex I country as an alternative to reducing emissions domestically. Projects in Annex 1 countries only is also what makes it different from the Clean Development Mechanism (see above) where projects are undertaken in developing countries.

Local Government Climate Roadmap

Advocacy process that began in 2007 aimed at echoing the voice of local and regional authorities in the international climate negotiations, and in particular in the reaching of a new global post-Kyoto agreement. Its strategy is three-fold: recognition, engagement and empowerment. Its first phase covered the 2007-2012 period. A second phase to run until 2015 started this year.

Mexico City Pact (Global Cities Covenant on Climate)

Launched in 2010 at the occasion of the 2010 World Mayors Summit on Climate, the Pact is designed to recall the strategic importance of cities in combating global warming and at the same time establishes a set of voluntary commitments to promote actions aimed at mitigating GHG emissions at local level and adapting cities to the impacts of climate change.

Check the text: <http://www.wmsc2010.org/the-mexico-city-pact/>

Mitigation

Actions taken to limit the magnitude and/or rate of long-term climate change, mainly through the reduction of human emissions of greenhouse gases or by increasing the capacity of "carbon sinks".

Examples: using fossil fuels more efficiently for industrial processes or electricity generation, switching to solar energy or wind power, improving the insulation of buildings, and expanding forests and other "sinks" to remove greater amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

International agreement adopted in Montreal in 1987 to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production of numerous substances believed to be responsible for ozone depletion. Ratified by 197 States and the European Union, it is set as an example of exceptional international cooperation.

Nantes Declaration of Mayors and Subnational Leaders on Climate Change

Declaration adopted at the 2013 World Mayors Summit on Climate Change that sets the vision, expectations and commitments of mayors and subnational leaders towards and for the global agreement to be reached in Paris in 2015. The Declaration was endorsed by CEMR.

Check the text: <http://bit.ly/16Dpyd0>

Nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs)

Set of policies and actions that countries undertake as part of a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They are summed up in a registry that governments set up at the COP 16 in 2010.

The term recognises that different countries may take different nationally appropriate action on the basis of equity and in accordance with common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. It also emphasises financial assistance from developed countries to developing countries to reduce emissions.

Non-Annex I Parties

Countries that have ratified or acceded to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change but that are not included in Annex I of the Convention. Most of them are developing countries.

Observers

Agencies, non-governmental organisations, and governments not Parties to the Convention that are allowed to attend, but not vote, at meetings of the COP, the CMP and the subsidiary bodies.

Plenary

Formal meeting of the entire COP, CMP or one of the subsidiary bodies. Formal decisions or conclusions may only be taken during plenary sessions.

Protocol

International agreement linked to an existing convention, but as a separate and additional piece which must be signed and ratified by the Parties to the convention concerned. Protocols typically strengthen a convention by adding new, more detailed commitments.

Quantified Emissions Limitation and Reduction Commitments (QELROs)

Legally binding targets and timetables under the Kyoto Protocol for the limitation or reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by developed countries.

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD)

Set of steps designed to use market and financial incentives in order to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases from deforestation and forest degradation.

A UN REDD Programme was set up in 2008 to assist developing countries in addressing certain measures needed in order to effectively participate in the REDD mechanism. REDD activities can be undertaken by national or local governments, NGOs, the private sector, or any combination of these.

Regional groups

Alliances of countries, in most cases sharing the same geographic region, which meet privately to discuss issues and nominate bureau members and other officials for activities under the Convention. The five regional groups are Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC), and the Western Europe and Others Group (WEOG).

Reservoirs

Components of the climate system where a greenhouse gas or a precursor of a greenhouse gas is stored. Trees are "reservoirs" for carbon dioxide.

Rio+20

United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2012. The first UN Conference on Sustainable Development was the "Earth Summit", held in 1992, and it spawned three "Rio Conventions" including the UNFCCC.

Sink

Any process, activity or mechanism which removes a greenhouse gas, an aerosol or a precursor of a greenhouse gas from the atmosphere. Forests and other vegetation are considered sinks because they remove carbon dioxide through photosynthesis.

Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF)

Fund established to support adaptation and technology transfer in *all* developing country parties to the UNFCCC. It supports both long-term and short-term adaptation activities in water resources management, land management, agriculture, health, infrastructure development, fragile ecosystems, including mountainous ecosystems, and integrated coastal zone management. The Fund is operated by the Global Environment Facility – as the entity that operates the UNFCCC financial mechanism.

Subsidiary bodies

Committees that assist the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC.

Two *permanent* subsidiary bodies were created by the Convention:

- the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) which makes recommendations on policy and implementation issues to the COP and, if requested, to other bodies;
- the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) which serves as a link between the information and assessments provided by expert sources (such as the IPCC) and the COP, which focuses on setting policy.

There are some additional *temporary* bodies.

World Mayors Council on Climate Change

Alliance of committed local government leaders concerned about climate change, founded in 2005, and advocating for enhanced engagement of local governments as governmental stakeholders in multilateral efforts addressing climate change and related issues of global sustainability.

The Council currently has over 80 members representing a vast network of local governments working to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. Membership is open to Mayors and equivalent leaders of municipal levels of government. The Chair is Park Won Soon, Mayor of Seoul Metropolitan Government.

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About CEMR

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is the broadest organisation of local and regional authorities in Europe. Its members are over 50 national associations of municipalities and regions from 41 European countries. Together these associations represent some 150 000 local and regional authorities.

CEMR's objectives are twofold: to influence European legislation on behalf of local and regional authorities and to provide a platform for exchange between its member associations and their elected officials and experts.

Moreover, CEMR is the European section of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the worldwide organisation of local government.

www.ccre.org