

## **ACS Climate Change Advocacy Workshop**

### **International efforts to combat climate change accessibility text**

Efforts to combat climate change cannot be implemented only by the United States. While it is one of the largest contributors, it is by no means alone. It is important to understand what is occurring at the international level as well. International efforts fall under the treaty titled: the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – or the UNFCCC.

The goal of the UNFCCC is to avoid dangerous human impacts to Earth's climate long-term. It commits all nations to take steps to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and recognizes that countries' obligations will vary due to their unique emissions contributions to climate change and resources available to address it. It also commits developed countries to assist developing countries in reducing emissions and coping with climate impacts. UNFCCC is governed by the Conference of Parties – or COP – which meets annually.

The most important international body overseeing efforts on climate change is the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – or IPCC. It was created to provide policymakers with regular scientific assessments on climate change, its implications, and potential future risks.

Click on the different chronological events outlined in the timeline below or use the black arrow on the right of your screen to navigate. The timeline will highlight key events associated with global diplomatic efforts to combat climate change.

#### **Main Page**

#### **International efforts to combat climate change**

This timeline will highlight key events associated with global diplomatic efforts to combat climate change.

#### United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

- Goal is to avoid dangerous human impacts to Earth's climate long-term.
  - Commits all nations to take steps to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions
  - Recognizes that countries' obligations will vary due to their unique emissions contributions to climate change and resources available to address it
  - Commits developed countries to assist developing countries in reducing emissions and coping with climate impacts.
- Governed by the Conference of Parties (COP), which meets annually.

#### Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

- Created to provide policymakers with regular scientific assessments on climate change, its implications and potential future risks

**1992**

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - Earth Summit

- US President George H.W. Bush and global leaders adopted international environmental agreements, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

## **1995**

COP1 - Berlin, Germany

- Inaugural Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC.
- Led to the Berlin Mandate for Kyoto Protocol Negotiations.

## **1997**

COP3 - Kyoto, Japan - Kyoto Protocol

- The Kyoto Protocol covers a small fraction of global emissions, including ozone layer protections.
- Initial emission targets extended only through 2012.
- President Clinton did not introduce the Kyoto Protocol to Congress before his term end, and George W. Bush did not support it. Therefore, the United States did not ratify this.

## **2005**

COP11 - Montreal, Canada

- Kyoto Protocol entered into force.

## **2009**

COP15 - Copenhagen, Denmark - Copenhagen Accord

- President Obama and leaders created Copenhagen Accord which was not part of COP formally, but set the precedent for limiting global temperature increase to 2C.
- Set the goal of contributing \$100B/year by 2020 to developing countries .
- Encouraged all nations to set mitigation pledges.

## **2010**

COP16 - Cancun Agreements

- Copenhagen Accord elements were formally recognized by COP.
- This was a temporary arrangement until a Kyoto Protocol successor could happen.

## **2011**

COP17 - Durban, South Africa

- Durban Platform for Advanced Action
- Discussed details for a comprehensive agreement to start in 2020.

## **2015**

COP21 - Paris, France - Paris Agreement

- Landmark agreement that merged Kyoto, Copenhagen, and Cancun Agreements. Each nation decided its nonbinding Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), and made a binding agreement for all countries regarding procedural commitments.

- Enhanced transparency framework allowed tracking of country actions and strengthening of NDC's every 5 years.
- Ratified by President Obama in 2016, withdrawn by President Trump, which took effect November 2020.

## 2018

COP24 - Katowice, Poland

- Progress was made on the rulebook for the Paris Agreement.

## 2020

US Re-enters Paris Agreement

- Almost immediately upon election to office, President Biden re-enters the United States into the Paris Agreement.

## 2021

COP26 - Glasgow, Scotland - Glasgow Climate Pact

- Paris Agreement Rulebook was completed and agreed to by every party at COP26 (almost 200 countries).
- Goal: Limit global temperature increase to 1.5C. Only works if every country does what they committed to during COP26.
  - Mitigation - reduce emissions
  - Adaptation - aid countries impacted by climate change
  - Finance - help countries take climate change action
  - Collaboration - contribute to greater and more impactful action by working together
- An agreement to cut methane emissions by 30% of 2020 levels by 2030 was agreed to by >100 countries.
- A phase out of coal-fired power plants and funding for international coal projects was pledged by a coalition of 18 countries and financial institutions

## 2022

COP27 - Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt

Goals for COP27:

- Include more countries in undertaking the 1.5 degree-efforts
- Fulfill all promises made in Glasgow and existing commitments including:
  - moving to timely implementation at scale
  - mobilizing flows of support to implement NDCs of developing countries
  - making financial flows consistent with the pathways towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.
  - strengthening NDCs not yet aligned with the Paris temperature goal, taking into account different national circumstances;
  - Mitigation
    - redoubling efforts to stabilize long-term climate by decarbonizing the global energy sector

- invigorating work to reduce near-term warming by rapidly cutting methane and other non-CO<sub>2</sub> greenhouse gases while ending deforestation
- enhancing adaptation efforts