

COP 22 briefing paper: moving forward from Paris

In 2015, the world's efforts to tackle climate change took a remarkable turn, with the global climate change conference in Paris producing a historic climate deal. We believe that we're now at the start of a new era of climate cooperation, at both international and national levels, that will deliver goals agreed in Paris.

The United Nations climate change conference in Paris (COP 21) last December marked a watershed moment in climate change diplomacy. World leaders adopted a universal agreement under the UN Climate Convention to strengthen the global response to climate change.¹

Between 7 and 18 November 2016, 197 countries will meet in Marrakesh, Morocco, to start laying the foundations for implementing the Paris Agreement. If the deal reached in Paris marks the end of the first phase in the fight to protect the climate, the Marrakesh conference will be a springboard into the future.

Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement was an important moment for multilateralism. For the first time in history, the entire world – including both developed and developing nations – agreed to a legally binding international climate change agreement. This requires them to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, while adapting and planning for a safer, cleaner, fairer and more climate-resilient future for all – with particular emphasis on ensuring that any solutions respect the needs of women and girls.

The Paris Agreement commits countries to transition to a zero-carbon climate-resilient future, by limiting the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, while pursuing further efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

Under the Agreement, countries are required to increase their adaptation work to ensure communities can adapt to the adverse effects

of climate change, by building resilience and better managing climate risks. Rich countries are also required to provide support to developing countries to help them adapt and reduce their vulnerability.

The Agreement includes important references to considering, respecting and promoting human rights, gender equality and empowerment of women and girls and other vulnerable groups, and for climate actions to take place in the context of just transition.

But while the Agreement recognises that gender should be a priority throughout climate policy, more work is needed to come up with specific actions and strategies to ensure that climate solutions fully consider, respect and promote the rights of women and girls.

To adhere to the Paris Agreement, all countries must show complete respect for human rights in all efforts to address climate change, and advance these when making decisions and implementing climate policy.

Furthermore, the conclusions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)'s Lima Work Programme on Gender² will be presented in Marrakesh to ensure that gender equality remains an ongoing priority.

While the Paris outcome was rightly hailed as a major breakthrough, it's not yet a success. Scientists who have assessed the aggregate effect of the 'nationally determined contributions' (NDCs) – the commitments for action on climate change each country made at Paris – confirm that the world is on track for warming of more than 3°C by 2100.³

'The Paris Agreement commits countries to transition to a zero-carbon climate-resilient future.'

Mohamed Adow,
Senior Adviser, Global
Advocacy and Alliances

Key components of the Paris Agreement include:

A **long-term goal** – commitment to achieve ‘net-zero’ greenhouse gas emissions (that is a balance between carbon emissions and carbon sinks) in the second half of the century, in line with the science of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and to make progress towards limiting the global average temperature rise to 1.5°C.

An **ambition mechanism** to ratchet up emissions reductions targets – consisting of a facilitative dialogue and collective review process by which countries will assess their ambition, and the requirement for them to produce and submit updated and increased emissions reduction contributions, starting in 2018.

A **Dynamic Cycle** – Paris does not establish a static system, but rather a

dynamic cycle by which national pledges to reduce emissions are tabled every five years, assessed against the demands of science and equity, and strengthened time and again.

A strong focus on **adaptation** – that helps countries prepare for and respond to the impact of climate change.

A section on **loss and damage** from climate change – which will help ensure that vulnerable countries plan for irreversible climate impacts.

A **financial commitment** – reaffirming the goal to keep mobilising \$100bn per year until 2025, coupled with a commitment to making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions.

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Much more work is now needed to prepare for the entry into legal force of the Paris Agreement and its eventual implementation. This requires countries to strengthen their national climate policies and take actions to sustain and accelerate the transformation towards zero-carbon and climate-resilient economies.

As such, COP 22 presents a key moment. The beginnings of this long process are behind us. It’s time to begin a new phase that delivers on the potential of the Paris Agreement, while fundamentally strengthening countries’ climate effort.

COP22: Life after Paris

This year, climate negotiations shift gears. While the Paris Agreement sets out the vision of what is needed to tackle climate change, at Marrakesh world leaders must begin the process of turning that vision into reality.

The Marrakesh conference should act as a springboard for accelerated climate action in the period before 2020, when the Paris Agreement is due to enter into force, through sustained political will, while at the same time laying the foundations for the new post-2020 climate regime agreed in 2015. That means nurturing the Paris Agreement so that it grows stronger over time to deliver a more stable climate as well as sustainable, climate-resilient development.

Pre-2020 climate actions

After the strong outcome agreed in Paris, particularly in setting the post-2020 regime, COP22 must shift the priorities to near-term concrete climate actions, to help avoid the worst climate impacts and have a decent chance of not only keeping warming ‘well below 2°C’, but also of meeting the additional goal of keeping it below 1.5°C.

The Paris Agreement demanded a rapid ‘decarbonisation’ through a global shift from fossil fuels to low-carbon energy. In Marrakesh, leaders need to accelerate this transition to low-carbon energy to help deliver the pre-2020 ambition workstream agreed in Durban in 2011 and the Paris commitments.

In particular, the planned ‘facilitative dialogue’ to be conducted in Marrakesh to assess the progress in implementing the ‘Durban mandate to enhance pre-2020 mitigation ambition and means of implementation’ – the provision of financial resources, technology transfer and capacity building support – presents an enormous opportunity.

It is important to highlight the vast potential of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures, particularly in helping to close the global emissions gap by 2020 and put the world on a climate ambitious course.

Marrakesh must focus on the need to switch to renewable energy in order to deliver near-term ambition. Countries should build on the recently launched Africa Renewable Energy Initiative,⁴ by broadening this exciting effort worldwide, to include other non-African least developed countries, small island states and Latin American and Caribbean countries.

The Africa Group, the least developed countries and small island states have called for a Global Programme on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency to be agreed in Marrakesh, to provide a means for establishing the global cooperative actions needed to 'decarbonise' the world and deliver sustainable energy access for all.⁵

Christian Aid believes such a global initiative is vital to ensure that short-term concrete climate actions are implemented and attract the required support to energise these initiatives.

1.5°C temperature rise target

As outlined above, the Paris Agreement not only commits all countries to hold the increase in global average temperature below 2°C, but also to pursue further efforts to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C. The inclusion of the 1.5°C goal was the result of a hard-fought battle, lasting many years, by countries vulnerable to climate change. These included small island states, least developed countries and African states, as well as other developing countries, which are worst affected by climate change and for whom 2°C is not a safe level of climate change.

It's remarkable that with the Paris Agreement all countries have now committed to this goal. They can no longer be complacent. Scientists insist that the 1.5°C temperature limit is physically, technologically and economically possible, but demands political will and innovation.

We must now ensure there is sufficient political will to meet this goal to keep warming to a safe level, which will necessitate a big shift from fossil fuels.

It is essential that Parties start preparing their mid-century low-carbon/zero-carbon development strategies, with lower-income countries being clear about where they need capacity building, technology and financial support to deliver. The earlier these strategies are established, the better prepared countries and economic sectors will be for the transition. All strategies should help countries strive for 100% renewable energy by 2050 (or earlier for those countries that are, or have been, major emitters).

The good news is that there is huge potential for renewable energy, which is largely untapped around the world. To reach the 1.5°C goal, we need a big shift to renewables and to stop investing in and remove subsidies for fossil fuels, which present a very high risk to our climate, people and economies, and instead power our society and economies with renewable energy. This must be coupled with a strategy for demand-side management approaches to reduce energy consumption and promote energy efficiency.

If countries are to limit warming to below 1.5°C by 2100, there must be a radical transition to renewable energy and energy efficiency. To achieve this we must cut out carbon emissions altogether within a generation.

Climate finance

Broadly speaking, rich countries have so far failed to outline a roadmap to provide the \$100bn a year by 2020 that they pledged at the Copenhagen COP15 in 2009.⁶

Christian Aid has long argued that the goal of mobilising \$100bn per year by 2020 was not linked to the actual climate needs of developing countries, but to the political constraints of developed countries.

This aside, we have called for a clear plan to deliver this \$100bn, allowing us to begin in earnest, to support, in a gender-sensitive way, developing countries, which are most at risk from climate change, to adapt to and also cut their emissions. Climate finance is required by developing countries to catalyse and accelerate climate actions and rich countries need to provide a clear predictable flow of finance to them.

In Marrakesh, rich countries must present their roadmap towards meeting the pledged \$100bn per year climate finance by 2020. They must also take steps to ensure that there will be an adequate, predictable flow of climate finance beyond 2020 to meet the needs of developing countries while addressing climate change. These steps cannot be postponed again. Developing countries are rightly asking richer states to deliver their climate finance promises.

They should also deliver a long-standing call to developing countries and NGOs for a 50:50 balance between financial support for mitigation and adaptation, with adaptation support provided primarily through grants.

'Scientists insist that the 1.5°C temperature limit is physically, technologically and economically possible, but demands political will and innovation.'

Crucially, both public and private finance and investment must shift from fossil fuels and high-carbon infrastructure and development towards low-carbon, clean and climate-resilient options for a cleaner, safer and brighter future. Countries with a lack of access to modern energy services must also be supported to achieve universal energy access, giving priority to decentralised and off-grid technology in order to break the energy poverty trap and deliver energy access directly to hundreds of millions of people in rural areas who live off the electricity grid.

Loss and damage

The inclusion of loss and damage as a standalone article is a crucial component of the Paris Agreement. It makes it more likely that the adverse impact of climate change on poor vulnerable communities, which can no longer be dealt with through mitigation or adaptation, will be tackled.

To build on this important decision, Christian Aid calls on countries to conclude the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM), established at COP 19 in 2013. The WIM needs to be strengthened in light of the Paris Agreement to help countries tackle loss and damage in a comprehensive, integrated and coherent way. It should enable vulnerable countries to prepare for and deal with the adverse effects of climate change, whether rapid or slow onset, through risk management and resilience, and by securing social protection in the proposed risk transfer mechanisms.

Another key expected outcome of COP 22 is for countries to develop and agree a detailed five-year work plan to tackle loss and damage through the WIM, in accordance with the decisions of Parties at the Paris and Warsaw COPs. But given delays in establishing the WIM, which has also experienced teething problems, it will be hard to stick to the agreed timeline. In our view, countries must agree a synchronised approach, building on current work, and initiate a process for finalising a five-year work plan by next year at the latest.

Paris Committee on Capacity Building

Enhancing the capacity of all decision makers and practitioners in developing countries is key to effective implementation of the Paris Agreement, and, for this, the Paris Committee on Capacity Building (PCCB) will be critical. The PCCB, which was conceived under the Agreement, is intended to promote capacity

building in developing countries through identifying gaps and needs, and coordinating work in this area.

Therefore, there's a need for Parties at Marrakesh to establish the PCCB quickly and launch a dedicated fund to address the capacity building needs of developing states, with rich countries committing to provide the required financial, technical and technological support through this fund.

Capacity building efforts must be country-led and focused on putting women and men living in poverty at the centre of any actions to address climate change and set the world on a sustainable, climate-resilient path.

Making reviews relevant

Despite countries committing to limit global temperature rise to below 2°C, and to pursue further efforts to limit temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, by reducing their greenhouse gas emissions, recent analysis by the UNFCCC and the United Nations Environment Programme shows that the mitigation contributions put forward by countries to achieve this are far from sufficient to keep the rise below 2°C.

To tackle this, the Paris Agreement requires all countries to come together in 2018 for a 'facilitative dialogue' to see if their collective efforts are enough to meet this long-term goal, and to increase their national climate action commitments.

Christian Aid argues that it is essential that countries continuously ratchet up their efforts to meet this target. For Paris to be effective, all countries must revisit and strengthen their national contributions for 2025/2030, before the next round of negotiations.

To ensure there is an adequate, predictable source of climate finance, rich countries must also assess the adequacy of the money they have pledged and delivered so far.

Rich countries in particular must increase their financial, technological and capacity-building support for developing countries in order to accelerate the transition towards cleaner, safer and more sustainable economies.

We believe that we cannot raise countries' ambition without also having a solid science-based equity review of their contributions to assess adequacy and fairness. Nor can this review wait until the 2023 'global stocktake'. The facilitative dialogue in 2018 is the decisive moment that can cement the Paris breakthrough, and it must not be wasted.

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To that end, we propose that countries meeting in Marrakesh initiate a formal process to outline guidance for conducting the reviews ahead of the 2018 facilitative dialogue, with the goal of assessing collective progress towards meeting the Paris Agreement's long-term goals.

The Agreement provides key tools for achieving this, including the 'dynamic review cycle', the 'progression clause' and the 'global stocktake', which together make up the core of the 'ambition ratcheting mechanism'.

While it is widely assumed that the global stocktake will only assess the collective efforts of all countries in aggregate terms, Christian Aid would like to emphasise that Article 14 of the Agreement lays out extremely broad terms of reference, and explicitly calls for equity (each country taking its fair share of effort) to be taken into proper account.

This implies the assessment of individual national contributions, in relation to ambition and equity. These should be assessed against a workable Equity Reference Framework that embodies the Convention's core equity principles, to ensure that individual countries' mitigation and finance contributions can be contextualised and reviewed.

Such assessments may still be beyond the reach of the Parties themselves. If this is the case, non-state actors have the flexibility needed to pioneer the way. To facilitate this process, the UNFCCC should formally invite efforts to expand the depth and coherence of informal assessments that take equity as well as ambition into proper account.

Business and investors

The progressive **business and investor community** made a valuable contribution to the success of Paris with their public support for an ambitious deal. However, the Paris Agreement was just the beginning of a long journey towards low-carbon economies and societies. There is still much at stake, including the ambition and speed of that transition. Without the continued serious engagement of these groups, we may not be able to realise the vision outlined in the Agreement.

The Paris Agreement sent a clear signal of our direction of travel towards low carbon economies. This shift provides many opportunities for innovation and investment in new low-carbon businesses. We have already locked in a certain level of temperature increase and the choices we make in the next two to three years will be crucial in keeping our climate goals within reach.

Most businesses will need to change their business models to avoid the risks and threats climate change poses and seize the opportunities that a low-carbon future presents.

Investors, asset managers and providers of finance must accelerate the shift of capital from fossil fuels towards low-carbon projects and businesses. In line with Article 2(c) of the Paris Agreement, 'making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development', they must continue to engage with policy makers and civil society to help create a truly sustainable financial system.⁷

'Without the continued serious engagement of [the business and investor community], we may not be able to realise the vision outlined in the Agreement.'

Endnotes

- 1 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Paris Agreement, 2015, http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf
- 2 UNFCCC, Decision 18/CP.20, Lima work programme on gender, 2014, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2014/cop20/eng/10a03.pdf#page=35>
- 3 Climate analyst organisations Climate Action and Climate Interactive (climateinteractive.org), which track NDCs, estimate projected warming to be 2.7°C and 3.5°C respectively (see climateactiontracker.org and climateinteractive.org/tools/scoreboard/scoreboard-science-and-data).
- 4 Africa Union, Africa Renewable Energy Initiative, 2015, <http://www.arei.org/>
- 5 Third World Network, *Call to strengthen global action on renewable energy at Marrakesh climate conference*, 2016, <http://twm.my/title2/climate/info.service/2016/cc160601.htm>
- 6 UNFCCC, Copenhagen accord, 2009, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/cop15/eng/11a01.pdf#page=3>
- 7 See note 1.

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We work globally for profound change that eradicates the causes of poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all, regardless of faith or nationality. We are part of a wider movement for social justice.

We provide urgent, practical and effective assistance where need is great, tackling the effects of poverty as well as its root causes.

Christian Aid, 35 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL
020 7620 4444 christianaid.org.uk
