



From Berlin to Baku: UNFCCC COP Highlights (1995–2024)

April-June 2025

From the Director's Desk

For nearly three decades, the Conference of the Parties (COP) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has been more than a meeting—it has been the stage where the world comes together to confront the defining challenge of our time: climate change. Each year, leaders, negotiators, scientists, farmers, youth, and civil society voices gather with a shared purpose—to shape a safer, more sustainable future for our planet.

From the early days of the Berlin Mandate in 1995 to the groundbreaking Paris Agreement and the recent finance commitments at Baku in 2024, the journey of COPs has been one of determination, debate, and at times, difficult compromise. These milestones remind us of what collective action can achieve. Yet, the road has not been easy. Setbacks, political divides, and the alarming pace of global warming urge us to act faster and with greater unity.

This issue of *Climate Lens* is an invitation to reflect on that journey. It highlights the breakthroughs, the struggles, and the evolving priorities that continue to shape the global response to the climate crisis. Whether you are a policymaker drafting strategies, a banker financing green solutions, an NGO driving awareness, a farmer adapting to new realities, or a student eager to make a difference—your role matters. Together, we are part of the story, and together, we can shape the road ahead.

Climate change is a global challenge, but the power to respond lies in each of our hands. The time to act is now, and every step counts.

International Initiatives on Climate Change

Climate change is widely regarded as the defining challenge of the twenty-first century. Rising global temperatures, melting glaciers, sea-level rise, frequent extreme weather events, and biodiversity loss are reshaping ecosystems and threatening the stability of economies, societies, and human

well-being across the globe. Unlike localized environmental problems, climate change transcends national borders, making it the most profound example of a global commons problem. The causes are diffuse, but the consequences are shared. It is, therefore, an issue that demands collective international action, and over the past five decades, the world has witnessed the development of a complex web of international initiatives designed to tackle it. These initiatives include scientific panels, multilateral treaties, global summits, and financial mechanisms, together forming the architecture of global climate governance.

The origins of international cooperation on the environment can be traced to the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm in 1972. While climate change itself was not yet the central focus of global attention, the conference marked the first occasion, when the nations collectively acknowledged the environmental consequences of human activity. The most enduring achievement of the Stockholm Conference was the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which later became a central actor in global climate discussions.



The next breakthrough was the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), created jointly by the World Meteorological Organization and UNEP in the year 1988. The IPCC was tasked with providing objective scientific assessments on climate change, its impacts, and potential policy responses. Its assessment reports, published every few years, have profoundly shaped global negotiations. The first report in 1990 led directly to the creation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Subsequent reports reinforced the scientific consensus on human influence over the climate

and highlighted the urgency of reducing emissions. The 2007 report was particularly influential, earning the panel a Nobel Peace Prize alongside Al Gore. The sixth Assessment Report, released between 2021 and 2023, confirmed that global warming has already reached 1.1°C above pre-industrialization levels and that immediate, drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are necessary if the 1.5°C target is to remain within reach.

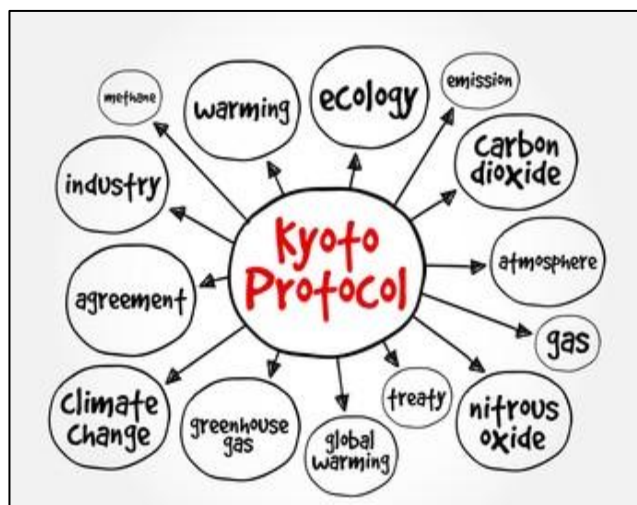
Building on the scientific foundation laid by IPCC, UNFCCC was adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and came into force in 1994. Its objective was to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations at levels that would prevent dangerous interference with the climate system. The Convention was significant for introducing the principle of “**common but differentiated responsibilities,**” which acknowledged that while all nations share the responsibility of addressing climate change, industrialized nations bear greater obligations due to their historical emissions and greater capacity to act. The UNFCCC institutionalized the annual Conference of the Parties (COP) as its decision-making body, thereby creating a permanent global forum for climate negotiations.



The first major milestone under the UNFCCC came with the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, which for the first time established legally binding emission reduction targets for thirty-seven industrialized countries. The protocol created innovative market-based mechanisms such as the Clean Development Mechanism, Joint Implementation, and emissions trading, which allowed countries to meet their obligations more flexibly. While some nations, such as members of the European Union, complied successfully with their commitments, the overall impact of the protocol was undermined by the withdrawal of the US and the absence of binding obligations for rapidly industrializing nations like

China and India. As a result, global emissions continued to climb even as the framework itself was hailed as groundbreaking.

In 2001, the Marrakesh Accords provided the operational details for implementing the Kyoto Protocol and established adaptation funds to help developing countries cope with climate impacts. Yet these mechanisms remained constrained by limited participation. By 2007, the Bali Action Plan recognized the need for a broader, post-Kyoto climate regime and introduced the idea of nationally appropriate mitigation actions for developing countries, while also highlighting the importance of finance and technology transfer.



Great expectations surrounded the Copenhagen Conference in 2009, which many hoped would deliver a new legally binding treaty. The outcome, however, was disappointing. The Copenhagen Accord was politically significant but lacked legal force. It recognized the need to limit warming to 2°C, initiated pledges by both developed and developing countries, and committed to mobilize 100 billion US dollars annually by 2020 to support developing nations. Yet the absence of binding commitments and the chaotic nature of the negotiations left many disillusioned.

The following year in Cancun, faith in the multilateral process was partially restored. The Cancun Agreements created the Green Climate Fund, established an Adaptation Framework, and introduced a Technology Mechanism, thereby laying the groundwork for financing and technology transfer on a larger scale. In 2011, the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action went further by mandating negotiations for a new universal agreement applicable to all countries, which paved the way for the historic Paris Agreement in 2015.

The Paris Agreement was a landmark in international climate governance, adopted by nearly 200 nations at COP21. It set

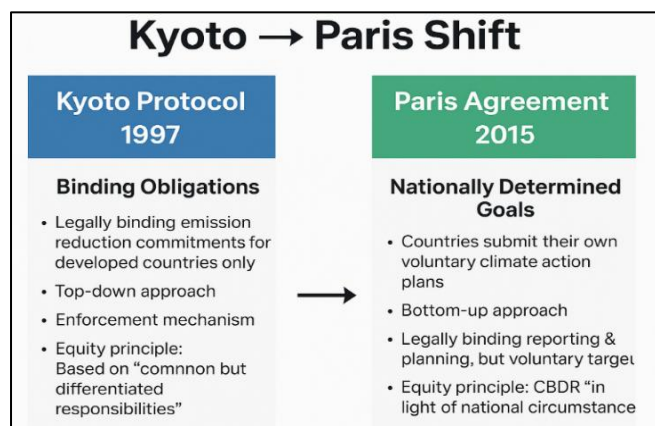
a collective goal of holding global temperature rise well below 2°C, with an aspirational limit of 1.5°C. Instead of top-down targets, it introduced nationally determined contributions, whereby each country submits its own emission reduction commitments. The agreement also established a transparency framework, required global stocktakes every five years, and emphasized support for adaptation and finance. The Paris Agreement succeeded where previous efforts faltered because it combined universal participation with flexibility, but its reliance on voluntary pledges meant that ambition remained insufficient. As of 2023, the world was still on track for approximately 2.7°C of warming by the end of the century, well above the safe threshold.

issue of climate justice. Countries agreed to establish a “Loss and Damage Fund” to assist vulnerable nations experiencing the irreversible impacts of climate change such as floods, droughts, and sea-level rise. While the decision was celebrated as a historic victory for developing countries, progress on reducing emissions remained limited, underscoring the persistent gap between ambition and reality.

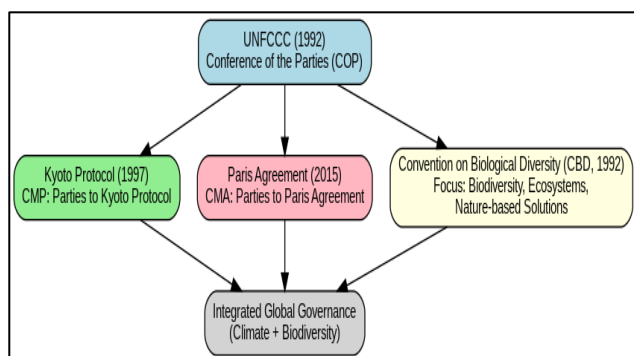
Alongside these multilateral treaties, several parallel initiatives have played critical roles in advancing climate action. The Montreal Protocol, originally designed to protect the ozone layer, has been hailed as the most successful environmental treaty. Its Kigali Amendment in 2016 targeted hydrofluorocarbons, potent greenhouse gases, thereby contributing directly to climate mitigation. The Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2015 included Goal 13 on Climate Action, integrating climate change into the broader development agenda. The International Solar Alliance (ISA), launched by India and France, seeks to accelerate solar energy adoption, particularly in tropical countries. Mechanisms such as REDD+ have promoted forest conservation as a means of enhancing carbon sinks, while numerous finance and technology initiatives have sought to bridge the gap between developed and developing nations.

Despite these achievements, the international response to climate change remains inadequate. Global greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, and the world is not on track to meet the 1.5°C target. Finance commitments often fall short of promises, with the hundred-billion-dollar pledge still not fully realized. Disputes over equity and responsibility persist, with developed countries pushing for greater contributions from emerging economies while developing countries emphasize historical responsibility and the need for support in adaptation. Moreover, the voluntary nature of many pledges raises concerns about accountability and enforcement.

Nevertheless, international initiatives on climate change demonstrate the importance of collective action in the face of a global crisis. From the scientific assessments of the IPCC to the legally binding commitments of Kyoto and Paris, from the establishment of the Green Climate Fund to the creation of the Loss and Damage Fund, these efforts reflect humanity’s evolving understanding of climate risks and the gradual construction of a governance framework capable of addressing them. The ultimate success of these initiatives will depend on political will, equitable burden-sharing, robust financing, and effective technology transfer. Strengthening multilateralism and ensuring that pledges are



In the years since Paris, much of the focus has been on developing detailed rules and operationalizing the agreement. The Katowice Climate Package of 2018 provided the so-called Paris Rulebook, setting guidelines for transparency, reporting, and accountability. The Glasgow Climate Pact of 2021 was significant for being the first agreement to explicitly reference the “phasing down” of coal power and for urging countries to strengthen their 2030 targets. Over 130 countries also pledged net-zero emissions by mid-century, though many of these commitments remain vague or unaligned with short-term action.



The Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan adopted at COP27 in 2022 represented a breakthrough on the long-contested

translated into concrete action remain critical if the world is to avert the worst consequences of climate change.

The story of international climate governance is thus one of both progress and frustration. It has succeeded in building institutions, setting goals, and mobilizing awareness on an unprecedented scale. Yet it has so far failed to bend the global emissions curve in line with scientific warnings. As the impacts of climate change intensify and the window for limiting warming narrows, the world faces a decisive decade. The initiatives of the past half-century provide a foundation, but the challenge now is to move from negotiation to implementation, from promises to delivery, and from incrementalism to transformative change. The future of international climate action will determine not only the fate of agreements and institutions but the trajectory of the planet itself.

Source: (1) Bodansky, D. (2016). The Paris Climate Change Agreement: A New Hope? American Journal of International Law; (2) Falkner, R. (2016). The Paris Agreement and the New Logic of International Climate Politics. International Affairs; (3) UNEP (2023). Emissions Gap Report - <https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report>

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)



United Nations
Framework Convention on
Climate Change

The United Nations Climate Change Conferences are annual events conducted under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Conference of the Parties (COP) serves as the official assembly of UNFCCC parties to evaluate advancements in addressing climate change and, since the mid-1990s, to negotiate the Kyoto Protocol, which establishes legally binding commitments for developed nations to mitigate their greenhouse gas emissions.

In the real sense, UNFCC is an agreement between 198 Parties (197 States and the EU). The accord aims to “stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human-induced) interference with the climate system.” The UNFCCC is a ‘umbrella’ agreement beneath which other binding decisions are made and executed. This includes the COP21 Paris Agreement of 2015.

Since 2005, the conferences have functioned as the "Conference of the Parties Serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol" (CMP); also, parties to the

convention that are not signatories to the protocol may attend protocol-related meetings as observers. Between 2011 and 2015, the sessions facilitated negotiations for the Paris Agreement under the Durban platform, establishing a comprehensive framework for climate action. The inaugural UN Climate Change Conference occurred in 1995 in Berlin.



What is the COP?

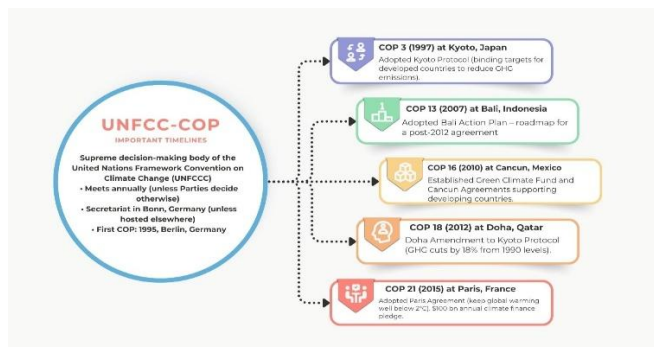
COP stands for Conference of the Parties and it often refers to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) international meeting focusing on climate. COP is the main decision-making body of the UNFCCC. It includes representatives of all the ‘Parties’, i.e. countries that have agreed to participate in and be bound by the UNFCCC. The UNFCCC COP takes place every year, and is an opportunity to negotiate new measures, and review Parties’ progress against the overall goal of the UNFCCC to limit climate change. Generally, each COP agrees a statement or a binding agreement which is publicly released at the end of the conference.

The COP is the supreme decision-making body of the Convention. All States that are Parties to the Convention are represented at the COP, at which they review the implementation of the Convention and any other legal instruments that the COP adopts and take decisions necessary to promote the effective implementation of the Convention, including institutional and administrative arrangements.

A key task for the COP is to review the national communications and emission inventories submitted by Parties. Based on this information, the COP assesses the effects of the measures taken by Parties and the progress made in achieving the ultimate objective of the Convention.

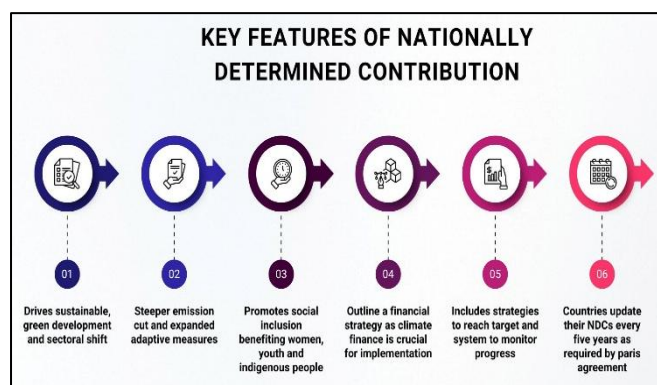
The COP meets every year, unless the Parties decide otherwise. The COP meets in Bonn, the seat of the

secretariat, unless a Party offers to host the session. Just as the COP Presidency rotates among the five recognized UN regions - that is, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe and Western Europe and Others – there is a tendency for the venue of the COP to also shift among these groups.



What happens at COP?

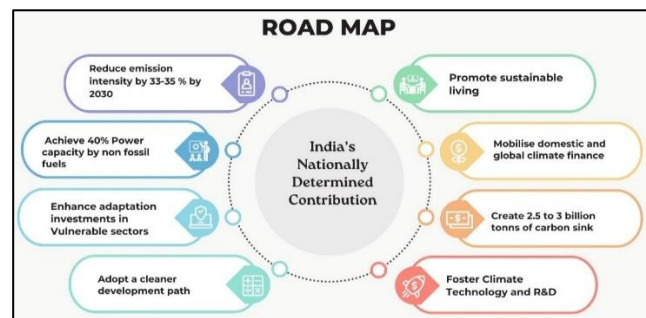
COP meetings primarily revolve around negotiations and debates. The aim is to review progress towards the overall goal of the UNFCCC: to limit climate change. Sometimes, COP will result in new agreements and treaties, often with the goal of refining targets, agreeing rules or forming binding treaties, like the Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement. A key part of COP meetings is to review the contributions of each of the Parties, detailing how they are tackling climate change. Members who are also party to the Paris Agreement will submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which are plans by each country to reduce their emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Taken together, these actions will determine whether we meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.



COP 1, Berlin, Germany: 28 March – 07 April 1995

The inaugural UNFCCC Conference of the Parties was held in Berlin, Germany, from 28 March to 07 April 1995. The sufficiency of individual nation commitments was one of the main concerns, which led to a directive to start a path toward individual country action for the years after 2000. As part of

this, Annex I Parties' pledges in Article 4.2 (a) and (b) were reinforced.



COP Negotiation through times: From Berlin (1995) to Baku (2024)



COP 2, Geneva, Switzerland: 08-19 July 1996

The Ministerial declaration was acknowledged (but not ratified) on 18 July 1996, reflecting a position statement from the United States that: (1) Acknowledged the scientific conclusions regarding climate change presented by the IPCC in its Second Assessment Report (1995); (2) Disavowed uniform "harmonized policies" in favour of flexibility; (3) Advocated for "legally binding mid-term objectives."

COP 3, Kyoto, Japan: 01-11 December 1997

After extensive talks, it enacted the Kyoto Protocol, which set Annex I nations' greenhouse gas emissions reduction commitment and established Kyoto mechanisms like carbon trading, clean development, and joint implementation. Countries agreed to a range of national security exclusions

that excluded bunker fuels and emissions from multilateral military activities from national emissions totals in a separate Conference of Parties decision. Most industrialised countries and certain central European economies in transition (Annex B countries) committed to legally enforceable greenhouse gas emission reductions of 6 to 8% below 1990 levels between 2008 and 2012, the first emissions budget period.

COP 4, Buenos Aires, Argentina: 02-14 November 1998

The remaining Kyoto concerns were expected to be settled during this summit. However, these issues were too hard to resolve, so the countries agreed to a two-year "Buenos Aires Plan of Action" (BAPA) to enhance efforts and develop Kyoto Protocol implementation mechanisms by 2000. Argentina and Kazakhstan became the first non-Annex countries to pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at COP4.

COP 5, Bonn, Germany: 25 October to 05 November 1999

COP-5 was an important "intermediate step" in the challenging process of concluding the Kyoto Protocol at COP-6, despite reaching no major conclusions.

COP 6, The Hague, Netherlands: 13-25 November 2000

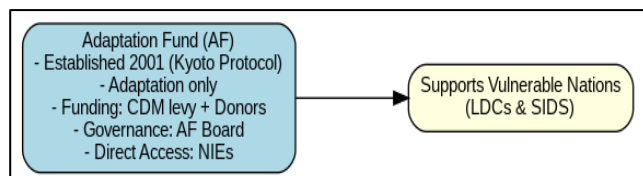
The EU countries, led by Denmark and Germany, rejected compromises agreed upon by the US and certain EU countries, including the UK, and the talks in The Hague collapsed. Without a deal, COP 6 President Jan Pronk suspended the meeting with the hope that negotiations would resume. Later, "COP 6 bis" meetings were announced for Bonn, Germany, in the second half of July 2001.

COP 6 (2), Bonn, Germany: 16-21 July 2001

In Bonn, Germany, COP 6 negotiations began again on 16–27 July 2001, with little progress in resolving the issues that had stalled in The Hague. Agreements included Flexibility mechanisms in emissions trading, Joint Implementation (JI), and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM); Carbon Credit for activities that absorb or store carbon, such as forest and agricultural management, and re-vegetation; Compliance procedures and mechanisms were deferred to COP 7, but consequences for non-compliance included a requirement to "make up" shortfalls at 1.3 tons to 1, suspension of surplus emissions reduction credits, and a compliance action plan for those not meeting targets and Financing, which included establishment of 03 new funds to address climate change needs: (i) a climate change fund supporting climate measures, (ii) a least-developed-country fund supporting National Adaptation Programs of Action, and (iii) a Kyoto Protocol adaptation fund supported by CDM levy and voluntary contributions.

COP 7, Marrakesh, Morocco: 29 October - 10 November 2001

The Buenos Aires Plan of Action was concluded, settling most operational elements and preparing governments to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. The Marrakesh Accords are the final choices. The key decisions included: (1) International emissions trading rules for the Protocol and CDM, joint implementation; (2) A compliance regime with consequences for non-compliance; (3) Flexibility mechanism accounting procedures; (4) Consideration of potential legal consequences



COP 8, New Delhi, India: 23 October to 01 November 2002

The Delhi Ministerial Declaration was adopted that called for efforts by developed countries to transfer technology and minimize the impacts of climate change on developing countries. A major point of contention was the EU and other developed countries' desired to initiate discussions on future emissions commitments for developing countries. Developing nations, however, insisted that developed countries first fulfill their existing obligations under the Kyoto Protocol.



COP 9, Milan, Italy: 01-12 December 2003

The parties agreed to use the Adaptation Fund, which was set up at COP 7 in 2001, mostly to help developing countries adapt to climate change. The Fund would also be used to build capacity through technology transfer. The parties also agreed to look over the first national reports sent in by 110 non-Annex I countries.

COP 10, Buenos Aires, Argentina: 06-17 December 2004

Discussion on what had been done since the first COP 10 years ago and the problems it would face in the future, focusing on how to deal with and adapt to climate change. The Buenos Aires Plan of Action was put in place to help developing countries deal with climate change issue in a better way. The parties also started talking on the post-

Kyoto mechanism, which is how to divide up the responsibility to cut emissions after 2012, when the first commitment period ends.

COP 11/ CMP 1, Montreal, Quebec, Canada: 28 November to 09 December 2004

The first CMP to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 1). It was one of the biggest meetings of governments ever about climate change. The Montreal Action Plan was an agreement to "extend the life of the Kyoto Protocol beyond its 2012 expiration date and negotiate deeper cuts in greenhouse-gas emissions."

COP 12/ CMP 2, Nairobi, Kenya: 06-17 November 2006

Even though there was a lot of criticism, COP12 did make some progress, especially in the areas of helping developing nations and the clean development framework. The parties agreed on the steps and methods for the Adaptation Fund and set up a five-year plan of work to help developing nations adapt to climate change. They also agreed to make the clean development mechanism initiatives better.

COP 13/ CMP 3, Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia: 03-15 December 2007

The Bali Action Plan established a schedule and process for post-2012 negotiations on the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period. Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) was created as a new subsidiary organization to negotiate urgently for improving Convention implementation through 2012.

COP 14/ CMP 4, Poznań, Poland: 01-12 December 2008

Delegates agreed on principles for creating a fund to help the poorest nations cope with climate change and endorsed a system to incorporate forest preservation into international climate change initiatives. Negotiations on a Kyoto Protocol replacement dominated the summit.

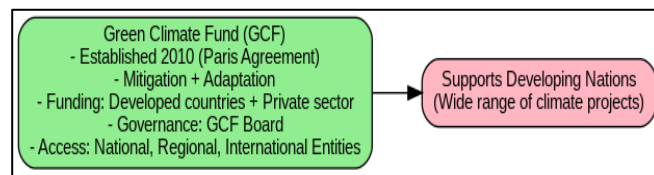
COP 15/ CMP 5, Copenhagen, Denmark: 07-18 December 2009

The non-legal binding Copenhagen Accord was adopted, which set a goal to limit global temperature rise to 2°C and included commitments for financial aid and a new Green Climate Fund (GCF). While the Copenhagen Accord was not a legal binding treaty, it established a framework for countries to submit mitigation pledges and for reporting and verification of act.

COP 16/ CMP 6, Cancún, Mexico: 29 November to 10 December 2010

The parties agreed to create a US\$100 billion "Green Climate Fund (GCF)" and a "Climate Technology Centre" and its

network. However, GCF funding was not agreed upon. No second Kyoto Protocol era was agreed upon, but the base year was 1990 and the IPCC global warming potentials were used. Recognizing climate change as an urgent and potentially irreversible threat to human societies and the planet, all parties agreed that it requires to be urgently addressed. It supports the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report objective of 2°C global warming and urges all parties to act now. Greenhouse gas emissions should peak as soon as feasible, but in developing countries, social and economic growth and poverty eradication are the top priority, thus peaking will take longer.



COP 17/ CMP 7, Durban, South Africa: 28 November to 09 December 2011

A management structure for a GCF was agreed. The fund were to distribute \$100 billion annually to disadvantaged countries to adapt to climate change. According to the conference Chairperson, Ms. Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, the pact was a success, but scientists and environmental groups had an opinion that more urgent action was needed to limit global warming to within 2°C above the pre-industrialization level.

COP 18/ CMP 8, Doha, Qatar: 26 November to 7 December 2012

The Doha Climate Gateway Documents collectively contained: (1) The Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol, a second commitment period from the year 2012 to 2020, limited to 15% of global CO₂ emissions due to non-commitment from Japan, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, New Zealand, the US, and Canada, and developing countries like China; (2) First codified language on loss and damage in conference documents. The meeting made little progress on GCF funding.

COP 19/ CMP 9, Warsaw, Poland: 11-23 November 2013

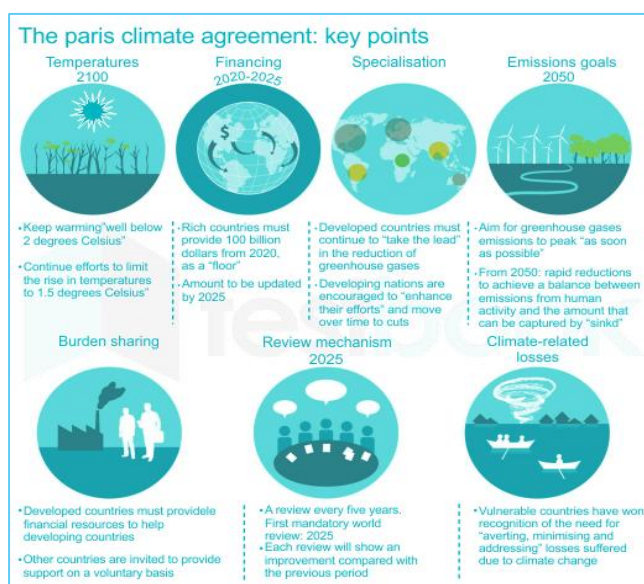
The approval of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ was the most notable outcome. To address loss and damage related to the effects of climate change, the conference also established the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damage linked with Climate Change Impacts (Loss and Damage Mechanism). In poor nations that are more susceptible to the negative consequences of climate change, this included both extreme and slow-onset disasters.

COP 20/ CMP 10, Lima, Peru: 01-12 December 2014

COP 20 is largely remembered as a necessary, if difficult, stepping stone that paved the way for the historic Paris Agreement that was adopted the following year. The conference concluded with the "Lima Call for Climate Action," which laid the groundwork for the more ambitious Paris Agreement a year later at COP 21.

COP 21/ CMP 11, Paris, France: 30 November to 12 December 2015

The Paris Agreement, which governs climate change reduction measures from 2020, was adopted because of negotiations. The activity of the Durban platform, which was established during COP 17, was terminated with the adoption of this agreement. The Agreement was ratified by over 55 countries, representing at least 55% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.



COP 22/ CMP 12/ CMA 1, Marrakesh, Morocco: 07-18 November 2016

A significant issue in the developing world, including numerous African states, is water scarcity, water sanitation, and water-related sustainability, which is a focal point of COP 22. Another significant concern was the necessity of reducing greenhouse emissions and utilizing low-carbon energy sources. The President of the United Nations General Assembly urged the global economy to undergo a comprehensive transformation in all sectors to achieve a low-emissions global economy.

COP 23/ CMP 13/ CMA 1-2, Bonn, Germany: 6–17 November 2017

The conference was presided over by Fijian Prime Minister, Frank Bainimarama. Its primary goal was to advance the aims of the Paris Agreement by developing the implementation

guidelines and rules needed to achieve its targets. Key outcomes included the adoption of the first Gender Action Plan to promote women's participation in climate policy. A coalition of 30 countries, the Powering Past Coal Alliance, was launched to phase out coal power by 2030.

COP 24/ CMP 14/ CMA 1-3, Katowice, Poland: 3–14 December 2018

The main outcome was the adoption of the Katowice Climate Package, which finalized the Paris Agreement Rulebook providing guidelines for nations to report on and implement their climate commitments, including greenhouse gas emissions and climate finance. Other outcomes included the Talanoa Dialogue to discuss increasing ambition, a focus on just transition for workers, a "forests for climate" policy, and commitments from several countries to enhance their climate pledges.

COP 25/ CMP 15/ CMA 2, Madrid, Spain: 02-13 December 2019

COP 25 was planned to take place from 11 to 22 November 2019 in Brazil. However, newly elected President of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro withdrew Brazil from hosting the event. COP 25 was then planned to take place in Parque Bicentenario Cerrillos in Santiago de Chile, Chile from 2 to 13 December 2019. However, following the 2019 Chilean protests, Chilean President Sebastián Piñera announced Chile's withdrawal from hosting the summit in late October 2019. Finally, Spain offered, and was appointed, as the new host.

The conference's main goal was to finalize the rulebook for the Paris Agreement, with a particular focus on agreeing on Article 6 concerning international carbon markets. However, the summit concluded without resolving key issues, notably the completion of the Paris Agreement rulebook, leaving significant unfinished work for future COPs.

COP 26/ CMP 16/ CMA 3, Glasgow, United Kingdom: 31 October to 12 November 2021

COP 26 was originally scheduled to take place from 09 to 19 November 2020, in Glasgow, United Kingdom, but was postponed to 31 October to 12 November 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

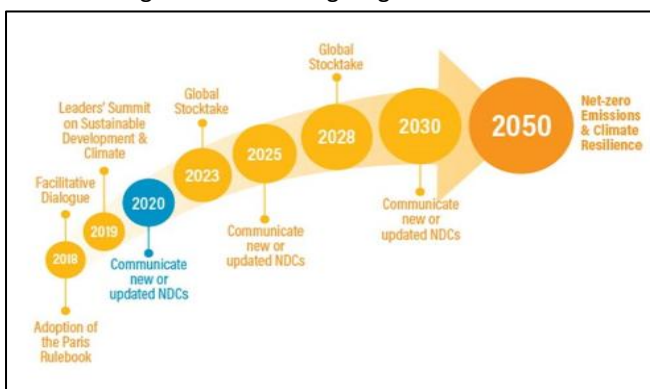
The Glasgow Climate Pact, negotiated by 197 parties, was the first climate deal to explicitly plan for the reduction of unabated coal power. It also encouraged countries to set more ambitious emissions reduction targets for 2030 and promised more finance for developing nations to help them adapt to climate change. The meeting finalized the rulebook for implementing the 2015 Paris Agreement, including common timeframes for national commitments and a framework for a global carbon market under Article 6.

COP 27/ CMP 17/ CMA 4, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt: 06-20 November 2022

COP 27 was originally expected to take place in November 2021 but was moved to 2022 due to the rescheduling of COP 26 from 2020 to 2021. The conference concluded with a landmark decision to establish a loss and damage fund to support vulnerable countries in addressing climate-induced disasters. Key objectives included building on previous successes, setting the stage for future climate ambition, and strengthening collective action to tackle the climate crisis under the Paris Agreement.

COP 28/ CMP 18/ CMA 5, Dubai, UAE: 30 November to 12 December 2023

Pope Francis issued *Laudate Deum*, an apostolic exhortation, before the meeting, calling for swift climate action and condemning climate change denial. British monarch Charles III presented the summit's opening address, his first on climate change since becoming king.



This key climate summit was significant for concluding the first "Global Stocktake" of progress under the Paris Agreement, which highlighted slow progress and spurred a decision to accelerate climate action. Key outcomes included the operationalization of the loss and damage fund, initial goals to triple renewable energy and double energy efficiency, and the first-ever recognition of the need to transition away from fossil fuels in the final agreement.

COP 29/ CMP 19/ CMA 6, Baku, Azerbaijan: 11-22 November 2024

Human rights groups and political analysts attacked COP29's hosting in Azerbaijan owing to its human rights abuses and fossil fuel dependence. Finance strategies to reduce climate change and help developing nations transition to renewable energy were agreed upon at the meeting. A UN registry and rules were established to allow worldwide carbon credit trading.

Major outcomes of the COP29 climate summit in Baku, Azerbaijan, included the finalization of a new, though

controversial, climate finance target, a partial breakthrough on international carbon market rules, and agreements on adaptation. However, the conference failed to produce a consensus on key mitigation issues, leaving many developing nations deeply disappointed.

New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance:

The central, and most contentious, achievement was the adoption of the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for climate finance, effective from 2025.

- **New financial target:** Developed nations agreed to lead in mobilizing at least \$300 billion annually by 2035 for developing countries, a tripling of the previous \$100 billion goal.
- **Scale-up target:** A broader call was made for all nations and the private sector to work towards mobilizing \$1.3 trillion annually by 2035.
- **Mixed reactions:** Developing countries, including India and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) group, strongly objected to the figure, calling it insufficient to meet their climate needs.
- **Baku-Belém Roadmap:** The summit also launched a new roadmap to help scale up finance and develop a better finance goal ahead of COP30 in Belém, Brazil, in 2025.

Breakthrough on carbon markets:

After a decade of negotiations, delegates finalized the rules for the international carbon markets established under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

- **Article 6.2:** Provides guidance for country-to-country carbon credit trading.
- **Article 6.4:** Created a new, centralized UN-backed marketplace for trading carbon credits.
- **Environmental integrity:** Key aspects, such as authorization, registration, and avoiding double-counting, were agreed upon to ensure environmental integrity.

Progress on adaptation and transparency: COP29 advanced international efforts to adapt to climate impacts and improve accountability.

- **Baku Adaptation Road Map:** Launched to provide a framework for progressing towards the Global Goal on Adaptation.
- **Indigenous Peoples:** Adopted the Baku Workplan to better integrate the knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local communities into climate policy.
- **Gender and climate change:** Extended the Lima Work Programme on Gender for 10 years and committed to developing a new Gender Action Plan at COP30.
- **Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF):** Concluded all negotiating items related to the ETF, which mandates

that countries transparently report their emissions and climate actions.

Shortcomings and unresolved issues: Despite some progress, key areas remain unresolved, with significant mitigation issues postponed until 2025.

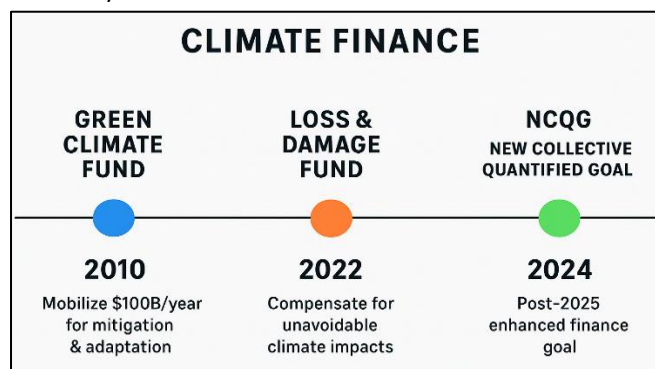
- **Fossil fuel transition:** Discussions on transitioning away from fossil fuels, including how to follow up on the Global Stocktake outcome from COP28, reached a deadlock and were deferred to COP30.
- **Just Transition Work Programme:** No consensus was reached on the program aimed at ensuring climate action does not cause unjust consequences, pushing the issue to mid-2025.
- **Loss and Damage Fund:** While operationalized, the fund for vulnerable nations faces concerns about insufficient funding, with current pledges falling far short of estimated needs.
- **Fossil fuel influence:** The negotiations were reportedly overshadowed by the presence of numerous fossil fuel lobbyists



Recognizing the urgency of the climate crisis and the need for accelerated and collective climate actions, the Presidency and the incoming Presidency will engage Parties throughout the year at ministerial, Heads of Delegation and technical levels, as appropriate, to lay the groundwork needed to deliver successful outcomes at COP 30.

To ensure coordination and alignment, the Presidencies will work closely with the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies, with the support of the secretariat, to shape the common vision and priorities towards COP 30.

Source: Compiled from UNFCCC main document



India's Journey in Global Climate Diplomacy: From Rio to COP29

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit as a global treaty to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere and prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Today, it has near-universal membership, with 198 parties. The supreme decision-making body of the UNFCCC is the Conference of the Parties (COP), which convenes annually to assess implementation, negotiate new commitments, and set the future direction of international climate governance. Over more than three decades, COPs have transformed from relatively technical negotiation rounds into high-profile global summits involving heads of state, civil society, private sector leaders, and international organizations.

The COPs have delivered several milestones in global climate diplomacy. The Kyoto Protocol (1997, COP3 in Japan) created legally binding emission reduction targets for developed countries, introducing mechanisms such as emissions trading and the Clean Development Mechanism. However, the protocol was weakened by the withdrawal of the United States and limited participation. The Copenhagen Accord (2009, COP15 in Denmark) marked a turning point by bringing both developed and developing countries into a framework of voluntary pledges, though it fell short of expectations. The Paris Agreement (2015, COP21 in France) established a universal framework where all countries submit nationally determined contributions (NDCs) to collectively limit warming to well below 2°C and pursue

Summary of COP 29 Outcomes
Another incremental COP that failed to meet the urgency of climate change

Key takeaways

\$300 billion annually by 2035- this commitment by wealthy nations to vulnerable developing ones is an increase over the prior \$100 billion number, but a fraction of what is needed

Fossil fuel phaseout is MIA- no further language on fossil fuels made it into the final text at COP 29, quite disappointing given that 2024 will see emissions reach a new record

Operationalizing carbon markets- many of the final pieces came together for the Paris Agreement's Article 6 in terms of guidance on country-country emissions trading and market-based approaches

A win for transparency- items agreed included greater clarity around reporting on climate and nature goals and finance

COP 30/ CMP 20/ CMA 7, Belém, Brazil: 10-21 November 2025

The COP 29 Presidency and the incoming COP 30 Presidency are committed to fostering an open, transparent, and inclusive UNFCCC process in preparing for COP 30, which will be held in Belém, Brazil, from 10 to 21 November 2025.

efforts to keep it under 1.5°C. This agreement also created mechanisms for transparency, finance, and a global stock take every five years. More recent COPs: from COP26 in Glasgow to COP29 in Baku: have grappled with operationalizing the Paris Agreement, scaling climate finance, enhancing adaptation efforts, and addressing the issue of loss and damage.

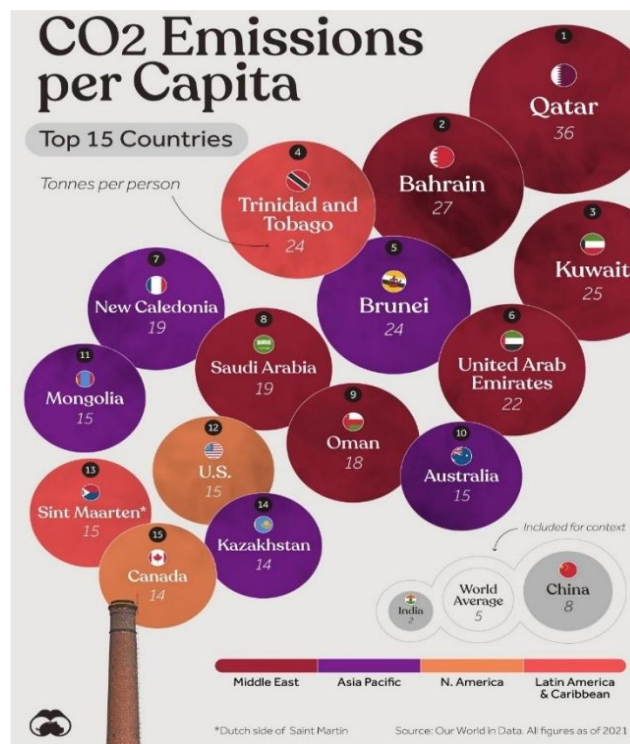
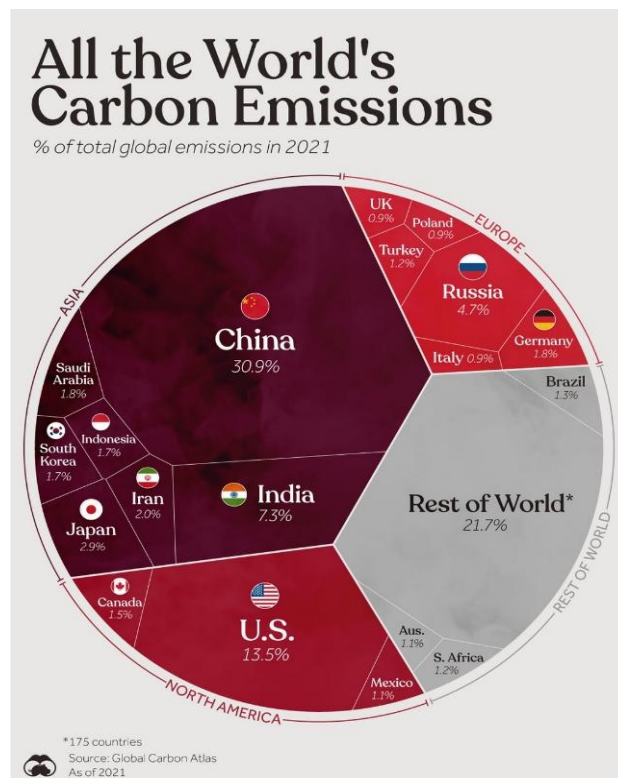
At the same time, India’s domestic vulnerability to climate change: evident in rising temperatures, erratic monsoons, heatwaves, and extreme weather events makes engagement in the COP process essential.

Agriculture, water resources, coastal zones, and energy systems are particularly at risk, affecting millions of livelihoods. Hence, India’s position combines an emphasis on climate justice with pragmatic efforts to build resilience and accelerate low-carbon growth.

India’s contributions at successive COPs highlight this dual approach. At COP21 in Paris, India helped shape the Paris Agreement, ensuring that differentiation among countries was preserved even as all parties were brought under a common framework. India committed to reducing the emissions intensity of its GDP by 33–35% from 2005 levels by 2030, achieving about 40% of installed power capacity from non-fossil fuels, and creating a carbon sink of 2.5–3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent through forest and tree cover. India also co-launched the International Solar Alliance (ISA) with France, a coalition to promote solar energy adoption worldwide, particularly in developing countries.

At COP26 in Glasgow (2021), Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the “Panchamrit” — a five-point climate action plan: (1) achieving 500 GW of non-fossil energy capacity by 2030, (2) meeting 50% of energy requirements from renewables by 2030, (3) reducing projected carbon emissions by 1 billion tonnes by 2030, (4) reducing the emissions intensity of GDP by 45% compared to 2005, and (5) achieving net-zero emissions by 2070. This marked a significant step forward, as it set clear long-term and short-term benchmarks. India also emphasized lifestyle change as a solution, introducing the LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) initiative to encourage sustainable consumption practices globally.

In COP27 at Sharm El-Sheikh (2022), India strongly supported the establishment of a “Loss and Damage Fund” to compensate vulnerable nations for climate-related harms. It also called for a phase-down of all fossil fuels, not just coal, emphasizing the need for equity in transition discussions.



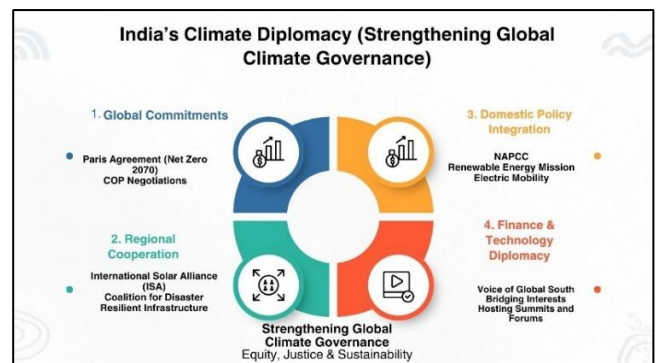
At COP28 in Dubai (2023), India highlighted its progress in renewable energy, with installed renewable capacity exceeding 180 GW, and reiterated its call for tripling global renewable energy and doubling energy efficiency improvements by 2030. However, it continued to stress that developed countries must fulfill their climate finance commitments, including the overdue \$100 billion per year pledge.

The focus of COP29 in Baku (2024) was the establishment of a New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance, which would replace the earlier \$100 billion goal. India played a central role in negotiations, insisting that the new goal must reflect the needs of developing countries, be predictable, transparent, and concessional, and amount to trillions of dollars annually rather than billions. India expressed dissatisfaction that developed countries' pledges remained inadequate, warning that without robust financial support, ambitious transitions like large-scale renewable deployment, green hydrogen production, battery storage, and grid modernization cannot proceed at the required pace. India's delegation worked within the Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC) bloc to demand greater accountability from the Global North. At the same time, India showcased its own efforts — with renewable capacity crossing 220 GW by early 2025 — as proof of its commitment despite limited international support.

Looking at India's participation over the years, several themes stand out. First, India consistently links climate responsibility to development equity, defending its right to grow while asking developed nations to lead in emissions reduction and support. Second, India is no longer seen as a passive recipient of climate outcomes; it is increasingly shaping the agenda through initiatives like the ISA, LiFE, and global coalitions on renewable energy. Third, India's domestic actions: rapid renewable expansion, ambitious targets, and investments in green hydrogen and electric mobility give it credibility in global negotiations.

However, challenges remain. India still relies heavily on coal, which accounts for about 70% of its electricity generation. Balancing energy security with decarbonization will require

significant investment in storage, transmission, and new technologies. The question of just transition: ensuring that workers and communities dependent on coal are not left behind is also critical. These realities make international finance and technology transfer indispensable, a point India continues to stress at every COP.



As UNFCCC Conference of Parties remain the central stage where the world negotiates its climate future, and India has emerged as a key voice in shaping that future. From defending equity in the 1990s to announcing ambitious renewable and net-zero targets in the 2020s, India's role has evolved from that of a cautious negotiator to a constructive leader. At COP29, India's demand for adequate and fair finance echoed the concerns of the entire developing world. Going forward, India's trajectory — combining domestic ambition with international advocacy: will be pivotal in determining whether the global community can achieve a just and effective climate transition.

Source: Compiled from Press information Bureau, Gov; unfccc.int; International Energy Alliance (IEA); Carbon Brief

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