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Climate change: a framework for a global agreement in 2015

Report[1]
Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development
Rapporteur: Mr John PRESCOTT, United Kingdom, Socialist Group

Summary

Climate change is a fact. As a largely man-made phenomenon it increasingly threatens human settlements and natural habitats, as well as economic stability, resources for development and, last but not least, human lives. Scientific experts warn that this process risks becoming unstoppable and irreversible if the international community fails to reduce greenhouse gas emissions effectively soon.

The Kyoto Protocol, which set the first targets on emissions reduction for industrialised countries, was extended to a second commitment period from 2013 to 2020. However, most major economies – and the biggest polluters – have not made any commitments yet. Whilst the clock is ticking and the cost of inaction is growing, the report urges countries to conclude an ambitious global agreement by 2015 at the latest.

The report proposes adopting a mixed "top down and bottom up" approach to reducing global emissions that would include – for the first time – formal recognition of national climate legislation in the legally binding part of the agreement. It advocates for intensified bilateral co-operation with key countries and stronger involvement of parliaments so as to advance national climate legislation, disseminate best practice, build capacity and promote common approaches.

1. Reference to committee: Doc. 13224, Reference 3977 of 28 June 2013.

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A. Draft resolution[2]

1. Climate change is one of the greatest threats our society faces. It threatens human settlements and natural habitats, economic stability, the availability of resources for development and, ultimately, human lives. As the scientific findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) attest, there is clear evidence that the climate is changing, and that this is largely as a result of human activities. This process risks becoming unstoppable and irreversible in the absence of united, coherent and determined action to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

2. Our success, or failure, in tackling climate change will shape the world we leave for future generations. If we succeed, we will not only safeguard our planet's resources, but also unleash immense economic opportunities for sustainable development, quality job creation and anti-poverty action. If we fail, the disruption to the global climate, environment, biodiversity and human well-being will be unprecedented.

3. The international community has recognised the scale of the challenge in adopting the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol, which set emissions-reduction targets for industrialised countries for the period 2008-2012. Even though the Kyoto Protocol was extended to a second commitment period from 2013 to 2020, most major economies do not have any formal or specific commitments between now and 2020.

4. The clock is ticking and the cost of inaction is growing. Under the Durban Platform, which was agreed in 2011, countries decided to begin negotiations on a new international agreement "with legal force" to become effective in 2020 and for those negotiations to be completed by 2015. The Parliamentary Assembly urges all European heads of State and government to show leadership in these negotiations and to work towards ensuring the adoption of an ambitious global agreement to tackle climate change.

5. The Assembly notes the IPCC's warning that exceeding a threshold of a global rise in temperature by 2˚C relative to the pre-industrial level would be disastrous in social, economic and environmental terms. It recalls that its climate action proposal "Stop the Clock – Save our Planet" enabled substantial progress in the global negotiations held in Durban.

6. The Assembly is convinced that the international community's talks must be supplemented by action at the national level. Advancing domestic climate change legislation in key countries needs to be a priority to help build the political conditions conducive to a comprehensive and ambitious international agreement.

7. For over twenty years governments have tried both "top down" and "bottom up" approaches to reducing global greenhouse gas emissions. Neither approach has achieved the levels of participation or ambition necessary to tackle climate change. What this Assembly proposes instead is a mixed top down and bottom up approach, including – for the first time – formal recognition of national climate change legislation in the legally binding part of the outcome.

8. This mixed approach should apply the United Nations principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and feature a core agreement with a global target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in line with the commitment already agreed by governments in the Copenhagen Accord to keep the global average temperature rise below 2˚C compared with pre-industrial levels, delivered through national legislation.

9. Countries should be required to pass climate legislation by 2020 at the latest with clear targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and 2050. These national targets and legislation would be reported to the United Nations and formally included in the legally binding part of the outcome in a schedule or Annex to the agreement.

10. A review of national pledges should be instituted to ensure national legislation is aligned with the global target to reduce emissions, and that it is equitable. Countries would also be required to report on progress each year as part of an international process that evaluates the implementation of national legislation and the emission reductions that result.

11. National climate change legislation is not just something that should underpin an agreement after it has been agreed; rather it is an enabler that creates the political space for an agreement. The Assembly urges European governments to invest in much greater bilateral co-operation with key countries, to involve national parliaments and to support the international processes between now and 2015 so as to help advance national climate legislation, disseminate best practice, build capacity amongst legislators and promote common or complementary approaches.

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2. Draft resolution adopted unanimously by the committee on 12 November 2013.

12. Legislators are a central element to any successful strategy to tackle climate change. They are responsible for developing, passing and amending laws and ensuring that these are implemented, as well as approving national budgets and holding climate negotiators accountable. It is crucial to build capacity amongst legislators in order to maximise their potential to have a positive influence on international climate ambition.

13. The Assembly therefore welcomes the launch of the GLOBE Climate Legislation Initiative and recognises the crucial role it will play in the international negotiations by helping legislators to prepare and implement climate change legislation between now and 2015. The Assembly also welcomes the publication of the latest GLOBE Climate Legislation Study, which provides an overview of current climate-related legislation in 33 countries and helps to identify gaps, highlight good practice and enable peer-to-peer learning. The study will be expanded to cover 66 countries in 2014 and to 100 countries in 2015.

14. The Assembly calls for the adoption of the United Nations principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and appeals to the negotiators, in particular those from European countries, to take into consideration the following key elements of a climate change agreement in 2015:

14.1. a target to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% by 2030 and by at least 50% by 2050, relative to 1990 levels;

14.2. the formal recognition of national climate change legislation in the legally binding part of the outcome and a requirement for countries to pass climate legislation by 2020 at the latest;

14.3. support for international processes to assist the development of national climate legislation, to spread good practice and to promote common methodologies;

14.4. a review of national pledges to ensure that they are aligned with the global target and are equitable;

14.5. transparency of performance of countries against their national targets and actions (with yearly reporting), as well as a process to evaluate the implementation of national legislation and the emission reductions that result;

14.6. flexibility allowing countries to improve their legislation and performance;

14.7. international rules and mechanisms for emissions trading;

14.8. a commitment to research and development, demonstration and sharing of new technologies, and dissemination of best existing technologies;

14.9. financial and technical assistance to developing countries, in particular the poorest ones, for climate change adaptation;

14.10. recognition of the right to equitable access to sustainable development, of the profound impact climate change will have on ecosystems and economies, and of the importance of valuing natural capital;

14.11. a call for international fora, notably the G8 and G20, to press for reform to support a shift towards a low-carbon green economy.

15. In this context, the Assembly reiterates its concern that climate change will affect the enjoyment of universally recognised fundamental rights, and therefore exhorts national parliaments of the member States to:

15.1. improve relevant mechanisms for building resilience against climate change, parallel to global governmental negotiations on the new climate treaty;

15.2. work with the governments to prepare lasting resettlement solutions for climate refugees and displaced persons.

B. Explanatory memorandum by Lord Prescott, rapporteur

1. Introduction and background: where do we stand?

1. Climate change is one of the greatest threats our society is facing in the 21st century. The battle against climate change and natural resource degradation compels us to think and act together beyond our conventional boundaries.[3] This battle is just as paramount as our efforts to agree on the new action framework for the Millennium Development Goals beyond 2015. Our success, or failure, will determine the type of world we leave for future generations.

2. If we get it right, we will not only safeguard our planet's resources for the future, but also create huge new economic opportunities. We could thus pursue sustainable growth, lifting millions of people out of poverty. And, we could create hundreds of thousands of high-quality jobs in new businesses competing in a low-carbon, resource-efficient global economy.

3. But if we fail, the disruption to the global climate and environment will be unprecedented. Mass movements of population and conflict over depleted resources will likely be commonplace, notably in the poorest parts of the world. The existing obstacles to development – such as water scarcity, agricultural limitations and poor health – will become too costly and difficult to overcome. Glaciers will melt, affecting the fresh water supply to millions of human beings, and sea levels will rise, threatening low-lying and coastal habitats including many big cities. Extreme weather events will become more common and more frequent, leading to destroyed lives and damaged economies. All these effects will hit the poorest hardest.

4. Against this background and these frightening prospects, the United Nations climate change negotiations are among the most complex international talks ever undertaken. Tackling climate change has profound implications for our economy and energy use, for our environment and for politics. It raises questions of responsibility and equity, as well as technology and finance. And it requires commitments from every country in the world. But most importantly, our action must be reconciled with the need for sustainable growth. Without serious global commitment to reduce greenhouse gases, climate change would exceed the capacity of natural and human systems to adapt.

5. The Kyoto Protocol, agreed in 1997 and in force from 2005, set specific emissions reduction targets for industrialised countries for the 2008-2012 period as recommended by experts. Agreed in 2009, the non-binding Copenhagen Accord recognised the need to limit temperature rise in this century to below 2°C. Most scientists warn that beyond this threshold climate change will become dangerous, with irreversible and potentially catastrophic environmental changes and attendant socio-economic consequences. They consider that a reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions[4] of 50% to 85% from 1990 levels is necessary by 2050. Given the significant time delay between the release of emissions and temperature rise, the window of opportunity to achieve a reduction of this scale is closing fast.

6. Under the Durban Platform, approved in 2011, countries agreed to start negotiations on a new international agreement "with legal force" to be effective in 2020, with talks to be completed by 2015. Even though the Kyoto Protocol has been extended to a second commitment period from 2013 to 2020, most major economies have not yet made any specific commitments and some even withdrew from the process (Canada, Japan, New Zealand and Russia).[5] It is now clear that international negotiations alone will not suffice and that key countries have to help create the political conditions for a global deal by acting at home, for example by adopting relevant domestic legislation.

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3. See the message of Mr William Hague, United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, to the meeting on "Climate change: implications for international resilience and for security" on 2 and 3 July 2013 at Wilton Park (United Kingdom).

4. The term "greenhouse gas emissions" is understood as the emission of carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), fluorinated gases (F-gases) and others. Greenhouse gas concentration, amount or emissions are usually expressed as a carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2-eq).

5. China, India, South Africa and Brazil – the world's biggest emitters of greenhouse gases – have signed and ratified the Kyoto Protocol, but have not taken on binding targets. The United States – the world's second biggest emitter – has signed the Kyoto Protocol, but never ratified it. 38 developed countries (including all European Union member States) accepted binding targets in the second commitment period. Japan, New Zealand and Russia participated in Kyoto's first round, but have not taken on new targets in the second commitment period. Canada withdrew from the Kyoto Protocol in 2012.

7. This report will set out a vision for what a new global agreement on climate change should look like and will make some recommendations to both governments and parliaments about priorities for action between now and 2015. We shall first look at why action on climate change is necessary, then see how it could be achieved and finally propose the key elements of the desired outcome.

2. Global risks for human well-being

8. When the first warning about global climate warming due to human activities was issued thirty-five years ago, we were struck by the extent and speed of the changes occurring on our planet.[6] It has since become increasingly clear that our natural world is no longer able to provide enough resources and CO_2 absorption capacity to sustain the prevalent economic model, much less so to allow it to continue growing. In 1990, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) presented evidence that man-made emissions of CO_2 far exceeded the natural range of the last 650 000 years. According to the Panel's most recent report, "[e]ach of the last three decades has been successively warmer at the Earth's surface than any preceding decade since 1850".[7] Several major boomerang effects are to be expected on our living environment: they concern natural resources, economic activities and the living space of the population.

2.1. Risks to natural capital

9. Nature's riches – such as soil, forests, water and biodiversity – constitute ecosystems with precious common assets which provide value for people and the economy.[8] These resources ensure benefits ranging from crops, animals and water supply to food security, climate regulation, health and protection from natural hazards. In providing these vital services and goods, nature delivers what is understood as "natural capital".

10. In much the same way that investors use financial capital to generate profits, natural capital yields a flow of valuable ecosystem services. Failing to account for the depreciation of natural capital can lead to an overestimate of net national wealth, income and well-being. Natural capital is however typically ignored by conventional government accounts and given a default value of zero. This is despite its potential to influence economic performance and prosperity by exposing a nation to a wide range of risks and opportunities. One such risk is that an erosion of nature's capacity to deliver ecosystem goods and services acts as a break on progress and development.

11. This connection can potentially lead to a spiral of conflicts and insecurity, especially in regions – such as some areas in Africa – having suffered from recent ethnic or political conflict and relying on climate-dependent sectors, notably rain-fed agriculture.[9] The United Nations General Assembly recognised the relation between climate change impacts on natural capital and possible security risks. It therefore qualifies climate change as a "threat multiplier". By affecting water resources, food security, health, habitats and other important factors, climate change can also trigger political instability and conflicts over resources.

12. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment[10] – a synthesis by over 1 300 scientists from 95 countries that was initiated by the United Nations and published in 2005 – gauged the consequences of ecosystem change for human well-being. The findings show that human activity over the last fifty years has resulted in a substantial and largely irreversible loss of biodiversity. If many of these changes have brought net gains in human well-being and economic development, they have been achieved at the cost of the degradation of our environment. About 60% of the ecosystem services examined in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment are being degraded or used unsustainably, notably fresh water supply, fisheries, air and water purification, as well as the regulation of regional and local climate, natural hazards, diseases and pests.

13. Climate change is one of the most significant drivers of this process, alongside habitat degradation (due to massive changes in the use of land and water courses), overexploitation, invasive alien species and pollution. Climate change is leading to more frequent severe weather events and alteration in rainfall patterns,

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6. See a study by Dr John H. Mercer on "West Antarctic ice sheet and CO_2 greenhouse effect: a threat of disaster", published in 1978.
7. Working Group I contribution to the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report (due in October 2014) – *Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis*, Summary for Policymakers, IPCC website, www.climatechange2013.org or www.ipcc.ch, September 2013.
8. The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (2011). HM Government, www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm80/8082/8082.pdf.
9. See the Report of the Secretary-General to the UN General Assembly on "Climate change and its possible security implications", 11 September 2009, p. 18.
10. See www.unep.org/maweb/en/index.aspx.

with implications for agriculture, flood control and the migration of humans, species and diseases. Our natural world is thus under enormous pressure and its resilience is diminishing. The balance of scientific evidence suggests that there will be much net harm in ecosystem services worldwide if the global mean surface temperature increases more than 2°C above pre-industrial levels or at rates greater than 0.2°C per decade.

14. An international climate change agreement in 2015 must recognise risks to the environment and sustainable development and highlight the need to better value natural capital in the pursuit of the objectives set out in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Moreover, the value of natural capital has to be better integrated into national accounts so as to allow governments to identify, reduce and mitigate development risks linked to the depletion of natural resources, as well as reaping opportunities from the protection and restoration of the natural environment.

2.2. The risk of the "carbon bubble"?

15. Recent scientific findings warn us about the issue of the so-called "carbon bubble" – a notion based on the assumption that there is a finite limit to the atmospheric space for greenhouse gases while still ensuring that warming does not exceed 2°C. This issue of the bubble arises because the combined proven oil, gas and coal reserves currently on the balance sheets of energy companies will produce far more carbon dioxide emissions when consumed than this finite limit.

16. Studies by the Potsdam Institute for Climate impact Research in Germany suggest that to reduce the probability of exceeding 2°C warming by 20%, the global carbon allowance between 2000 and 2050 is 886 gigatonnes of CO_2. However, by 2011, over one third of this had already been emitted, leaving only 565 gigatonnes of CO_2 in the global "carbon budget" for the next four decades. Yet the total potential emissions from burning the world's proven fossil fuel reserves are a staggering 2 795 gigatonnes of CO_2. Thus only one-fifth of the total reserves could be used unmitigated.

17. The IPCC report of 27 September 2013 endorsed a world "carbon budget" saying that no more than 1 trillion tons of carbon could be burned and CO_2 released into the atmosphere. Half of that amount has already been used up and the ceiling on global emissions might be reached by 2040. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Emissions Gap Report of 5 November 2013 underlines that no more than 44 gigatonnes of CO_2 equivalent could be released by 2020 so as to respect the 2°C target and set the stage for further cuts needed.

18. Investors are fearing a financial bubble if the value of energy companies shrinks due to climate-related action, since the estimated global carbon budget could be used up even earlier – in just 16 years.[11] Energy companies continue exploration and development of fossil fuel reserves, which is adding new fossil resources into the balance and hence escalates the likelihood that climate objectives will be missed. A global climate change agreement in 2015 must take this systemic risk into account and include proposals for the G20 to support more strongly a shift towards a green economy.

2.3. Climate refugees: where is the refuge?

19. Humanity's ecological footprint is increasingly visible and its effects translate into growing numbers of environmental, or climate, refugees. Voices from the developing world, in particular small insular States,[12] are seriously worried about the viability of human habitats on their territory which will go under water if oceans continue to warm. Indeed, the IPCC's Working Group I report of 27 September 2013 confirms that ocean warming dominates the climate system and represents over 90% of the energy cumulated in the global system between 1971 and 2010; even if emission levels stabilise or stop, global warming effects will persist for several centuries.

20. In its Resolution 1655 (2009) "Environmentally induced migration and displacement: a 21st century challenge", the Assembly noted that "over 30 million people worldwide are displaced because of the increase in desertification, droughts, rising sea levels … and extreme weather events" that are all exacerbated by climate change. The United Nations estimates that there could be at least 250 million climate refugees by 2050. It appears that the world's poorest regions, which have contributed the least to the global warming, will be the main source of climate refugees.

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11. In March 2012, Carbon Tracker published the report "Unburnable carbon" which maps the extent of climate risk in capital markets. The report points out that some 200 top energy companies in the fossil fuel business possess resources that could generate up to 745 gigatonnes of CO_2. But only about 149 gigatonnes of CO_2 can actually be used.

12. See articles in *Le Monde* on 5 September 2013 and 17 October 2013 entitled, respectively, "Atoll inhabitants pushed to exile by the rising waters" and "An inhabitant of the Kiribati islands requests a status of climate refugee".

21. Our legal and humanitarian systems at both national and international levels are ill-adapted to deal with the challenge. To avoid human tragedies, developed countries, including in Europe, will have to activate solidarity and resettlement mechanisms. As the Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner has pointed out, "[w]ith the growing awareness of the harms caused by climate change it will be necessary to clarify in further depth the obligations that must be connected to the right to a healthy environment".[13] Mary Robinson, the former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, was also alarmed at the collective failure to grasp the scale and the urgency of the problem, as climate change reveals "countless weaknesses" in the existing institutional architecture concerning human rights protection.

3. The need for a new international agreement and national action

22. The clock is ticking and the cost of inaction is growing. "Business as usual" is no longer a path to follow. Politicians worldwide must rise up to the challenge and act so as not to steal prosperity from future generations. We have the basis for action if we build on the Durban Platform and institutional proposals concerning green growth from bodies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the UNEP and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to mention just a few. National action, unlike in the past, should feature more prominently in paving the way for a new international agreement.

3.1. Implications of the Durban Platform for action

23. The Durban Platform[14] represents an important milestone in the history of international climate negotiations. The explicit goal of "ensuring the highest possible mitigation efforts by all Parties" is a significant departure from negotiations on the Kyoto Protocol which excluded the possibility of any commitments for developing countries. The Durban Platform thus replaced the long-standing division of the world into countries with ambitious responsibilities and those with none. Yet reaching an agreement that covers all countries while respecting the different circumstances in each nation will be hugely challenging.

24. However, considering that the Durban Platform provides only a very general framework for negotiators, a number of key questions remain open as regards:

– legal aspects – it is not clear what form an "outcome with legal force" could take, nor how the notion "agreed outcome with legal force" should be interpreted;

– the structure of the agreement remains to be defined either as a single deal or multiple agreements, some being mandatory and others optional. Some countries would prefer a centralised or "top down" agreement, while others would prefer the opposite. Negotiators need to take inspiration from both approaches;

– contents: the negotiations should address "mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology development and transfer, transparency of action, and support and capacity-building" but does not specify how these issues should be addressed, nor that they should be part of the final outcome.

3.2. Factors influencing negotiating positions

25. Negotiating an international climate change agreement is a dynamic process, particularly when talks span many years. Negotiators are no doubt influenced by the state of the global and national economy, their interpretation of lessons from the Kyoto Protocol and their view on science, as well as perceptions of fairness, beliefs about intergenerational equity and domestic political processes and interests. Moreover, in recent years, we have seen a marked shift in the dynamics of the climate change debate, notably in developing countries. Key factors that influence negotiating positions and their relative importance vary from country to country.

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13. See the Viewpoint of the Commissioner of Human Rights on "Climate change is causing an unprecedented, global human rights crisis – and must now be countered by co-ordinated, rights-based action", www.coe.int/t/commissioner/Viewpoints/091019_en.asp.

14. The Durban Platform of 2011 launched a new round of climate negotiations aimed at developing a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the United Nations Convention on Climate Change, applicable to all parties. Negotiations should be concluded no later than 2015, with the new agreement due to come into effect from 2020.

26. National interest, or a perceived national interest, is an overriding factor. Debates in the run-up to 2015 are likely to be heated and no political leader will compromise his or her citizens' prosperity for the sake of the global good, unless the proposed agreement is seen as fair. National interest[15] can include a domestic assessment of systemic climate risks and impacts for a given country as regards the health sector, food security and energy use. Higher vulnerability is likely to result in more co-operative behaviour and a more ambitious negotiating position, but will not suffice to foster a global consensus.

27. Public and parliamentary opinion about the perceived risks of climate change is also important, notably relative to other domestic challenges. Carbon intensity[16] of the economy also matters, in particular the assessment of impact-costs-benefits to the economy from reducing emissions. The political influence of high carbon-emitting industries should not be underestimated, such as when these industries are significant players in terms of exports or employment.

28. We also have to bear in mind opportunities relating to the climate change agenda. This includes, for example, the extent to which mitigation action will benefit the country via new commercial opportunities related to green energy, goods and services, as well as development aid and climate finance when appropriate. The growth in green investment and the emergence of climate-friendly economic models are helping to demonstrate the huge industrial opportunities to countries that are willing to engage in this direction.

29. Competitiveness is another key factor, particularly in times of economic hardship which today absorbs much attention of politicians. The likelihood of continued economic difficulties in developed countries could lower political confidence and undermine the financial capacity needed to deliver an international agreement. At the same time, the crisis does provide a chance to reassess our policies, systemic risks and opportunities for better quality, "greener" growth. It is crucial to convincingly demonstrate that low-carbon growth is not only possible and affordable, but that it is the only path to sustainable long-term growth.

30. The positions of key trading partners and competitors could also have a big influence on a country's negotiating position. For example, Canada's position has, to date, been closely aligned to the United States, with whom it has strong economic ties. Similarly, South Korea's framework for Low Carbon Green Growth legislation was driven, at least in part, by the risk that US climate legislation could impose import tariffs on countries considered by the Congress as not to be pulling their weight.[17] Some of the US federal States have taken positive climate protection initiatives: California, for instance, launched, in January 2013, a cap-and-trade scheme (the world's largest after the European Union) for big emitters of greenhouse gases, which others, such as Quebec in Canada, are planning to join.

31. Peers and negotiating groups are of great importance, because countries tend to negotiate in groups. For example, developing countries co-ordinate positions and negotiate as the G-77 plus China, while the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) goes further and promotes high collective ambition, given these countries' shared extreme vulnerability to climate change impacts. The so-called Umbrella Group is a club of non-EU developed countries that loosely co-ordinates positions, and the EU countries negotiate as one block. It follows, therefore, that the position of the most economically powerful countries in a group will influence the overall group position. However, as developing countries grow and diverge, their unity is crumbling within the G-77 plus China group, while the voice of AOSIS and the African Union is getting stronger. When interests diverge too much, new alliances can be formed.

32. Reputation and leadership issues also matter. How a country wishes to be viewed on the international stage may drive some countries to take on relatively ambitious stances at the negotiation table. Mexico, for instance, stands out as a regional leader and has taken on a relatively progressive and coherent position both domestically and internationally. Similarly, the Least Developed Countries (LDC) group has recently enhanced its strategy so as to be seen as more of a leader.

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15. Townsend, Terry and Matthews, Adam (2013), *National climate change legislation: The key to more ambitious international agreements*. GLOBE International and Climate and Development Knowledge Network, http://cdkn.org/resource/national-climate-change-legislation-the-key-to-more-ambitious-international-agreements/.

16. Carbon (emissions) intensity is the average emission rate of a given pollutant (CO_2) or the amount of carbon by weight emitted per unit of energy consumed. A common measure of carbon intensity is weight of carbon per British thermal unit (Btu) of energy. See www.teachmefinance.com/Scientific_Terms/Carbon_intensity.html#ixzz2f8kt446Z for more information.

17. All of the draft laws in 2008-2009 included automatic tariff measures, unless the Congress viewed a country's action comparable with the United States. The United States is a major export market for South Korea.

3.3. The role of national action and legislation

33. The pace of international climate negotiations so far has been painfully slow and inconsistent with the response that the scientific evidence demands. Whilst the 18th Conference of Parties in Doha in 2012 achieved the modest outcomes that were expected, the difficulties encountered suggest that there will be many challenges ahead of 2015, with much more difficult decisions to be taken.

34. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change alone cannot drive the politics of ambition. Instead it must capture the outcome of political discussions held in other international fora and nationally. At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in June 2012 (Rio+20), the Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (and the head of the British delegation) noted that it was the initiatives outside of the governmental process which generated real momentum.

35. The same is true of the climate change negotiations: the Conference of Parties cannot drive the change alone. The annual meetings are benchmarks that merely reflect change being driven elsewhere. If we are to secure an agreement in 2015, governments will need to deploy their political skills very differently over the next two years, with a much greater focus on practical bilateral co-operation with key countries. They will have to support national climate legislation in parallel to the negotiations in order to create the political conditions for success.

36. National legislation on climate change has traditionally followed after an international agreement was reached so as to support implementation. Yet, it is now clear that advancing national legislation helps create the conditions that enable a global deal to be reached. This view is fully shared by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Ms Christiana Figueres, who deems domestic legislation on climate as the "absolutely critical, essential, linchpin between action at the national level and international agreements".[18] She makes clear that the negotiations under the Durban Platform will not succeed if the political conditions are not ripe in key countries.

37. National climate action is triggered by a better understanding of risks associated with climate change and the potential benefits of taking action. The main benefits include increased resource efficiency, which leads to lower costs and increased competitiveness, and stronger energy security through more diversified supplies, away from fossil fuels. We can also enjoy improved air quality as a result of cleaner, better performing transports and secure early mover advantage in embracing green technologies of tomorrow. All these benefits show that rationalising energy use and incentivising domestic sustainable production is not only possible, but also strategically valuable.

38. In fact, competitiveness and confidence are two main reasons that explain why national action has a positive influence on international talks. Indeed, countries that do not adequately price pollution and emissions are effectively subsidising "dirty" industries by not requiring them to pay the environmental costs. If, on the contrary, a country takes action to price carbon and invest in green economy, it will be motivated to encourage others to follow the suit so as to reduce impacts from competition and develop comparative advantage. Domestic legislation creates the political space for leaders to go further and faster in the international negotiations, whilst their populations begin to experience the benefits of energy security, efficiency and resilience, together with a cleaner environment and reduced vulnerability to price shocks.

39. The perceived unfairness in the implied allocation of emissions' reduction action across countries still undermines the willingness of many large economies (both developed and emerging ones) to make international commitments. However, what is exciting about the current climate negotiations is that many countries around the world are doing more to tackle climate change domestically than their governments are willing to sign up to internationally. This progress needs to be harnessed at the international level as a way of facilitating a global agreement.

40. Successive failures to negotiate a legally binding agreement have led to the widespread assumption that climate change is too hard to solve. This legacy has also affected global co-operation. The joint work of governments and parliaments therefore remains central for a successful outcome in 2015. As the 3rd GLOBE Climate Legislation Study demonstrates, there already exists a positive trend with parliaments around the world mobilising and proposing climate change legislation. Significantly, China announced, in April 2013, its plans to develop such legislation within one or two years.

18. Extract from the speech delivered at the GLOBE Climate Legislation Summit in January 2013.

41. National parliaments therefore have to engage fully and early towards the desired outcome in global climate negotiations. Depending on the interpretation of "an agreed outcome with legal force", an international agreement including the formal recognition of national legislation is a real possibility. One such option would be a "legalisation" of national commitments, potentially taken as domestic legislation.

42. However, for changes in national legislation to be fully legitimate and to receive public support, they must be preceded by public information actions. Political leaders and policy-makers need to explain clearly to the public the likely risks of global warming and potential benefits of changes in national legislation and policies. Despite the scientific evidence on climate change, some population groups remain hesitant or unwilling to contribute to joint efforts for financial reasons. Some surveys even show that the ranks of climate-skeptics are increasing.[19]

4. Setting the framework for a global deal

43. Since the launching of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, governments have tried both "top down" and "bottom up" approaches to reducing global emissions. Yet neither has achieved the levels of participation or ambition necessary to tackle climate change. As shown above, an agreement under the Durban Platform could take many different forms. What I propose, however, is a mixed "top down and bottom up" approach, including – for the first time – formal recognition of national climate legislation.

44. A mixed approach would thus feature a core agreement with a global target to reduce emissions in line with the commitment (fixed in the Copenhagen Accord) to contain the global average rise in temperature below 2°C compared with pre-industrial levels. It would also include one or more schedules listing national targets and actions, such as legislation.

45. On the basis of analysis of the risks and costs of action and inaction, an appropriate target for stabilising greenhouse gas concentrations at 450-500 parts per million of CO_2 equivalent in the atmosphere[20] is widely regarded as feasible and appropriate. This target should guide national commitments. Currently, however, there is a gap between the cumulative level of ambition at the national level and that required to limit the temperature rise below 2°C.

46. The United Nations Environment Programme estimates[21] that the emissions gap in 2020 is likely to be between 8 and 13 gigatons of CO_2, depending on the implementation of pledges. This means that emissions would be 14% above what is needed to stabilise the situation. To narrow this gap, domestic actions and targets have to match a global target while also fitting national circumstances. National legal frameworks therefore have to be adapted accordingly and be listed in a global deal by 2020 at the latest, so that Parties take on balanced national and international commitments.

47. The international processes accompanying the development of legislation require special attention ahead of 2015 so as to boost political conditions to enable a deal to be reached. They include focus on capacity building, engagement between parliaments and governments, and support for legislator peer groups.

48. A core agreement should also include institutional arrangements, a financial mechanism and procedures for monitoring, reporting and verification. It should also contain provisions relating to international emissions trading and adaptation strategies, as well procedures for reviewing, amending and expanding the agreement over time in the light of the latest scientific evidence. In summary, the key elements of a 2015 agreement and priority actions for building ambition to offset climate change are:

– a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% by 2030 and by at least 50% by 2050, relative to 1990 levels;

– the formal recognition of national climate change legislation in the legally binding part of the outcome and a requirement for countries to pass climate legislation by 2020 at the latest;

– support for international processes to assist the development of national climate legislation, to spread good practice and to promote common methodologies;

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19. See the UK Energy Research Centre's (UKERC) report on "Public attitudes to nuclear power and climate change in Britain – Two years after the Fukushima accident", September 2013, www.ukerc.ac.uk/support/tiki-download_file.php?fileId=3371.

20. Stern, Nicholas (2008), Key Elements of a Global Deal on Climate Change. London School of Economics and Political Science, United Kingdom.

21. See www.unep.org/pdf/2012gapreport.pdf.

– a review of national pledges to ensure that they are aligned with the global target and are equitable;

– transparency of performance of countries against their national targets and actions (with yearly reporting), as well as a process to evaluate the implementation of national legislation and emission reductions;

– flexibility allowing countries to improve their legislation and performance;

– international rules and mechanisms for emissions trading;

– a commitment to research and development, demonstration and sharing of new technologies, and dissemination of best existing technologies;

– financial and technical assistance to developing countries, in particular the poorest ones, for climate change adaptation;

– recognition of the right to equitable access to sustainable development, of the profound impact climate change will have on ecosystems and economies, and of the importance of valuing natural capital;

– finally, a call for international fora, notably the G8 and G20, to press for reform to support a shift towards a low-carbon economy.

5. Conclusions and scenarios for the future

49. Tackling climate change effectively and reaching a new global agreement "with legal force" no later than 2015 is a daunting task for the international community. The Durban Platform of 2011 has set the roadmap for climate negotiations and represents a real opportunity to develop a coherent approach to combating climate change. To help build the broad consensus needed to achieve a breakthrough in this process, national efforts can be a decisive drive. Parliaments need to be involved at an early stage, along with governments. Together, they should seek recognition for national climate change legislation as an enabler that creates the political space for an international agreement.

50. Drawing lessons from past failures and scaling up our ambition, we must try a mixed "top down and bottom up" approach that would feature a core agreement as outlined above. Countries should be asked to pass climate legislation by 2020 at the latest. Their targets and laws should be formally referred to in the legally binding part of the outcome agreement.

51. Governments will hence need to invest more in bilateral co-operation with key countries and support international mechanisms that help advance national climate legislation, spread good practice, build capacity amongst legislators and promote common methodologies. They should ensure a proper review of national pledges so as to better align national commitments with the global target and secure equity. The value of natural capital must be duly recognised. Finally, annual evaluation of progress is also a key element of a successful future agreement on climate change.

52. Following its earlier initiative "Stop the Clock – Save our Planet",[22] the Parliamentary Assembly, together with member States, is well placed to play an important part in the global climate negotiations. This is paramount in the light of the impact climate change will have on the enjoyment of universally recognised fundamental rights.[23] Gaps in the existing legal protection framework, in particular as regards climate refugees and displaced persons, will have to be removed so as to build resilience against climate change. The Council of Europe as a whole could speak up more forcefully on the need for a stronger emphasis on human rights in the global climate negotiations.

22. During the 17th Conference of Parties (COP17) in Durban in 2011, the Council of Europe proposed extending the timetable in order to enable the negotiations for the Kyoto Protocol successor to continue. The COP17 accepted this proposal.

23. See the Viewpoint of the Commissioner of Human Rights on "Climate change is causing an unprecedented, global human rights crisis – and must now be countered by co-ordinated, rights-based action", www.coe.int/t/commissioner/Viewpoints/091019_en.asp.

Appendix 1 – Background information to the International Climate Talks

1. Early years – the deployment of a cohesive approach to climate change policy

In 1972, the Stockholm Conference adopted a declaration that set out principles and an action plan for the preservation and enhancement of the human environment. It also raised the issue of climate change for the first time, warning governments to be mindful of activities that could affect the climate.

In 1988, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)[24] organised an internal seminar to identify environmental sectors that might be sensitive to climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC),[25] a forum for the investigation of the potential causes and scale of climate change, was established. Since its foundation, the IPCC has published four reports (in 1990, 1995, 2001 and 2007) collecting scientific data about climate change, its causes and impact.

The first IPCC report awakened world leaders, policymakers and the public, alerting them to the potential dangers of global warming and leading to a United Nations conference in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. During that conference the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted. This non-binding treaty – with no mandatory limits of greenhouse gas and no enforcement mechanisms – was meant to commit signatory nations to voluntary action to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. These measures were aimed primarily at developed, industrialised countries listed in Annex I to the Convention (so-called "Annex I countries"). The UNFCCC currently has 195 Parties which meet during annual Conferences of Parties (COP).

2. Kyoto Protocol: consolidation, ratification and implementation between 1997 and 2005

The third Conference of Parties took place in December 1997 in Kyoto (Japan). After intensive negotiations, the Parties adopted the Kyoto Protocol. This document outlined specific greenhouse gas emissions targets for developed countries, following the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities". Annex I countries agreed to legally binding reductions in greenhouse gas emissions of an average of 5% below 1990 levels in the first emissions-reduction period: between 2008 and 2012.

The Kyoto Protocol was underpinned by five key concepts:

a. Legally binding targets for the Annex I countries;

b. Implementation: Annex I countries were required to prepare policies and measures for the reduction of emissions, to increase the absorption of greenhouse gases and to adopt "flexible mechanisms" (see below);

c. Minimising impacts on developing countries by establishing an adaptation fund for climate change;

d. Transparent accounting, reporting and review;

e. Establishing a Compliance Committee to enforce the implementation of commitments under the Protocol.

The Kyoto Protocol adopted the so-called "flexible mechanisms" to assist in delivering emissions reductions. These are:

– Emissions trading, allowing countries to sell permitted but non-"used" emissions units to countries exceeding their targets;

– The Clean development Mechanism which allows Annex I countries to implement emissions-reduction projects in developing countries. Such projects can earn saleable certified emission reduction (CER) units, which can be counted towards the Kyoto Protocol targets;

– Joint Implementation, allowing Annex I countries to earn emission reduction units from an emissions removal or reduction project in another Annex I country, which can be counted towards meeting its target.

The four years following the signature of the Kyoto Protocol were taken up by resolving specific issues that were not resolved in Kyoto and planning for implementation and ratification. COP 4 (1998, Buenos Aires), COP 5 (1999, Bonn), COP 6 (2000, Hague and Bonn) and COP 7 (2001, Marrakech)[26] held expert

24. See www.unep.org/.
25. See www.ipcc.ch/.

discussions about Kyoto mechanisms, plans for ratification and the withdrawal, in 2001, of the United States – by far the largest greenhouse gas emitter among Annex I countries – from active participation in the Kyoto process. The Kyoto Protocol came into force in February 2005 after its ratification by Russia, while Australia and the United States kept refusing to ratify it.

The signature of the Millennium Declaration in 2000 by 189 world leaders highlighted the goal of "protecting our common environment" and renewed their commitment to the Kyoto Protocol.

3. Efforts to negotiate a successor regime since 2005

The key meetings and events for negotiating a new agreement replacing the Kyoto Protocol are as follows:

Date and name of event	Main outcomes
2005, Montreal: COP 11/ MOP 1	The first Meeting of the Parties (MOP) of the Kyoto Protocol initiated discussions on commitments for industrialised countries in the period beyond 2012.
2007, Washington Declaration	A non-binding agreement between governments from the G8 countries and Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa on the outline of a successor to the Kyoto Protocol. It envisaged a global emissions trading system for both industrialised and developing countries.
2007, IPCC Fourth Assessment Report	The IPCC warned policymakers that the pace of climate change was faster than previously believed and that its effects on the planet were worse than previously thought. The report further estimated that to keep warming at 2°C, greenhouse gas emissions would need to be cut from their 2000 levels by 25% to 40% by 2020 and by 50% to 85% by 2050.
2007, Bali: COP 13/MOP 3	An agreement on a timeline and structured negotiation on the post-2012 framework ("Bali Action Plan" or "Kyoto II Road Map"). Establishing Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Co-operative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) – a new subsidiary body to conduct negotiations. Australia finally ratified the Kyoto Protocol.
June 2009, G8 meeting in Italy	G8 nations committed to the 2°C target and a successor regime to the Kyoto Protocol.
2009, Copenhagen: COP 15/ MOP 5	No legally binding agreement was adopted due to the lack of political consensus on how to share the burden to achieve the necessary 50% to 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and even less consensus on how to set mid-term quantitative emissions targets for 2020. Instead, a modest 13-paragraph non-binding "political accord" was negotiated outside the COP framework and then "noted" by COP 15.
2010, Cancun: COP 16/MOP 6	No progress towards negotiating a successor to Kyoto.
2011, Durban: COP 17/MOP 7	Concluded that talks on a legally binding agreement should be completed no later than 2015 and come into force by 2020. Parties agreed that a new instrument should be "applicable to all Parties". Establishment of a Green Climate Fund to help developing countries reduce their emissions. The Fund is to be endowed with US$100 billion from 2020, but it is unclear where the money would come from.
2012, Rio de Janeiro: Rio+20 Conference	The UN Conference on Sustainable Development focused on securing renewed political commitment to a green economy and the institutional framework for sustainable development. The outcome document "The future we want" underscored the need for urgent and ambitious action to combat climate change.
2012, Doha: COP 18/MOP 8	Agreement on a timetable for developing a new international agreement by May 2015. 38 industrialised countries agreed a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol to start in January 2013 and to last eight years. It was also agreed that the Kyoto Protocol's "flexible mechanisms" can continue as of 2013. Developed countries reiterated their commitment to deliver on promises to continue long-term climate financial support to developing nations. Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Denmark, Sweden and the European Commission announced financial pledges for the period up to 2015, totalling about US$6 billion.

26. Information about all conferences and meetings with documents is accessible on the UNFCCC webpage: http://unfccc.int/2860.php.

Appendix 2 – Flagship climate legislation and legislative progress identified in the third GLOBE Climate Legislation Study

Country	Name of law	Main purpose	Progress in 2012
Argentina	*Presidential Decree 140/2007 declaring "rational and efficient" energy use a national priority*	Includes goals to reduce energy consumption and promote the use of renewable energy in the public sector (including transport and lighting), private industry and households.	◄►
Australia	*Clean Energy Act, 2011*	Aims to reduce the country's GHG emissions by 80% by 2050. The central element of the bill is pricing carbon, initially via a carbon tax and, subsequently, via an emissions trading scheme.	▲ Secondary legislation to underpin Clean Energy Act and draft legislation to link emissions trading scheme with EU by 2018
Bangladesh	*The Climate Change Trust Fund Act, 2009*	Focused on funding adaptation-related activities over the period 2009–2011.	▲ Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority Act passed in 2012
Brazil	*National Policy on Climate Change* (NPCC), 2009	The NPCC is based on Brazil's global commitment within the UNFCCC and includes all related instruments (the National Plan on Climate Change, the National Fund on Climate Change and others).	▲ Forest Code amendments
Canada	None		▼ Repeal of the Kyoto Implementation Act
Chile	*National Climate Change Action Plan 2008–2012*	Creates an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Climate Change and dialogue platforms for public–private partnerships and for the civil society; sets public policy guidelines for 5 years, after which it will be followed by long-term national and sectoral plans for adaptation and mitigation.	▲ Resolution 370 improving access to the grid for renewable energy and Law 20571
China	*12th Five-Year Plan, 2011*	The Plan includes targets to reduce the carbon intensity of GDP by 17% by 2015; to decrease the energy intensity of GDP by 16% and to increase the share of non-fossil fuel primary energy consumption to 11.4% and forest coverage by 21.6%.	▲ Progress with developing national climate change law
Colombia	*Law No. 1450, 2011*	National Development Plan 2010–2014 addresses sustainability and risk reduction and foresees the implementation of a National Climate Change Policy.	▲ Launch of the Low Carbon Development Strategy and the National Plan for Climate Change Adaptation
El Salvador	*National Environment Policy, 2012*	The Policy, passed as a government decree, offers a framework for the governmental action to reverse environmental degradation and reduce vulnerability to climate change.	▲ Approval of the National Environment Policy
Ethiopia	*Climate-Resilient Green Economy Initiative, 2011*	Aims to achieve middle-income status by 2025 in a climate-resilient green economy based on 4 pillars: agriculture; stopping deforestation; more renewables; and transport, industry and buildings.	◄►

Key:

▲ Positive legislative progress | ◄► No legislative progress | ▼ Negative legislative progress

Country	Name of law	Main purpose	Progress in 2012
European Union	*Climate and Energy Package, 2008*	The core package includes complementary legislation: Revision and strengthening of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS); Reducing GHG emissions fairly (considering the relative wealth of the EU member States); A framework for the promotion of renewable energy; A framework for the safe geological storage of CO_2.	▲ New Directive on Energy Efficiency
France	*Grenelle* laws, *2009-2010*	Grenelle laws include policies on emissions targets, renewable energy, energy efficiency and research.	◄►
Germany	*Integrated Climate and Energy Programme, 2007* (updated in 2008)	This programme aims to cut GHG emissions by 40% from 1990 levels by 2020. It focuses strongly on the buildings, transport and construction sectors.	◄►
India	*National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), 2008*	NAPCC outlines existing and future policies and programmes directed at climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Plan sets out eight "national missions" running up to 2017.	▲ Plan includes recommendations on Low Carbon Strategy for Inclusive Growth
Indonesia	*Presidential Regulation on the National Council on Climate Change, 2008*	The Council, composed of 17 ministers and chaired by the President of the Republic, co-ordinates climate change policy-making. It is assisted by the working units on adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer, funding, post-2012 policies, forestry and land use conversion.	▲ Ministerial regulation to expand thermal energy
Italy	*Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP), 2007*	CCAP is a comprehensive action plan to help Italy comply with GHG reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol.	◄►
Jamaica	*Vision 2030 Jamaica, 2007*	The Vision programme seeks to achieve developed country status for Jamaica by 2030. It includes 82 national strategies, including hazard risk reduction and adaptation to climate change.	◄►
Japan	*Law Concerning the Promotion of Measures to Cope with Global Warming,* 1998 (amended 2005)	This Law establishes the Council of Ministers for Global Environmental Conservation; develops the Kyoto Achievement Plan; and stipulates the establishment and implementation of countermeasures by local governments.	▲ Carbon Tax introduced in October 2012
Kenya	*The Climate Change Action Plan, 2013*	Provides a platform for the implementation of the 2010 National Climate Change Response Strategy, defining clear measures on adaptation and mitigation.	▲ Climate Change Authority Bill and Action Plan to be approved in 2013
Mexico	*General Law on Climate Change, 2012*	Establishes the basis for the creation of institutions, legal frameworks and financing to move towards a low carbon economy and fixes emissions reduction target of 30% below "business as usual" by 2020.	▲ General Law on Climate Change passed in June 2012
Mozambique	None		◄►
Nepal	*Climate Change Policy, 2011*	Sets out a vision to address the adverse impacts of climate change and to improve livelihoods and encourage climate-friendly development.	◄►
Pakistan	*National Climate Change Policy, 2012*	Identifies vulnerabilities to climate change, and spells out appropriate response measures, including disaster risk management.	▲ National Climate Change Policy adopted in September 2012
Peru	*National Strategy for Climate Change, 2003*	The Strategy aims to reduce the adverse impacts of climate change by conducting research that identifies vulnerability and develops mitigation action plans.	◄►

Key:

▲ Positive legislative progress | ◄► No legislative progress | ▼ Negative legislative progress

Country	Name of law	Main purpose	Progress in 2012
Philippines	*Climate Change Act, 2009*	The Act sets up the Climate Change Commission (a governmental body) for drafting a National Climate Change Framework, an Action Plan and guidelines for local Climate Change Action Plans.	◄►
Poland	*Strategies for Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction until 2020, 2003*	Outlines the action plans for economic sectors to comply with international obligations, including energy, industry, transport, agriculture, forestry, waste, public utilities, services and households.	◄►
Russia	*Climate Doctrine of the Russian Federation, 2009*	The law sets strategic guidelines for the development and implementation of future climate policy, covering issues related to climate change and its impacts.	◄►
Rwanda	*Green Growth and Climate Resilience/ National Strategy on Climate Change and Low Carbon Development, 2011*	Includes a collection of 9 working papers covering all major sectors relating to mitigation and adaptation.	◄►
South Africa	*National Climate Change Response Policy (NCCRP), 2011*	The Policy addresses mitigation and adaptation strategies in the short, medium and long term (up to 2050) for water; agriculture and forestry; health; biodiversity and ecosystems; human settlements; and disaster risk reduction and management.	▲ Carbon Tax proposed in 2012–2013 budget
South Korea	*Framework Act on Low Carbon Green Growth, 2009*	This law creates the legislative framework for mid- and long-term emissions reduction targets, cap-and-trade, carbon tax, carbon labelling and disclosure, and the expansion of new and renewable energy sources.	▲ Act on the Allocation and Trade of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Rights passed
United Kingdom	*Climate Change Act, 2008*	The Act provides a long-term framework for improved carbon management, the transition to a low carbon economy, and encouraging investment in low carbon goods. It includes emissions reduction targets (at least 80% reduction from 1990 levels by 2050) and creates 5-yearly carbon budgets.	◄►
United States of America	*Clean Air Act, 1963* (amended in 1976 and 1990)	Following the “endangerment finding”, the Environment Protection Agency is now required to regulate gases for their GHG potential under the Clean Air Act.	▲ Progress with regulating carbon dioxide under the Clean Air Act
Vietnam	*The National Climate Change Strategy, 2011*	The Strategy aims to ensure food, water and energy security, poverty alleviation, gender equality, social protection, public health; to enhance living standards, and preserve natural resources in the context of climate change.	▲ Approval of the national REDD+ action programme, June 2012

Key:

▲ Positive legislative progress | ◄► No legislative progress | ▼ Negative legislative progress