

(3) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992)

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http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/background_publications_htmlpdf/application/pdf/conveng.pdf

<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.pdf>

http://unfccc.int/files/kyoto_protocol/application/pdf/kp_doha_amendment_english.pdf

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[497 words]

The [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) (UNFCCC) is an international climate treaty agreed in 1992. It creates a legally-binding framework for international climate diplomacy, establishes how the world should come to political agreement on the issue of climate change, and paves the way for further treaties that aim to limit global greenhouse gas emissions.

The aim of the UNFCCC is to "achieve ... stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system." Parties to the treaty, including nearly all UN member states and the European Union, are required to record national greenhouse gas emissions, create national plans "to mitigate climate change by addressing anthropogenic emissions", and cooperate on sharing technologies and best practices for addressing climate change.

The treaty requires developed countries to limit "anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases and [protect] and [enhance] greenhouse gas sinks and reservoirs," but doesn't set binding targets for emissions reductions. These are contained in the 1997 [Kyoto protocol](#), an addition to the UNFCCC that required rich countries to reduce emissions by 2012; less developed countries were not required to do so. In 2012, the [Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol](#) was agreed in Cancun, setting further targets for the period 2013-2020, but many countries are yet to ratify it.

Since its establishment the UNFCCC has shaped international climate and energy diplomacy. The treaty establishes that richer developed countries should take the lead in emissions reductions, describing the "common but differentiated responsibilities" of world nations to address climate change. It requires rich countries to commit to provide financing for poor countries to deal with climate change, introduces the concept of carbon trading into international climate diplomacy, and allows developed countries to 'offset' emissions by sponsoring projects in less developed countries. By setting national emissions targets, the Kyoto Protocol requires rich countries to treat reducing emissions as a goal of national policy.

However, the treaty also demonstrates the challenges of getting international agreement on climate. The US signed the Kyoto Protocol but didn't ratify it, meaning the world's largest emitter at the time was excluded from binding targets. Canada withdrew from Kyoto in 2011 with no real repercussions. Among nations that committed to reducing emissions there was a mixed picture of success. Emissions fell in rich countries over the Kyoto period, but in part because of economic decline in former Soviet nations. In focusing on rich countries, the Protocol was poorly formed to address rapid growth of emissions from less developed nations like China and India, which meant that overall global emissions grew rapidly during the Kyoto period.

Annual meetings of the UNFCCC continue to be the most important international political venue for the formulation and agreement of international climate policy. At a meeting in December 2015 in Paris, the world's leaders will attempt to form a new agreement to limit climate change to no more than two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures - the next milestone in the UNFCCC process.

[EXTRACT]

The ultimate objective of this Convention and any related legal instruments that the Conference of the Parties may adopt is to achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention,

stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.

...

All Parties, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and their specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, shall: (a) Develop, periodically update, publish and make available to the Conference of the Parties, in accordance with Article 12, national inventories of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, using comparable methodologies to be agreed upon by the Conference of the Parties;

Formulate, implement, publish and regularly update national and, where appropriate, regional programmes containing measures to mitigate climate change by addressing anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, and measures to facilitate adequate adaptation to climate change; (c) Promote and cooperate in the development, application and diffusion, including transfer, of technologies, practices and processes that control, reduce or prevent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol in all relevant sectors, including the energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry and waste management sectors;

Take climate change considerations into account, to the extent feasible, in their relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions, and employ appropriate methods, for example impact assessments, formulated and determined nationally, with a view to minimizing adverse effects on the economy, on public health and on the quality of the environment, of projects or measures undertaken by them to mitigate or adapt to climate change;

...

Each of these [Annex 1] Parties shall adopt national policies and take corresponding measures on the mitigation of climate change, by limiting its anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases and protecting and enhancing its greenhouse gas sinks and reservoirs. These policies and measures will demonstrate that developed countries are taking the lead in modifying longer-term trends in anthropogenic emissions consistent with the objective of the Convention, recognizing that the return by the end of the present decade to earlier levels of anthropogenic emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol would contribute to such modification, and taking into account the differences in these Parties' starting points and approaches, economic structures and resource bases, the need to maintain strong and sustainable economic growth, available technologies and other individual circumstances, as well as the need for equitable and appropriate contributions by each of these Parties to the global effort regarding that objective. These Parties may implement such policies and measures jointly with other Parties and may assist other Parties in contributing to the achievement of the objective of the Convention and, in particular, that of this subparagraph;

The developed country Parties and other developed Parties included in Annex II shall take all practicable steps to promote, facilitate and finance, as appropriate, the transfer of, or access to, environmentally sound technologies and knowhow to other Parties, particularly developing country Parties, to enable them to implement the provisions of the Convention. In this process, the developed country Parties shall support the development and enhancement of endogenous capacities and technologies of developing country Parties. Other Parties and organizations in a position to do so may also assist in facilitating the transfer of such technologies.

[/EXTRACT]

ARTICLE 2**OBJECTIVE**

The ultimate objective of this Convention and any related legal instruments that the Conference of the Parties may adopt is to achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.

ARTICLE 4**COMMITMENTS**

1. All Parties, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and their specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, shall:
 - (a) Develop, periodically update, publish and make available to the Conference of the Parties, in accordance with Article 12, national inventories of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, using comparable methodologies to be agreed upon by the Conference of the Parties;
 - (b) Formulate, implement, publish and regularly update national and, where appropriate, regional programmes containing measures to mitigate climate change by addressing anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, and measures to facilitate adequate adaptation to climate change;
 - (c) Promote and cooperate in the development, application and diffusion, including transfer, of technologies, practices and processes that control, reduce or prevent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol in all relevant sectors, including the energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry and waste management sectors;

- (a) Each of these Parties shall adopt national¹ policies and take corresponding measures on the mitigation of climate change, by limiting its anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases and protecting and enhancing its greenhouse gas sinks and reservoirs. These policies and measures will demonstrate that developed countries are taking the lead in modifying longer-term trends in anthropogenic emissions consistent with the objective of the Convention, recognizing that the return by the end of the present decade to earlier levels of anthropogenic emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol would contribute to such modification, and taking into account the differences in these Parties' starting points and approaches, economic structures and resource bases, the need to maintain strong and sustainable economic growth, available technologies and other individual circumstances, as well as the need for equitable and appropriate contributions by each of these Parties to the global effort regarding that objective. These Parties may implement such policies and measures jointly with other Parties and may assist other Parties in contributing to the achievement of the objective of the Convention and, in particular, that of this subparagraph;

[EXTRACT]

KYOTO:

Each Party included in Annex I, in achieving its quantified emission limitation and reduction commitments under Article 3, in order to promote sustainable development, shall: - 2 - (a) Implement and/or further elaborate policies and measures in accordance with its national circumstances, such as: (i) Enhancement of energy efficiency in relevant sectors of the national economy; (ii) Protection and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, taking into account its commitments under relevant international environmental agreements; promotion of sustainable forest management practices, afforestation and reforestation; (iii) Promotion of sustainable forms of agriculture in light of climate change considerations; (iv) Research on, and promotion, development and increased use of, new and renewable forms of energy, of carbon dioxide sequestration technologies and of advanced and innovative environmentally sound technologies; (v) Progressive reduction or phasing out of market imperfections, fiscal incentives, tax and duty exemptions and subsidies in all greenhouse gas emitting sectors that run counter to the objective of the Convention and application of market instruments; (vi) Encouragement of appropriate reforms in relevant sectors aimed at promoting policies and measures which limit or reduce emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol; (vii) Measures to limit and/or reduce emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol in the transport sector; (viii) Limitation and/or reduction of methane emissions through recovery and use in waste management, as well as in the production, transport and distribution of energy;

The Parties included in Annex I shall, individually or jointly, ensure that their aggregate anthropogenic carbon dioxide equivalent emissions of the greenhouse gases listed in Annex A do not exceed their assigned amounts, calculated pursuant to their quantified emission limitation and reduction commitments inscribed in Annex B and in accordance with the provisions of this Article, with a view to reducing their overall emissions of such gases by at least 5 per cent below 1990 levels in the commitment period 2008 to 2012. 2. Each Party included in Annex I shall, by 2005, have made demonstrable progress in achieving its commitments under this Protocol.

[/EXTRACT]

1. Each Party included in Annex I, in achieving its quantified emission limitation and reduction commitments under Article 3, in order to promote sustainable development, shall:

(a) Implement and/or further elaborate policies and measures in accordance with its national circumstances, such as:

- (i) Enhancement of energy efficiency in relevant sectors of the national economy;
- (ii) Protection and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, taking into account its commitments under relevant international environmental agreements; promotion of sustainable forest management practices, afforestation and reforestation;
- (iii) Promotion of sustainable forms of agriculture in light of climate change considerations;
- (iv) Research on, and promotion, development and increased use of, new and renewable forms of energy, of carbon dioxide sequestration technologies and of advanced and innovative environmentally sound technologies;
- (v) Progressive reduction or phasing out of market imperfections, fiscal incentives, tax and duty exemptions and subsidies in all greenhouse gas emitting sectors that run counter to the objective of the Convention and application of market instruments;
- (vi) Encouragement of appropriate reforms in relevant sectors aimed at promoting policies and measures which limit or reduce emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol;
- (vii) Measures to limit and/or reduce emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol in the transport sector;
- (viii) Limitation and/or reduction of methane emissions through recovery and use in waste management, as well as in the production, transport and distribution of energy;

Article 3

1. The Parties included in Annex I shall, individually or jointly, ensure that their aggregate anthropogenic carbon dioxide equivalent emissions of the greenhouse gases listed in Annex A do not exceed their assigned amounts, calculated pursuant to their quantified emission limitation and reduction commitments inscribed in Annex B and in accordance with the provisions of this Article, with a view to reducing their overall emissions of such gases by at least 5 per cent below 1990 levels in the commitment period 2008 to 2012.
2. Each Party included in Annex I shall, by 2005, have made demonstrable progress in achieving its commitments under this Protocol.

Article 5

1. Each Party included in Annex I shall have in place, no later than one year prior to the start of the first commitment period, a national system for the estimation of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol. Guidelines for such national systems, which shall incorporate the methodologies specified in paragraph 2 below, shall be decided upon by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol at its first session.

Annex B

Party	Quantified emission limitation or reduction commitment (percentage of base year or period)
Australia	108
Austria	92
Belgium	92
Bulgaria*	92
Canada	94
Croatia*	95
Czech Republic*	92
Denmark	92
Estonia*	92
European Community	92
Finland	92
France	92
Germany	92
Greece	92
Hungary*	94
Iceland	110
Ireland	92
Italy	92
Japan	94
Latvia*	92
Liechtenstein	92
Lithuania*	92
Luxembourg	92
Monaco	92
Netherlands	92
New Zealand	100
Norway	101
Poland*	94
Portugal	92
Romania*	92
Russian Federation*	100
Slovakia*	92
Slovenia*	92
Spain	92
Sweden	92
Switzerland	92
Ukraine*	100
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	92
United States of America	93

* Countries that are undergoing the process of transition to a market economy.

**UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION
ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

UNITED NATIONS

1992

**KYOTO PROTOCOL TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**



UNITED NATIONS

1998

Doha amendment to the Kyoto Protocol

Article 1: Amendment

A. Annex B to the Kyoto Protocol

The following table shall replace the table in Annex B to the Protocol:

1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Party</i>	<i>Quantified emission limitation or reduction commitment (2008–2012) (percentage of base year or period)</i>	<i>Quantified emission limitation or reduction commitment (2013–2020) (percentage of base year or period)</i>	<i>Reference year¹</i>	<i>Quantified emission limitation or reduction commitment (2013–2020) (expressed as percentage of reference year¹)</i>	<i>Pledges for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (percentage of reference year²)</i>
Australia	108	99.5	2000	98	–5 to –15% or –25% ³
Austria	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Belarus ⁵ *		88	1990	NA	–8%
Belgium	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Bulgaria*	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Croatia*	95	80 ⁶	NA	NA	–20%–30% ⁷
Cyprus		80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Czech Republic*	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Denmark	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Estonia*	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
European Union	92	80 ⁴	1990	NA	–20%–30% ⁷
Finland	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
France	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Germany	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Greece	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Hungary*	94	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Iceland	110	80 ⁸	NA	NA	
Ireland	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Italy	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Kazakhstan*		95	1990	95	–7%
Latvia*	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Liechtenstein	92	84	1990	84	–20%–30% ⁹
Lithuania*	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Luxembourg	92	80 ⁴	NA	NA	
Malta		80 ⁴	NA	NA	