

## Climate Change and Development

European media is full of titles such as “Record summer temperatures”, “Hottest July days on record”, “Weather records across Europe” – and then there are daily reports on intensifying floods, fires and droughts. These events are disturbing the everyday life of people and influencing, for example, food production and water availability all around the globe. There is a scientific consensus, that climate change is a man-made problem – the burning of fossil fuels is the main reason for rising concentrations of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases (GHG). It is followed by growing political consensus that we have to act. And this is where the next UN Climate Conference in Paris comes in to the picture.

In December 2015, Paris is hosting a climate summit where 196 countries – literally, the whole world – will meet with one single goal: to agree a new global agreement on climate change. Throughout the last years, Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), better known through its Kyoto Protocol, have been negotiating new global and legally binding commitments on emission reduction and implementation in the period after 2020. For such an agreement – the so-called “**Paris Climate Agreement**” – to be reasonable and meaningful it will have to cover several key aspects seen as essential by the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)<sup>1</sup>: an ambitious

action plan for before and after 2020; a strong legally binding framework; a long term approach based on equity, clear financial setup for adaptation, mitigation, addressing loss and damage; and have a clear linkage to the global 2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

Climate change and the intergovernmental negotiations around it are multifaceted and complex. This Policy Digest will aim to address the following key themes in a clear and simple manner: how climate change and development cooperation are interlinked; what are the risks the world’s poorest countries are facing; the process, key issues negotiated and the expected outcomes of the Paris conference; what the EU is bringing to the negotiating table and how civil society organisations are engaging on the topic before and after the Paris conference.

### How are climate change and development linked?

Development cooperation models focusing on reducing poverty have been put in place in recent decades to strengthen economic, environmental and social development of developing countries. The **changing climate due to GHG emissions** is already taking a toll on a great number of developing countries that have themselves contributed the least to the GHG emissions. For example **hunger and food sustainability** are key issues addressed in development cooperation which are in turn affected by climate change. According to an Oxfam study, rising temperatures and

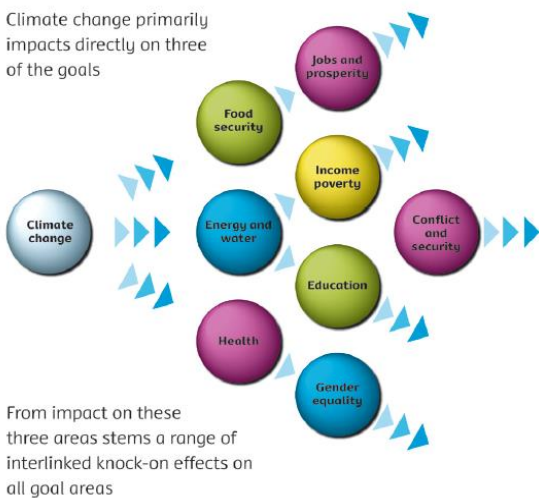
<sup>1</sup> Paris 2015 - Getting a global agreement on Climate change, Green Alliance, [www.green-alliance.org.uk](http://www.green-alliance.org.uk)

weather disasters are already undoubtedly hurting the crop production and disrupting incomes in numerous developing countries. The number of people in the world at risk of hunger could climb by 10% to 20% by 2050, followed by declining daily per-capita calorie availability on global scale. The whole food cycle is showing high levels of vulnerability.

“With 2° to 3°C warming, between 30 and 200 million people will be at risk of hunger; with an over 3°C warming, this number rises to 250 to 550 million people (Stern, 2007), mostly in Africa and Southeast Asia.”<sup>1</sup>

To add insult to injury, UNEP’s Adaptation Gap Report from 2014 assesses **the costs of climate change for the Least Developed Countries** to be in the range of 50 billion USD per year by 2025/2030 – and it could even double by 2050. UNEP is assessing the climate change costs for developing countries to 150 billion USD in the same period. The numbers on costs are a very important and substantiated reason for action.

**Figure 1 The Billiard Ball Model**



As explained by the Billiard Ball model,<sup>2</sup> climate change affects most directly development goals in the area of food security, energy, water, health and the environment. However, having a direct effect on these areas, climate change indirectly also affects development goals in the area of income poverty, education and other.

### What are the UN climate talks about?

Climate change negotiations in last 23 years, moved us some way along the road to keeping global temperatures down, but there is still some way to go. The Kyoto protocol, signed in 1997 with 192 countries as Parties, set the legally binding emission limitation and reduction commitments for 37 developed countries. In Durban in 2011 the global community decided to establish a binding international climate action agreement – and this negotiation should be completed in 2015 at COP 21 in Paris. In Doha in 2012 the second commitment period under the Kyoto protocol was adopted to cover the period to 2020.

There is also a clear agreement that a **heavier burden should be taken on by the developed countries**, which are principally responsible for the current situation as a result of their industrial activity. However, there is also an increasing understanding that higher income countries have a role to play to take forward a low carbon path recognising the disastrous global impacts and indeed some higher income countries are making great strides towards renewable and energy efficient models of investment. A “Paris Climate Agreement” will have to revitalise and make concrete commitment to the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities” regarding the position of the developing countries.

However, it is a well-known fact, that decision-making at global level falls under the rule that

<sup>2</sup> The Billiard Ball Model, from: [Climate change and vulnerability: Pushing people over the edge](#), CAFOD, September 2014

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“nothing is decided until everything is decided”. Although sometimes it is the source of frustration, it is the only way national states can commit themselves to act simultaneously.

### What are the main issues to be decided at COP21 in Paris?

What civil society actors would like to see is at least the same level of commitment to the climate change negotiations as world leaders showed towards the financial crisis in 2009. The main topics to be negotiated in Paris are climate finance, adaptation and mitigation measures as well as the legal form of the text and accountability.

The effectiveness of the “Paris Climate Agreement” is dependent on the provision of finances to support adaptation and mitigation measures in developing countries. Developed countries have committed to scaling up the climate finance to reach 100 billion USD per year by 2020. Meeting climate finance commitments is not foreseen to be achieved from the Official Development Aid (ODA) that donor countries provide, however, some of the ODA that focuses on climate change is counted towards it. We suggest that as an initial step towards stopping the diversion of existing aid to climate finance, that climate finance that qualifies as ODA is part of an overall ODA budget that increases by at least the same rate. Discussion on the definition and ways of counting climate finance are ongoing. For example, the OECD-DAC estimates that in 2013 there was \$37 billion of public funding provided for climate financing while Oxfam argues that \$17.3 billion is a more adequate estimate<sup>3</sup>.

Climate finances provided should not replace traditional aid resources, but to be new and additional to existing commitments regarding ODA. The COP15 in Copenhagen established the **Green Climate Fund** to

<sup>3</sup>[https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/the\\_roadmap\\_to\\_100bn\\_per\\_year\\_by\\_2020\\_-\\_a\\_foundation\\_for\\_success\\_in\\_paris.pdf](https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/the_roadmap_to_100bn_per_year_by_2020_-_a_foundation_for_success_in_paris.pdf)

facilitate and to fund mitigation and adaptation actions in developing countries. In 2014 the Fund received \$10.2 billion for the first capitalisation period (2015-2018). An establishment for a progress roadmap to achieve the \$100 billion target has been proposed by the French Presidency of the COP21<sup>4</sup>.

One of the topics at the centre of the Paris climate change negotiations is **adaptation** which focuses on anticipating the adverse effects of climate change and taking action to prevent or minimise the damage it can cause. Achieving more balanced allocation of resources by upgrading the adaptation measures is needed, as current practice indicates that majority of climate finances are being spent on mitigation measures. Allocating more public resources on adaptation is critical for developing countries, including small island states, the Africa group and the least developed countries, which are actively advocating for this change.

The “Paris Climate Agreement” must also set a new commitment regarding stronger **mitigation** measures by use of the contributions provided by the countries themselves – by indicating their national contribution to reduction of GHGs emissions in advance of the conference. In 2014 at the Lima conference, the global community determined the scope of the information on the **intended nationally determined contributions** (INDC's). Now all Parties are able to state their national commitment regarding their national circumstance well in advance of the Paris conference in 2015.<sup>5</sup> This should facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding among the Parties.

The **legal format** of the Paris agreement is very

<sup>4</sup>[https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/the\\_roadmap\\_to\\_100bn\\_per\\_year\\_by\\_2020\\_-\\_a\\_foundation\\_for\\_success\\_in\\_paris.pdf](https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/the_roadmap_to_100bn_per_year_by_2020_-_a_foundation_for_success_in_paris.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Find out details about the EU's and other countries' commitments through the intended nationally determined contributions here:  
<http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/indc/Submission%20Pages/submissions.aspx>

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important. It could take the form of a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force.<sup>6</sup> Some countries might oppose legally binding emission targets. The agreement will also contain a reporting and review obligations.

As the “Paris Climate Agreement” will cover the post 2020 period, agreement is needed also for the period before 2020. This process will aim to set more ambitious action before 2020, a mechanism on closing the gap in existing mitigation and finance commitments before 2020. Such a mechanism should have a time period/cycle setup connected with a long term goal.

### What is the European Union bringing to the negotiation table?

The EU has stated its expectations that COP21 – the conference shall deliver a robust international agreement that fulfils the following key criteria. It must:

- create a common legal framework that applies to all countries
- include clear, fair and ambitious targets for all countries based on evolving global economic and national circumstances
- regularly review and strengthen countries' targets in light of the below 2 degrees goal
- hold all countries accountable – to each other and to the public – for meeting their targets.

The EU and its Member States are committed to a binding target of at least a 40% domestic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 1990, to be fulfilled jointly, as set out in the conclusions by the European Council of October 2014.

### What are CSOs doing/advocating for ahead of Paris?

European CSOs and CSO platforms have a clear vision what they would like to see achieved in Paris in December 2015. CSOs' call for the following:<sup>7</sup>

- legally binding framework to enhance preparedness of the countries for action
- clear commitment to achieve 100 billion USD a year by 2020 for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures
- provision of clear, separate and transparent measures of both official development aid and climate finance to ensure commitments in both areas are fully kept
- balancing adaptation and mitigation measures by closing the existing gap by commitment to achieve 50:50 share
- setting up a global goal for adaptation to set concerted actions towards resilient societies and providing finances to the particularly vulnerable countries
- creating strong leadership of the Green Climate Fund financing and management
- modelling solutions based on principles of transparency, differentiated approach and additionality regarding the need to provide additional climate finances to traditional official development aid

<sup>7</sup> The points represent a generic summary from the following CSO publications: “Paris 2015 - Getting a global agreement on Climate change”, Green Alliance, [www.green-alliance.org.uk](http://www.green-alliance.org.uk); “The Right to resilience”, [Oxfam briefing on adaptation finance in the post-2020 Paris Agreement](http://www.oxfam.org.uk), June 2015; “Climate Financing”, SLOGA & Plan B position paper, June 2015

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- clear monitoring and review mechanism with a five year cycle for upgrading and adapting national commitments
- clear linkage with the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals



## What can I do?

- Inform yourself about your country's role and position ahead of the COP21 in Paris
- Join active organisations and citizens in your country to draw citizens' and politicians' attention to the importance of the Paris Agreement outcome
- Join a global campaign and global action on the weekend of the 28th/29th November with a mass mobilisation in Paris and capitals across the globe demonstrating solidarity between the climate and development movements. More info: [www.coalitionclimat21.org](http://www.coalitionclimat21.org) and [www.action2015.org](http://www.action2015.org)
- Follow the Climate Action Network Europe, that gathers most of the NGOs working on climate in Europe

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