

Policy

350

In December of 2009, all eyes will be on the city of Copenhagen, Denmark, as governments from around the world will meet to create the next global treaty on climate change. This meeting will be a part of a process that is now nearly 20 years old - the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The negotiations are very complex - this is a very brief guide to get citizens everywhere up to speed about what our decision-makers are doing at this important venue, and show how we can take a stand this year for a just treaty that meets the latest science.

A guide to the UN Climate Treaty Process



Acronym Watch

Explaining the negotiations, one acronym at a time

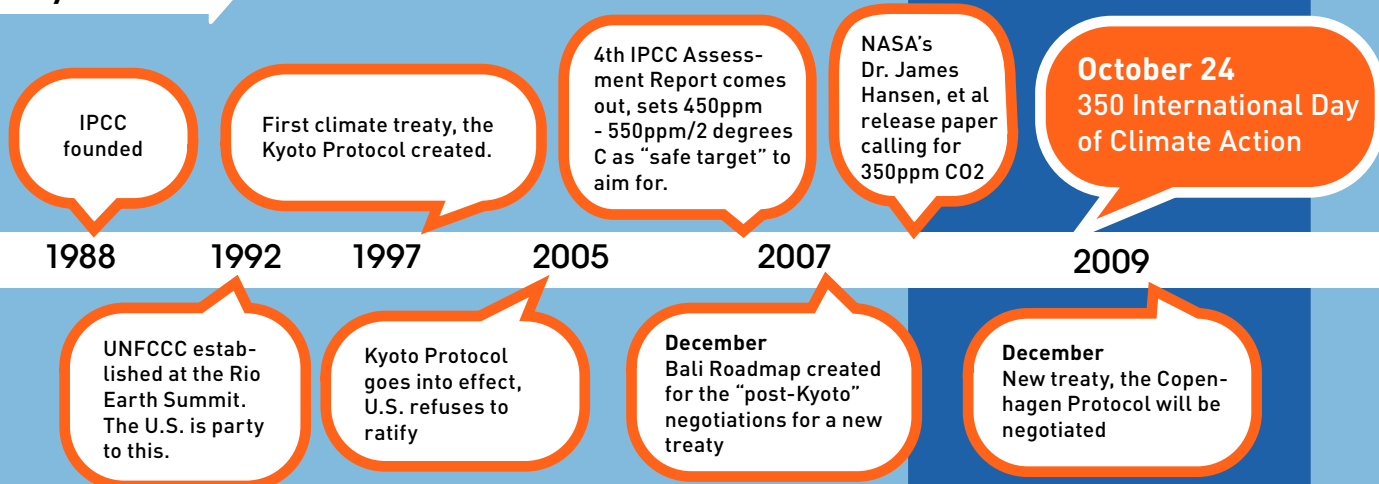
- AOSIS** the Alliance of Small Island States: a group of Small Island Developing States that negotiate together at the UN
- CAN** Climate Action Network: a network that represents of environmental organizations at the UN
- CDM** Clean Development Mechanism: a flawed framework under the Kyoto Protocol for developed countries to offset their emissions through 'clean development' projects in the Global South.
- CJN!** Climate Justice Now!: coalition of indigenous, campesino, and environmental justice groups
- COP/MOP** Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC/Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol: Takes place for 2 weeks every December
- G-77** Group of 77 and China: a coalition of developing countries that negotiate together at the UN
- IPCC** Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: UN body of 2,000 climate scientists. Jointly awarded the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize
- LDCs** Least developed country: a bloc of especially vulnerable countries, mainly from Africa, that negotiate together at the UN
- REDD** Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation - framework for developing countries to reduce their emissions from deforestation, and be compensated for it.

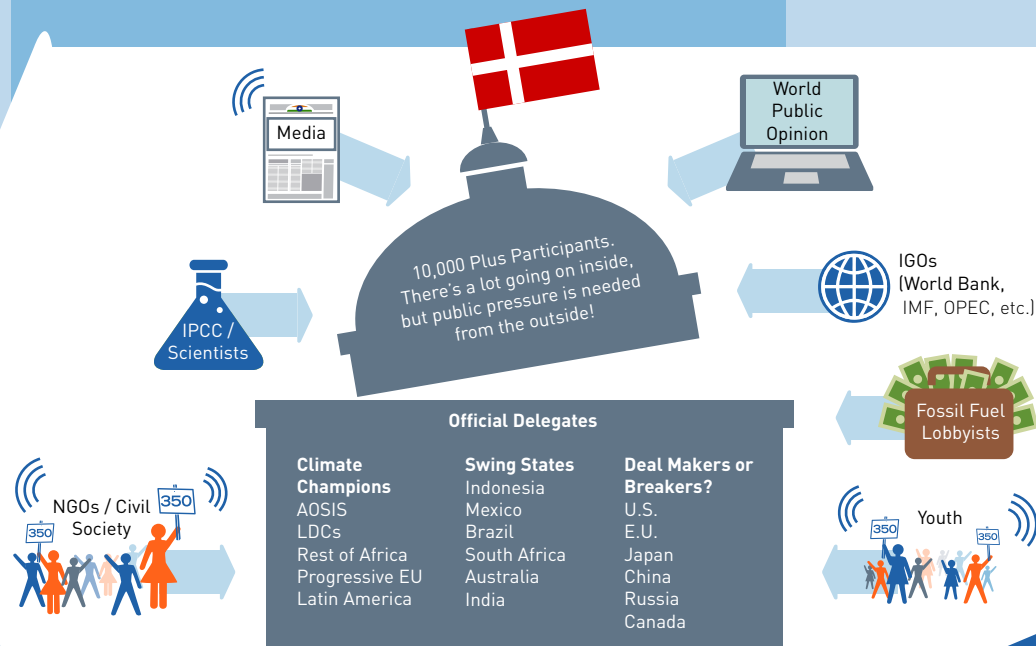
The Road to Copenhagen



At COP13 in Bali, negotiators wrote the Bali Road Map, a document to ensure the creation of a new treaty by 2009, to replace the current climate treaty, the Kyoto Protocol. This document focused on four main areas: mitigation, adaptation, financing, and technology transfer. These cut to the core of the important (and contentious) issues: How will we reduce emissions? How much, and by when? How will we adapt to the impacts we're already seeing? Who will take responsibility? Who will pay? A year later, at COP14 in Poland, governments were able to decide upon very little, leaving negotiators with a lot of work for 2009. They must not only create a treaty that all governments can agree to, but also that global citizens will accept. **That's where we come in.**

Key Dates





Influences on the COP

***Country positions are shifting all the time, so this graphic may be out of date already - check out the 350 blog to stay up to date on developments along the road to Copenhagen*

Helpful Terms to Know

Adaptation - reducing the the vulnerability of natural and human communities to climate change impacts.

Mitigation - cutting greenhouse gas emissions and protecting "sinks", such as forests or soils that naturally store CO2 and other greenhouse gases.

"Common But Differentiated Responsibilities" - the idea that all countries must take action, but that some countries have contributed more to the problem, and therefore have more responsibility (and often more capacity) to act.

Annex I - broadly defined as developed countries. Under the Kyoto Protocol, only Annex 1 countries have to reduce emissions

Non-Annex I - broadly defined as developing countries - these countries were not required to cut emissions under the Kyoto Protocol.



350 at the UN

With such a complex process, the 350 target helps cut right to the core of the debate - will this treaty be enough to avoid the worst effects of global warming? Just over a year ago, almost no one had heard about the number 350. Now, thanks to activists worldwide, 350ppm is on the agenda and has the support of over 90 countries. At COP14 in Poland, AOSIS, the LDCs, and the International Youth Delegation all announced their support for 350ppm, and the target is gaining support all the time - check the blog for news on this front.

2009 Predictions and Possibilities

With a new U.S. administration, bold climate policies from countries like Brazil and South Africa, and climate champions like AOSIS making strong statements on emissions targets, more now is possible than ever before. Yet, there's a great and dangerous possibility that if the burgeoning global climate movement doesn't keep a close eye on decision-makers' progress, the whole process could fall apart. Lack of trust, and disagreements over funding, technology transfer, and emissions targets could make it impossible to reach agreement in the time frame left.

By working together this year, and taking action on 24 October, the 350 International Day of Climate Action, we can keep the pressure on for leaders to create a just climate treaty in Copenhagen that meets the latest science. See below for ideas to keep the pressure on!



TAKE ACTION

24 Oct. Action Ideas to engage your politicians:

- Deliver the photos and a report of your action to your officials' office.
- Invite your government officials (at all levels) to speak at your action.
- Adopt a politician - choose a leader whose climate position you'd like to change, and figure out how to influence them through meetings, creative actions or the media.

350.org is an international climate change campaign calling for a fair Copenhagen climate treaty that meets the latest science. 350ppm represents the safe upper limit of CO2 in our atmosphere. Take part in your community on 24 October, 2009: An International Day of Climate Action. Visit www.350.org to get involved.

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