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Model UN

Climate change

Updated February 2024

Introduction

This material is a guide for a Model United Nation (MUN) about the UN's annual climate negotiations. With the help of the material, a teacher can organize a Model United Nation (MUN) in the classroom or at the school. The intended participants are high school students. During the MUN, students will represent different countries in the climate negotiations and discuss emission reductions and adaptation measures.

The material contains instructions for preparation, background and position papers based on the countries' commitments in the climate issue. The information in the position paper is largely taken from the countries' national action plans. The material also contains a glossary of terms that often appear in the country guides.

This MUN-material is produced by the Swedish UN Association and was last updated in February 2024. For more information about the Model United Nation (MUN) and additional MUN-materials, please visit the Swedish UN Association website and the school portal.

Sources and tips for further reading:

The world is changing rapidly. Therefore, we have created a page with sources and link tips where you can find updated statistics, facts and delve into the issues raised in this MUN, at the end of this document.

Instructions: Model UN (MUN) step by step

Preparations (1–2 lessons)

Prepare the students to act as delegates, i.e. representatives of countries in the UN, to discuss climate change. Feel free to point out the importance of stepping into your delegate role and not acting as yourself with your own opinions or wishes in the MUN. On the contrary, the entire MUN is based on the delegates acting as diplomats who act and speak according to their country's government. This also means that there is a focus on listening to each other's differences in order to find compromises and cooperate. Countries that reach joint agreements together are successful in a MUN.

Divide the students into a maximum of 16 delegations of 2 - 3 people. Each delegation represents a country and is given the opportunity to prepare with the help of the background description of the material, role-playing rules and the country map assigned to the group.

Reserve time before the Model United Nation (MUN) for:

- basic facts about the climate issue and COP,
- each delegation to study its own (and preferably others') position paper
- each delegation to write a draft/proposal for a resolution (see below)
- each delegation to write an opening speech (see below)

Furnish the room so each delegation can sit together and at the same time both see and hear everyone's performances. A table at the front of the classroom is needed for the meeting chairperson (this role can be held by an external person or the class teacher, for example). Next to the chairperson's table, a standing table or similar is advantageously placed as a lectern.

Place country signs at each delegation's place and feel free to prepare name tags for each delegate showing which country they represent.

Clothes and language

With simple rules for dress and language, the simulation becomes more realistic, and the students quickly get into the role of delegates. Therefore, please encourage everyone who will participate to come dressed formally for the MUN. Delegate clothing can, for example, mean a shirt/blouse and dark trousers/skirt. We recommend using some form of dress code to make it easier for everyone to step into their roles and to make the simulation as realistic as possible.

In the formal debate, which is conducted from the podium, the delegates always address the chairperson with "Honorable President". In the same way, the chairperson always addresses the delegates in the corresponding way, e.g. "highly respected delegate from the USA". Another important rule is to consistently avoid "I" and "you". Instead, use the names of the different countries, for example "Australia looks forward to ..." "The Maldives demands that ..." "The EU asks the honorable delegate of Bangladesh to clarify ..."

Draft resolutions

Before the start of the meeting, each delegation should have prepared a written draft resolution in which they formulate their country's proposal for a joint resolution. A resolution consists of two parts, one with preambulatory clauses and one with operative clauses. The preambulatory clauses describe the situation and why the countries need to make new decisions. The operative clauses state which measures the country wishes the meeting to agree on. There are rules for how a resolution is written to facilitate negotiations. Therefore, for example, there is no subject in a resolution. See template below.

Draft resolutions - template

Committee:

Topic:

Sponsor:

Signatories:

UN climate conference,

- (1) *opening* each preambulatory clauses with an italicized verb in the present participle,
- (2) *Ensuring* that each row is numbered for ease of negotiation,
- (3) *Ending* each introductory clause with a comma,
- (4) *Assuring* that this part contains important argumentation and history,
- (5) *Bearing in mind* that this part must also contain references to any previous resolutions and
- (6) agreements,
- (7) *Paying attention* to the fact that these opening sentences should serve as background and

- (8) motif for the operative clauses below,
- (9) 1. Establishing that the operative part of the resolution always begins with a verb in
- (10) third person singular;
- (11) 2. Reminding that every operative clause ends with a semicolon;
- (12) 3. Noting that in this section it is decided whether the resolution is vague, i.e
- (13) begins with verbs like
- (14) i) supporting,
- (15) ii) pleading,
- (16) iii) emphasizing;
- (17) 4. Noting further that a strong resolution contains introductory verbs such as
- (18) i) demanding,
- (19) ii) condemning;
- (20) 5. Pointing out that the resolution is a single long sentence that ends with a period.

The three phases of the Model United Nation (MUN)

In order to complete the three different phases of the role-playing game, at least 2–3 hours are needed. But feel free to use more time to give the delegates the opportunity to go deeply into their roles and work out a well-developed resolution.

Phase 1. Opening of the conference and the delegations' opening speeches (approximately 30 minutes)

The MUN begins ceremoniously with the chairperson welcoming and formally opening the meeting. Here you can also make room for any guest speakers (e.g. principal or expert). The chairperson then registers which countries are present and thus have the right to vote (done with calls where each country is asked to answer "present" and raise its country sign). Then it is time for the delegations' opening speeches.

The opening speech (often a maximum of 1 minute) addresses the delegation's central positions on the climate issue, preferably in a way that encourages other countries to cooperate. The chairperson calls up one representative per delegation, preferably in alphabetical order, to give an opening speech. Other delegates listen to prepare for the negotiations. The opening speeches, as a rule, always begin with "Honorable President, distinguished delegates...".

Phase 2. Lobbying and writing of resolutions (approximately 1,5 hour)

During the lobbying, the delegates mingle and negotiate how a joint resolution can be formulated. The task of the delegates is to create a draft resolution with as broad support as possible. Each country can only stand behind one resolution, either as a presenting country or as a supporting country. This means that you will at most get 3 different resolutions to debate and vote on. If necessary, after lobbying for a while, the chairperson can choose which resolution drafts have the most support and invite the delegates to work further in lobbying with these.

Tips: Encourage the delegates to dare to raise their voice, step into their role, push their own lines but also be open to compromise. Use resolution templates as support. Let the lobbying take place in a room with coffee and space for both mingling and resolution writing. Let a

resolution panel support the delegates in shaping common draft resolutions according to the template.

Phase 3. Debate and voting (approximately 45 minutes)

When there are one or two resolution proposals with the support of enough countries, the UN meeting enters its final phase where the delegates in the plenary/general assembly debate and vote on one resolution at a time. The chairperson has an important task to ensure that each resolution gets enough time for both debate and voting in the following order:

1. **Debate:** A delegate from the presenting country of the first draft resolution is asked by the Chair to read out the operative clauses. The delegate is then given the opportunity to argue for his resolution for e.g. 1 minute. After this, other countries are given the opportunity to speak either for or against the resolution. The chairperson distributes the floor and has also an important task to encourage as many people as possible to participate in the debate and ensure that different opinions and arguments come forward.
2. **Voting:** Each member state has one vote. When voting, the delegations can either vote to adopt or reject the resolution. They can also be given the opportunity to abstain from voting as long as not everyone's votes are needed to achieve a result. A resolution is adopted when a majority vote to adopt the resolution. The entire procedure of debate and vote is repeated for additional draft resolutions, if any. The resolutions adopted are welcomed and applauded as the outcome of the climate summit.

Further instructions and information about resolutions can be found in the handbook on Model United Nation (MUN) on the Swedish UN Association's website.

Background and agenda

Climate change

The climate issue with global warming in focus is one of humanity's biggest and most complex challenges. The issue of global warming refers to the observed warming of the Earth's lower atmosphere and oceans since the 1950s, as well as how the warming is assumed to continue in the future. The concentration of greenhouse gases is gradually increasing in the atmosphere, leading to higher temperatures globally, which in turn leads to more extreme weather such as droughts, heat waves and floods. In the spring of 2023, researchers within the UN climate panel IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) released a new report with a compilation of the world's climate research. It is a synthesis report with the aim of providing decision-makers in the world with important knowledge about climate change, the existing risks, and possible solutions. The report was an important basis for the climate conference COP 28 in autumn 2023.

The report shows that the climate issue is more acute than previously feared and that climate change is already affecting people and ecosystems. Compared to the last synthesis report released in 2014, the 2023 report shows that many climate impacts are worse than previously predicted. There is a rapidly shrinking opportunity to limit global warming to 1.5°C or well below 2°C to ensure a viable and sustainable future for all. Climate change is already causing negative, widespread, and increasingly irreversible losses and damage to nature and human systems, which also makes achieving sustainable development more difficult.

Scientists and climate experts agree that the scale of climate change observed today has no equivalent in a thousand years. During the 20th century (during the period 1850–1900 and 1995–2014), the global average temperature rose by 0.85°C. Climate change also affects all inhabited regions of the world already today. During the period 2011–2020, the global average temperature was 1.1°C higher than during the period 1850–1900. Global emissions of greenhouse gases have continued to increase, and it is unequivocal that human influence, primarily through emissions of greenhouse gases, has warmed the climate system, warming the atmosphere, oceans, and land areas.

The IPCC's report states that a global temperature increase of 1.5°C is close in time and that the decisions taken so far are not enough to reverse the trend. Several regions of the world are already experiencing higher regional warming and have experienced over 1.5°C temperature increase in at least one season. The researchers believe that the consequences of climate change can be very serious and affect several different areas, such as international security, food security, water supply and human health. Likewise, people's basic needs and right to food, housing, healthcare, education, and security are also threatened. Both rich and poor countries are affected, but people and societies with the least resources who contributed to the least extent to the warming, will be affected the most as they are geographically and economically the most vulnerable.

Over the next hundred years, sea levels are expected to rise. During the 21st century, it can rise by up to 1.5 meters. The sea ice in the Arctic risks disappearing completely during the summer and small sensitive ecosystems, such as coral reefs and small islands, will probably not survive a global warming of 2 degrees. However, there is hope that they might be able to cope with 1.5 degrees of warming. These are just a few examples of the negative consequences of climate change. The next few years will therefore be crucial as global emissions continue to rise. In the report, the IPCC also believes that the technology and solutions already exist, but that the political will and political leadership are lacking.

UN Framework convention in climate change and Common But Different Responsibilities

The UN system has a very important role in the global climate negotiations as it is between the states that joined the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, abbreviated UNFCCC) that the international climate negotiations take place. According to this climate convention, the principle of common but different responsibilities is central, which means that the main responsibility rests with the developed and richer countries.

Global warming is a cross-border problem, therefore global agreements are a prerequisite for slowing down climate change. Regardless of where the emissions of greenhouse gases occur, the whole world is affected. But in order for the agreements and agreements that have been concluded not to become empty words, all countries must perceive the decisions as real and fair. The relationship and trust between high-income, middle- and low-income countries is a key issue in international climate negotiations. Many low- and middle-income countries have low trust in the high-income countries, which have so far failed to fulfill their promises on aid volumes and reduced carbon dioxide emissions.

An important principle in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and in its Paris Agreement, is the principle of common but different responsibilities. This means that high-income countries are taking the lead in the fight against climate change and in financing measures to mitigate the consequences of its harmful effects. This is fundamental because the high-income countries have historically been responsible for the largest part of the emissions, while the low-income countries have almost negligible emissions but are most affected by climate change. It also means that low-income countries are not forced to slow down development towards higher prosperity.

Paris Agreement – a new global climate agreement

In December 2015, the countries of the world gathered in Paris to negotiate a new international climate agreement under the leadership of the UN. The new agreement would primarily steer towards greatly reduced emissions from high-income countries, with contributions on a voluntary basis from all countries. The negotiations led to the goal of keeping global warming below 2 degrees compared to pre-industrial times and aiming to limit it to 1.5 degrees. The Paris Agreement was a success in this respect. Initially, all the countries of the world were behind the Paris Agreement. In 2017, the US chose to leave the agreement, which was a major setback for global climate work. In connection with the change of power in the USA in February 2021, the country reentered into the agreement. Today, the agreement

covers all the countries of the world. The Paris Agreement further develops the idea that developing countries' emissions can be limited without jeopardizing the countries' opportunities for sustainable development. This through support from the rich countries for both emission reductions and adaptation to harmful climate changes.

In order for the decisions not to become empty words, it is important to follow up and report on the countries' climate work. The Paris Agreement therefore stipulated that all countries must submit a nationally decided action plan every five years to reduce emissions. Furthermore, the Paris Agreement also determined that the countries' commitments must be tightened and that the level of ambition must increase gradually, with coordination every five years. In the countries' follow-ups (Nationally determined contributions, NDCs), they must communicate what commitments they are making and plan to make to reach the goals stated in the Paris Agreement. All states are asked to set goals to reach net zero emissions of greenhouse gases. This means that the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere should not be more than what disappears naturally - so that the amount of greenhouse gases does not increase. Emissions must therefore be kept lower than the amount captured.

The international climate negotiations are complex and require decisions on many smaller sub-issues. With the Paris Agreement entering into force just one year after the decision, the pace of work has increased to get all the technical rules in place. In 2018, it was decided to follow the so-called rule book, which describes how the countries must plan, report, implement and follow up on the national commitments. The negotiations at the annual COP meetings (Conference of the parties) deal, among other things, with how the national promises on emission reductions can be tightened quickly enough to be able to slow down the rapid climate change. They also deal with measures for climate adaptation, financing, technology development and technology transfer, and deforestation.

The Paris Agreement represented a major step forward in formulating the long-term goal for climate work and in mobilizing efforts from all countries through voluntary commitments. However, many important questions are still unresolved: How can the weak commitments on emission reductions that have been made be strengthened so that the 2-degree target can be reached? Which mechanisms should form the basis of the emission reduction? Is it possible to have a target of 1.5 degrees temperature increase? How should technical and financial support for climate adaptation increase and benefit middle- and low-income countries? How can deforestation be stopped?

Conference of the parties, COP

Conferences of the parties are held annually with all countries that have signed the climate convention. They are called COP, short for Conference of the Parties. Many important and decisive decisions are made here regarding the countries' climate work to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and adaptation to climate change.

After the IPCC's report and all states' follow-up of the climate goals, it was found that the measures taken are far from those required to reach the goals contained in the Paris Agreement. Before COP 28, the climate conference arranged in the fall of 2023 in Dubai, many experts speculated about how far the conference would go in deciding to phase out

fossil fuels such as coal, gas, and oil. It was an issue that the EU had already made clear before the conference began that they would press on. The meeting was the conclusion of the first evaluation of all countries' commitments to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement (Global Stock take, GST).

On December 13, 2023, a decision was made on the climate agreement and COP 28 ended. Particular attention was paid to the fact that the agreement states that the world must switch from fossil fuels. With that, it is the first time that all the world's countries agree on something similar and the first time that fossil fuels are mentioned in a final agreement from the UN climate negotiations. However, the agreement has been criticized for interpretations in different ways. It says that the climate action is needed fast, but it is not specified how quickly it should go. However, the agreement allows civil society to put greater pressure on their governments to speed up the phase-out of fossil fuels in order to reach the Paris Agreement's agreement that the warming of the planet must not rise by more than 1.5 degrees.

Some decisions from the climate agreement are that all states agree to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and switch from fossil fuels, increase climate adaptation and switch financial flows. For that work, a new fund will be established, and its purpose is to help vulnerable developing countries deal with climate-related damage and losses. It is something that several countries and especially island nations have been asking for a long time. It is part of the principle of common but different responsibilities and the fair transition that poorer countries should receive aid to reduce emissions and deal with climate change.

COP 29 will be organized in autumn 2024 by Azerbaijan in Baku. Before COP 30 in Brazil, all countries must once again develop new national action plans (Nationally Determined Contributions, NDCs) to reach the Paris Agreement's goals.

Main issues of the Model United Nation (MUN)

The issues at the international negotiations are summarized in the role-play's two main questions. You can choose to have the MUN include both issues, or only one of them. If you want to include both issues in the MUN, two committees can each be given a question and then come together to debate and vote on the resolutions.

1. Emission reductions (Mitigation)

How the emissions of greenhouse gases should be limited is discussed at various levels. They are both about how the global long-term 1.5-degree target is to be reached and about the actual construction and distribution of commitments on emission reductions between countries. In the Model United Nation (MUN) use the facts you get on the position papers about existing agreements, including the Paris Agreement and the countries' own commitments on emission reductions.

In order to reach the goal of emission reductions, the countries can agree on, for example, issues such as new promises on stricter national emission reductions, energy supply and energy efficiency, technology development and reduced deforestation. The main question is how the countries that cause the largest emissions will be able to change course in time and implement sufficient emission reductions until 2050 to, together with the efforts of other countries, in principle achieve zero net emissions globally.

2. Adaption, technology and funding

The issue of adaptation to climate change is central to middle- and low-income countries. In addition to the requirements for reduced emissions in high-income countries, middle- and low-income

countries require extensive technical and financial support for their adaptation to a changing climate. The discussions on adaptation have been difficult but are not so much about high-income countries assisting developing countries, which is already clear from the Climate Convention (UNFCCC) that they must do, but more about how middle- and low-income countries should gain access to sufficient and new financial resources on a transparent way. Technology transfer and deforestation are also part of the discussion. The issue of long-term goals is also important in the context of adaptation. The target of 2 degrees will require more adaptation and create greater problems than if the target of 1.5 degrees can be achieved.

Agenda 2030 and the sustainable development goals

In September 2015, the world's heads of state and government adopted a new development agenda called Agenda 2030. The agenda consists of 17 global goals for sustainable development that aim to eradicate poverty, stop climate change, and create peaceful and secure societies. It is the most ambitious plan for creating sustainable development that the world has ever adopted. The three dimensions of sustainable development, i.e. the economic, social, and environmental dimensions, are an important starting point for the global goals. Goal 13 is about combating climate change, as well as strengthening resilience against and the ability to adapt to climate-related hazards and disasters. The goals must be achieved by 2030.

Leave no one behind

"Leave no one behind" is the promise behind the global goals for sustainable development. It represents the commitment of all UN Member States to end poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, tackle climate change, promote peace and justice and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind. Leave no one behind means that there is an equality aspect in the global goals. Leave no one behind thus means that everyone should benefit from all the progress that has been made and that none of the global goals can be considered fulfilled if it has not been fulfilled by everyone. It requires combating discrimination and inequality within and between countries.

Abbreviations and glossaries

Abbreviations

Delegate: As a delegate in a Model United Nation (MUN) students step into the role of a diplomat and represent a country at a UN meeting. The delegate's task is to negotiate on behalf of his country and agree with other countries' delegates on a joint resolution.

Lobbying: In the UN context, lobbying is an informal debate that prepares the formal debate. Civil society organizations or companies can also be allowed to participate in lobbying.

Convention: A convention is a legally binding agreement between countries that states can sign to show they want to abide by it. It is only when a state has signed and ratified the convention, that it becomes legally binding. It contains a problem description and points that explain what the countries commit to comply with. Long negotiations are often required to agree on the text of a convention.

Sign a convention: A state that signs a convention is bound to act in a way that does not go against the goals and purpose of the convention. For the commitment to apply in full, the state must then ratify the convention. Then it becomes legally binding.

Ratify a convention: Ratification is the decision a state takes to commit to an international agreement. It is the step after signing a convention and is legally binding. In democracies, ratification usually requires parliament to approve the agreement.

Make reservations to an article in a convention: While ratifying a convention, states can make reservations to certain parts or articles of the treaty. They thereby state that they do not intend to comply with these parts of the convention.

Resolution: A resolution is a type of decision adopted in the UN's various bodies. In the UN context, only the Security Council can adopt resolutions that are binding on member states, while General Assembly resolutions are seen as recommendations. The resolution usually expresses recommendations for how states should work with the issue.

Sovereignty: International law concept for a state's independence in relation to other states and for its right to exercise power within its own territory.

Glossaries

Annex I/non-annex I countries – the industrialized countries that were members of the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) in 1992, plus countries with economies in transition (the EIT Parties), including the Russian Federation, the Baltic States, and several Central and Eastern European States. Annex I to the Climate Convention lists the rich, developed countries that, among other things, must undertake emission reductions and finance the low- and middle-income countries' costs for adaptation and emission reductions. All other countries are Non-Annex I. The classification is now obsolete.

AOSIS - Alliance Of Small Island States - An organization of poor low-lying island states in the Pacific Ocean that will be hit hard by rising sea levels. Drives demands to limit temperature increases to below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

BAU - Business As Usual - A country's development scenario for e.g. carbon dioxide emissions, which means that no new legislation or new national measures affect development.

Black Carbon - Soot particles that strongly affect the temperature when they are released into the air or fall on snow - or ice-covered surfaces.

BRICS – The countries of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

CCS - Carbon Capture and Storage - A technology for capturing carbon dioxide from power plants and industries and channeling the carbon dioxide down into underground storage facilities.

CDM – Clean Development Mechanism – One of the Kyoto Protocol's three so-called flexible mechanisms. The CDM enables the high-income countries to make emission reductions in the low- and middle-income countries and credit the emission reductions.

CIF - Climate Investment Fund – Fund to support emission reductions in low- and middle-income countries that was supported by the United States and Japan.

CAT - Climate Action Tracker - Website that provides detailed information on countries' NDCs and their ambition levels as well as their emissions and energy policies.

Climate Watch - Offers open data, visualizations, and analytics to help policymakers, researchers and other stakeholders gather insights into countries' climate progress. Information about all countries' emissions in this document is taken from Climate Watch.

COP – Climate Convention's highest decision-making body, Conference of the Parties.

G77, G77 and China – the largest negotiating group in the UN which basically brings together all low- and middle-income countries. After its rapid economic development, China still wanted to associate itself with these countries, hence the name G77 and China. The name goes back to the 1960s when there were exactly 77 low- and middle-income countries in the world.

G7 Group of 7 - France, Italy, Japan, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, and the United States.

GCF - Green Climate Fund - A fund under the Climate Convention that was added to be the Paris Agreement's financial support mechanism for low- and middle-income countries. GCF is headquartered in South Korea.

GTP - Global Temperature Potential - Measure of a greenhouse gas's ability to contribute to the global temperature increase relative to carbon dioxide.

GWP - Global Warming Potential - Measure of the ability of a greenhouse gas to contribute to the greenhouse effect and global warming. The scale is relative and compares the current gas's climate impact with the effect of the same amount of carbon dioxide. For example, one kilogram of methane causes 24 times more warming than one kilogram of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere over a hundred-year period.

HCFC -22, HCFC – 23 – Two different so-called Hydrochlorofluorocarbons, which i.e. is used as a cooling medium, which is a greenhouse gas and affects the ozone layer.

INDC - Intended Nationally Determined Contribution - The intended, nationally determined contributions for emission reductions that the countries submitted in 2015 and which were a basis for the Paris Agreement. A country's INDC automatically becomes an NDC once the country has ratified the Paris Agreement

IPCC - Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change - The UN's scientific climate panel that regularly compiles all climate research.

JCM - Joint Crediting Mechanism - An own version of the CDM that Japan created to, within the framework of bilateral agreements, make emission reductions in other countries and where Japan and the country share the emission reductions. This is not approved by the climate convention.

Carbon dioxide equivalents – Summation of emissions of various greenhouse gases where GWP is used to calculate the equivalent emissions as if it were carbon dioxide. Often written as CO₂e (equivalent)

LDC - Least Developed Countries - The least developed low- and middle-income countries.

LULUCF- Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry- Emissions of greenhouse gases depending on how the land is used, changes in land use and forest. This applies, for example, to agricultural land, deforestation, or afforestation. Deforestation produces emissions, but afforestation produces absorption of carbon dioxide. In the emission values found in each country guide, LULUCF is included. Countries with small emissions of carbon dioxide from fossil fuels but with large deforestation still have significant carbon dioxide emissions.

NDC - Nationally Determined Contribution - see INDC.

OECD - Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development - High-income countries' cooperation organization on economic development and social issues. The OECD also works with environmental and climate issues.

OPEC - Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries - Cooperation organization for the oil-producing countries Algeria, Angola, Ecuador, United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela.

Ratification – If a state ratifies an agreement, it means that the country has approved the agreement and undertakes to comply with it. The agreement then becomes legally binding for that state.

REDD/REDD+ - Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation - A system for high-income countries to pay tropical rainforest countries to end deforestation and inappropriate forestry with high carbon dioxide emissions as a result. Has been negotiated within the Climate Convention.

SIDS - Small Island Developing States - A group in the UN system that protects the interests of poor, low-lying island nations. Partially overlapping with AOSIS.

SLCP – Short Lived Climate Pollutants - Short Lived Climate Affecting Air Pollutants, such as black carbon, tropospheric ozone, methane and some HFCs (hydrofluorocarbons). SLCP has a lifetime in the atmosphere of between a few weeks and 15 years.

UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change- The UN climate convention that was signed in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Under the Climate Convention are the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.

Australia

Background

Australia is a country with 26 million inhabitants spread over the world's largest island and is part of the world's smallest continent. The country stretches from the tropics to regions with all four seasons. The country has large exports of steel, agriculture and is also a large exporter of coal. Australia will be hit hard by future climate change. In 2020, the country emitted almost 600 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e), which corresponds to 22 tons per capita. Australia accounts for 1.2% of global emissions.

In recent years, Australia's different governments have had different levels of ambition when it comes to the climate issue. In 2015–2018, the country was led by Malcolm Turnbull, who tried to implement several different climate policy measures, but he failed to gain a voice within his own party. Between 2018 and 2022, Scott Morrison was Prime Minister of Australia and pursued more conservative policies for the Liberal Party. Now Anthony Albanese, who also leads the Australian Labor Party, is Prime Minister.

Important positions

Australia believes that technology development and market-based solutions should contribute to transforming Australia's economy into a low-carbon economy. However, a reduction in coal use must not threaten continued economic growth and increased living standards. A reduction in greenhouse gas emissions requires new technology investments for energy efficiency and the use of clean fossil fuels, biofuels, and hydrogen. Australia therefore wants to see increased international research and development cooperation. According to the climate adaptation index ND-Gain (Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative), Australia is among the fifteen countries in the world that have the best conditions for dealing with climate change.

Australia accounts for just over one percent of global emissions of greenhouse gases and therefore believes that a reduction in emissions on Australia's part is of minor importance compared to large emitting nations such as China and India. Australia is still one of the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases per capita at 14.8 tons, but this has declined significantly in recent years (2020). In the climate negotiations, Australia works for international agreements and the country has supported the negotiations with voluntary commitments. Australia has ratified the Paris Agreement and Australian representatives are quite happy with the outcome.

Emission reductions and NDC

NDC (Nationally Determined Contributions) suits Australia perfectly as it involves a voluntary commitment that is in principle not negotiated but only registered. In addition, Australia reserves the right to change its contribution if environmental conditions change. In its latest 2022 NDC, Australia stated that the country aims to reduce its emissions by 43% by 2030, compared to 2005, which is an increase in ambition. They stressed the importance of continuing to work to reach the 1.5°C target. This means economy-wide reductions in the greenhouse gases covered by the Kyoto Protocol. The main instrument for implementing Australia's emissions reductions is a national fund, the Emissions Reduction Fund. The government states that the fund has contributed to emission reductions of up to 60 million tons in all sectors.

According to CAT (Climate Action Tracker), Australia's NDC is insufficient, and they also point out that the country's updated NDC is more ambitious, but still not enough to reach the agreed targets. The most recent assessment was made in December 2023.

Other questions

Deforestation

The Australian government aims to encourage the country's farmers to adopt sustainable farming practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create carbon sinks. In recent years, the percentage of Australia's area covered by forest has increased. However, Australia often refers to the fact that they are still a country with a lot of immigration and that they must clear forests to get new agricultural land.

Adaption

Australia has already been affected by climate change and is dependent on adaptation measures. Large-scale forest fires already cause large amounts of death and damage to people and property. Climate change also threatens agricultural production in the country. As an island, Australia is vulnerable to sea level rise and storm surges. The country may also receive large flows of refugees from low-lying neighboring countries such as the Maldives. Even the country's unique plants and animals are in the danger zone. However, adaptation is primarily a national issue in Australia and an international negotiation issue only when it comes to funding adaptation measures in developing countries.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

Technology development is important to Australia but not an international negotiation issue.

Funding

As a rich country, Australia has contributed to the Green Climate Fund. The country focuses a lot on financing vulnerable countries in the neighboring region with its own programs.

Alliances

Australia is included together with Japan, New Zealand, the USA, Canada, Norway, Iceland, Ukraine, Russia, and Kazakhstan in the so-called Umbrella Group. It is a collection of most industrialized countries that are not members of the EU that was created during the negotiations of the Kyoto Protocol. The group is usually seen as a brake block during climate negotiations. They have some common positions but still act in accordance with their own nation's goals. Australia cannot therefore count on automatic support from the Umbrella Group. Australia has historically had a close relationship with the US and Japan in the climate negotiations. Australia also has a lot in common with New Zealand which also has a heavy reliance on agriculture and relatively high marginal costs for emissions reductions.

Role profile/ character

As a delegate for Australia, you have an open and positive attitude in the negotiations. However, your strength does not always lie in contributing constructively. In previous climate negotiations, Australia has been considered to be somewhat weak and out-of-date in its climate policy, and not to actively contribute enough to push the discussions forward towards a solution. This may make it challenging in future negotiations to convince other countries that Australia is an important player in the negotiations.

Bangladesh

Background

Bangladesh is a developing country in the central part of Asia. With its 171.2 million inhabitants (in 2022), it is one of the world's most densely populated countries and at the same time has a very high population growth rate. The country has a geographically vulnerable location, because of which it is very flat and extremely susceptible to flooding during the monsoon season.

Bangladesh is one of the world's poorest countries, with over 20% of the population (in 2020) living below the poverty line with a daily income of less than \$1.9 per person. A large part of the population makes a living as farmers, which means that large areas of forest land have been felled to make way for fields and pastures. In 2020, the country emitted 225 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e), which corresponds to 1.3 tons per capita. Bangladesh accounts for 0.4% of global emissions.

The sea level may rise by around one meter by the year 2100, the level depends on how large the emissions continue to be. This could mean that a large part of Bangladesh is flooded and forces up to 30 million people to flee. Greenhouse gas emissions in 2021 were 1.3 tons per capita including LULUCF, which can be compared to the USA which had 16 tons per capita or Sweden which had 2.9 tons per capita in the same year. The total emissions correspond to approximately 0.4% of global carbon dioxide emissions.

Important positions

For Bangladesh, the Climate Convention's principle of common but different responsibilities is of utmost importance. Bangladesh emphasizes the responsibility of the high-income countries for the historical emissions together with the fact that the per capita consumption of the high-income countries is many times greater than that of the developing countries.

Bangladesh's position in the climate negotiations is that all the earth's inhabitants have the right to development. The goal for Bangladesh is that per capita emissions of greenhouse gases should be equal globally. Bangladesh believes that technology transfer is important and also emphasizes the importance of international research cooperation and access to patents. The country's officials claim that the cost of adapting to a changing climate will be much more expensive than estimated.

Emission reductions and NDC

Bangladesh has submitted a national climate plan, so-called NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution), where they outline their ambitions in terms of both emissions and adaptation. In the NDC, it is emphasized that for the first time the country has made an international commitment on emission reductions and believes that the country has thus heeded the call for further climate measures. Bangladesh's NDC involves a doubling of emissions by 2030 compared to 2010, which is not a break in the trend. But Bangladesh points out that this means that the country is still reducing the pace of its emissions increases, which the country believes should be seen as a major effort. Bangladesh has also submitted an updated NDC that covers more sectors than the first.

Climate Action Tracker (CAT) has not given Bangladesh a rating or assessment.

Other questions

Deforestation

Only a small part of the northern part of Bangladesh is forested. A large part of the forest has already been converted into tea plantations. Deforestation is therefore not a major negotiating issue for Bangladesh.

Adaption

Rising sea levels along with devastating hurricanes and cyclones in the Caribbean and Pacific are already showing the devastating effects of climate change and threaten to devastate the entire economy of the threatened countries, including Bangladesh. Bangladesh therefore prioritizes adaptation measures in its NDC. Bangladesh believes it is important to prioritize rebuilding communities exposed to extreme weather conditions and other climate-related impacts. Efforts to adapt societies to climate change must go hand in hand with efforts to slow climate change. This work requires large financial contributions from richer countries.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

Bangladesh believes that the existence of strong patent protection rules hinders technology transfer and emphasizes the importance of international research and development cooperation in the field of technology.

Funding

Within the framework of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and other mechanisms, the industrialized countries' promise of USD 100 billion/year from 2020 must be realized, however, there is still a lack of funding. Bangladesh, like most other middle- and low-income countries, requires that the funds in the UN's Green Climate Fund, GCF, should mostly come from public, state grants. The high-income countries, on the other hand, believe that financing should take place both through government grants and through the participation of the private sector.

Alliances

Bangladesh is a very active member of the G77 group in the climate negotiations. They were originally 77 countries but are now over 120 developing countries working together on common issues. The country also belongs to the LDC, (Least Developed Countries), which has a strong voice in the negotiations. The country supports all countries that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol and that have already committed to emission reductions. However, Bangladesh believes that the commitments of industrialized countries under the Paris Agreement are insufficient and if nothing more is done, Bangladesh will be flooded. Bangladesh is happy to cooperate with countries that prioritize the environment and that show great consideration for countries' vulnerability and different levels of development.

Role profile/ character

As a delegate from Bangladesh, you have one of the key roles in the climate negotiations. You know that your country caused a very small part, both historically and per capita, of climate change. At the same time, your country risks enormous problems. Bangladesh has shown good will by including emission reductions in its NDC, now the high-income countries must do their part and take on greater commitments than they have done so far. You argue emotionally with clearly threatening future scenarios, not least the risk of millions of climate refugees. You would like to negotiate climate-smart solutions that can help the country switch to more modern forms of energy that can also contribute to social and economic development. As a delegate, you have a keen attitude towards research and development collaborations as a means of implementing the country's planned emission reductions and adaptation. The financing issues are therefore very important.

Bolivia

Background

Bolivia has approximately 12.5 million inhabitants (2023), many of whom live in extreme poverty. However, in the last decade, the country has clearly prioritized the fight against poverty. The World Bank states that the percentage of the population living below the poverty line has decreased from 59% in 2015 to 37.2% in 2019. However, after the pandemic, poverty increased again and in 2020, 39% of Bolivia's population lived below the poverty line. There are still large differences between different groups in Bolivia's population where the indigenous people are particularly vulnerable with poorer health, shorter average life expectancy, higher unemployment, lower incomes and worse than average education.

Bolivia is rich in silver, tin, and other metals. Therefore, mining has been central for centuries. In recent years, large natural gas and oil resources have also been discovered and contributed to high growth. In 2020, Bolivia released 131 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) greenhouse gases or 11.2 tons per capita. Bolivia accounts for 0.28% of global emissions. It is deforestation that contributes the largest emissions.

Bolivia has been among the most radical countries in the climate negotiations. Climate change is already being felt through melting glaciers, which has had serious consequences for agriculture. The country was ruled by the socialist president Evo Morales between 2005–2019. Morales was the first president to represent the indigenous people, he was also a champion of nature. Furthermore, Morales had a vision that the state would take control of the country's natural resources and use the profits to equalize social differences. Morales was ousted in 2019 after a turbulent election marred by protests and allegations of electoral fraud. Today, the country is ruled by President Lous Arce who took office in 2020 and belongs to the same party as Morales and continues the same political line.

Important positions

Bolivia's line in climate negotiations has been that climate change is caused by the capitalist system. The capitalist system seeks unlimited profit and separates man from nature. It is not possible to combine the large profit taking with protecting natural resources or smoothing out the large class differences. An important part of Bolivia's culture is mother earth, which is often referred to in the climate debate. Under capitalism, Mother Earth is the source of natural resources and man is only a means of production and consumption. The public sector must take over control of resources so that both climate change and poverty can be fought.

Bolivia believes that the countries that caused climate change through industrialization are obliged to greatly reduce their emissions and assist low-income countries so that they can develop without burdening the climate and adapt to climate change. According to Bolivia's calculations, the Annex-I countries (the rich countries in 1992 when the climate convention was negotiated) have only 11% of the remaining CO₂ budget to consume. Bolivia has opposed the NDC (Nationally Determined Contributions), but the country has been forced to accept this instrument and has itself submitted an NDC to the Paris Agreement. In its NDC, Bolivia presents its entire political and ideological worldview as well as the most important principles for development.

Bolivia believes that in the climate negotiations, the world community is discussing solutions that are primarily about maintaining an unsustainable order and making money from the problems, at the expense of the climate and poor people. Bolivia is therefore, among other things, against emissions trading and biofuels produced from food that can be used as food instead of driving up prices on food markets.

Emission reductions and NDC

Bolivia has submitted an updated NDC within the framework of the Paris Agreement for the period 2021-2030. Bolivia calls in its NDC for emission reductions that can limit the increase in the Earth's average temperature to a maximum of 1°C but has accepted 1.5°C as a common goal during this century. The emission reductions must primarily take place in the richer countries because their development has so far caused the most damage.

Bolivia's NDC (Nationally Determined Contributions) deals with integrated development measures, poverty alleviation and environmental adaptation together with emission reductions and climate adaptation. Bolivia has not specified a direct target for emissions reductions but indicates that the country intends to significantly increase climate efficiency from around 0.1-ton CO₂/MWh electricity to 0.04 ton/MWh in 2030, mainly by investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy including hydropower. However, Bolivian emissions will probably increase for a few more decades, but from a very low level.

Climate Action Tracker (CAT) has not given Bolivia a rating or assessment.

Other questions

Deforestation

A large part of Bolivia's population relies on the forest as their habitat and livelihood. 50% of Bolivia is covered by forest, of which 40% is in the lowlands near the Amazon. Nature has intrinsic value for the indigenous population. Bolivia is critical of part of the so-called Green Economy, REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation). Bolivia has presented an alternative to REDD, "Sustainable Forest Life". The alternative is characterized by three principles: finding other sources of financing to counteract climate change, a recognition of the different functions of the forest (ecological, social, economic, and cultural) and methods of integrated forest management.

Adaption

Bolivia believes that the high-income countries have a historical debt to climate change. In order to achieve sustainable development, it is required that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) be replaced by bodies that are democratic and transparent, that respect national priorities and independence in the development strategies of low-income countries. The new bodies should have a majority of middle and low-income countries and be characterized by cooperation and solidarity rather than privatization and commercialization.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

Bolivia believes it is important to create an effective technology transfer mechanism that responds to the needs of poor countries for solutions that are socially, culturally, and environmentally sustainable. To enable an exchange of knowledge and environmentally friendly technology, restrictive patents must be removed.

Funding

Bolivia believes that the enormous resources that high-income countries use to finance defense, security and war must be reduced. These resources must instead be used to limit the consequences of climate change in low-income countries. A financial transaction tax must be levied to create a Fund for Sustainable Development. Bolivia has also criticized the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and believes that the largest part of the GCF should consist of publicly funded contributions.

Alliances

ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America) is an association of Latin American countries where Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, and several other island

nations such as Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is coordinating its position in the climate negotiations. Bolivia is also a member of the G77 group. They were originally 77 countries but are now over 120 developing countries working together on common issues.

Role profile/ character

As a delegate for Bolivia, you have an uncompromising profile and are quite outspoken in the climate negotiations. Bolivia is active and clear in its debt coverage of the world's high-income countries and in its sharp criticism of capitalism. Bolivia believes that it is not possible to compromise on the climate and that the consequences for many of the world's poor are already being felt while greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise. Furthermore, the Bolivian line of negotiations is characterized by social justice, the rights of indigenous peoples and the debt of high-income countries to middle- and low-income countries.

Brazil

Background

Brazil is the world's fifth largest country after Russia, Canada, China, and the United States. The country has a very varied landscape with rainforest, mountains, and savannah areas. The country is rich in ore, minerals, and oil. A major problem for the country is the deforestation of the rainforest, where mining, cattle ranching and agriculture are some of the reasons why the rainforest is destroyed to create more land.

Brazil along with many other developing countries will be negatively affected by global warming. In 2020, the country emitted 1470 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e), which corresponds to 7 tons per capita. Brazil accounts for 3% of global emissions.

Brazil has previously been a driving force in climate negotiations. Between 2018 and 2023, Brazil was ruled by Jair Bolsonaro, who was skeptical of climate change and international climate cooperation. Under Bolsonaro's rule, exploitation of the rainforest increased significantly and control mechanisms to reduce deforestation have been dismantled. Now Lula da Silva is president and does not pursue such a hard line but is more positively disposed to international cooperation.

Important positions

Brazil ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2002 and has ratified the Paris Agreement. Brazil believes that a distribution of countries' responsibilities for reduced emissions of greenhouse gases must, according to the climate convention's (UNFCCC) principle of common but different responsibilities, consider two factors:

- The countries that have used fossil fuels since industrialism primarily started to benefit their economic development are responsible for the current global temperature rise, which will affect continued emission space.
- The countries that contributed on a small scale to climate change and have less resources to adapt their societies to the consequences of climate change should be given less responsibility.

Brazil has a positive attitude to REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation), which means that countries must be credited with reducing emissions by preventing deforestation and forest degradation. It is a way for countries with large forest areas to utilize the amounts of carbon dioxide stored in forests. The proposal should result in developing countries actively working to reduce the felling of their rainforests.

Brazil is also positive about the use of ethanol from sugar cane as it has been an important part of the country's own efforts to reduce emissions.

Emission reductions and NDC

In Brazil's updated NDC, the country undertook to reduce its emissions by 48.4% by the year 2025, compared to 2005, and to reduce its emissions by 2030 by 53%, compared to 2005. This goal was again communicated in the updated NDC which was submitted in October 2023.

In 2005, Brazil had very large emissions including LULUCF (Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry), 1357 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) greenhouse gases, or 6.65 tons/capita. This corresponds to 2.78% of the world's emissions. It is therefore possible to reduce emissions compared to the year 2005. Great emphasis is placed on expanding nuclear power and expanding renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power, but also increasing the use of biofuels.

Brazil believes that it has one of the most ambitious commitments of any country. However, the Climate Action Tracker points out that there are significant gaps in Brazil's policies to stop an increase in emissions. The country's dismantling of the forest cover leads to a higher degree of deforestation, which leads to even more emissions. In December 2023, the Climate Action Tracker (CAT) assessed Brazil's NDC as insufficient.

Other questions

Deforestation

A large part of Brazil's total emissions come from the Amazon; emissions increase in step with deforestation. For the country, illegal logging in the Amazon is a major problem. Rising world market prices for meat and soy have paved the way for continued illegal logging, while protection mechanisms for deforestation are being deregulated. Brazil also emphasizes the importance of continued results-based financing of REDD+ efforts in Brazil.

Adaption

Brazil believes that industrialized countries must contribute with support for adaptation in the most vulnerable countries.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

The country was, after China and India, the world's third largest recipient of CDM projects under the Kyoto Protocol, which expired in 2020. The Brazilian government saw CDM as an important step in a necessary technology transfer for middle- and low-income countries to share in clean technology at reasonable costs.

Brazil believes that the existence of patent protection rules hinders technology transfer. Brazil emphasizes the importance of international research and development cooperation in the field of technology.

Funding

Brazil adheres to the G77 group and China's view on the financing issues and does not pursue any issues of its own in the area. They support the continued development of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and push for high-income countries to live up to their funding pledges.

Alliances

Brazil is part of the G77 group. Brazil is also a member of the G77 group. They were originally 77 countries but are now over 120 developing countries working together on common issues.

Brazil also belongs to the BRICS countries along with Russia, India, China, and South Africa. Those countries are five of the largest economies in the world. From the first of January 2024, five more countries have been added to the collaboration. Now Egypt, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Saudi Arabia are also part of the BRICS cooperation.

Role profile/ character

As a delegate from Brazil, you are skeptical of proposals that might force your country to commit more. You point out that it is not the developing countries that are responsible for the historical emissions, so it is primarily the responsibility of the industrialized countries to reduce emissions. You handle questions about carbon sinks and technology cooperation.

China

Background

China is a country in rapid change and one of the world's fastest growing economies. The country wants to be counted as one of the world's great powers, and since the formation of the UN has one of the five permanent seats on the UN Security Council. It is the world's most populous country with a population of just over a fifth of the world's total population. Many people live in poverty and income distribution in society is still very uneven.

China's overall domestic policy goals are social stability and economic growth. At the same time, foreign policy is characterized by a desire to guard global reputation and integrity. The climate issue therefore becomes a balancing act for China between maintaining economic development and at the same time being a responsible nation internationally.

China knows that the country will be hit hard by climate change and that the country has a great responsibility. Today, China's emissions are the largest in the world and account for over 25% of global emissions. China is thus a key country in the climate negotiations. China's per capita emissions are also high and now stand at 8.7 tons, including all greenhouse gases. China is the world's largest consumer of energy, followed by the United States. Furthermore, the country is also the largest producer and user of coal where new coal power plants are constantly being built, which worries the outside world.

Important positions

For China, the climate convention (UNFCCC) principle of "common but different responsibilities and respective capacities" is of utmost importance. The principle emphasizes the responsibility of the high-income countries for the historical emissions together with the fact that the per capita consumption of the high-income countries is many times greater than that of the middle and low-income countries. However, China's position is undermined by the fact that its per capita emissions are now at the same level as many Western countries and above the world average.

As China's economic development is threatened by energy shortages, the country is focusing on energy-saving measures and on developing nuclear power to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. The country's president Xi Jinping declared in autumn 2020 that the country will become carbon dioxide neutral by the year 2060, which is being questioned internationally as the country continues to expand the country's coal-fired power plants.

Emission reductions and NDC

China is adamant that since industrialized countries have historically been the biggest emitters, they should take the biggest responsibility when it comes to promises of action. China thus has a tough line of negotiation and considers the Western countries' level of ambition to be insufficient. The country has submitted an NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution) and President Xi Jinping announced that the country plans to strengthen its climate commitments to become carbon neutral by 2060.

In its NDC, China has committed to achieving maximum emissions and then turning the curve downwards and reducing carbon dioxide intensity by 60-65% compared to the year 2005. Carbon dioxide intensity means emissions of CO₂ divided by GDP. They must also increase the share of non-fossil-based electricity production by 20% and increase the volume of timber in forests by 4.5 billion cubic meters.

The Climate Action Tracker rated China's November 2023 NDC as highly inadequate. The biggest problem is cited as China's continued support for the coal industry.

Other questions

Deforestation

China has problems with desertification in the northern part of the country, despite extensive planting of new trees. One reason is that they previously carried out large-scale deforestation within the country. Therefore, the ambition is now to greatly increase forest stocks.

Adaption

China is expected to be severely affected by global warming and therefore adaptation is an important issue. The adaptation involves, among other things, preventing desertification, improving the efficiency of agricultural irrigation and counteracting future floods through improved infrastructure.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

There are several CCS (Carbon Capture and Storage) projects underway within the country and China emphasizes the importance of international research and development cooperation in the field of technology. China sees itself as a potential leader in a future world market for environmental technology. The country also has a very large production of solar cells and other environmental technology.

Funding

China supports the continued development of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and pushes high-income countries to live up to their funding pledges. China believes that it is important that middle- and low-income countries get access to financing that is long-term, sufficient, and predictable.

Alliances

China is part of the G77 group (now known as "G77 and China"). China is a very active member of the G77 in the climate negotiations. China also belongs to the BRICS countries along with Brazil, Russia, India, and South Africa. Those countries are five of the largest economies in the world. From the first of January 2024, five more countries have been added to the collaboration. Now Egypt, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Saudi Arabia are also part of the BRICS cooperation.

The relationship between India and China has been very significant and the countries have held unofficial climate discussions with each other. However, that relationship has been damaged by conflicts between the countries in recent years. China must fight harder and harder to keep the G77 together in the climate discussions. Island nations and poor countries think China should commit to more climate action than it has previously promised.

Role profile/ character

As part of the Chinese delegation, you have one of the key roles in the climate negotiations and will, to a large extent, together with India, set the tone for the negotiations. You know that your country has historically caused a small, but now increasing, share of global emissions per capita, and you act accordingly. You are reluctant to binding emission reductions before the high-income countries have shown that they will implement their promises. You constantly emphasize your country's right to development.

EU – European Union

Background

The European Union, EU, is an intergovernmental and supranational organization under the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). The EU has 27 European member states that cooperate on political, economic, and social issues. The member states have negotiated common positions on the climate issue and decided on legislation to achieve the EU's climate goals. The EU has a voice in international climate negotiations. Individual countries do not normally speak at the climate negotiations, but the individual countries in the EU have national climate policy strategies.

While the US and China have increased their emissions, the EU has gradually reduced theirs. In 2018, the EU accounted for approximately 6.8% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, while China accounted for 23.9% and the USA 11.83% in the same year. The EU emitted 3.3 gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e) of greenhouse gases in 2018, which corresponds to 7.46 tons/capita.

The EU has an important role to play in the international negotiations as an example that it is possible to reduce the global emissions of greenhouse gases. Before and during COP 28, the EU made a united case on important positions and emphasized the importance of reaching the common climate goals and standing up to the countries with the biggest emissions and which prevent the agreements from going further.

Important positions

The EU believes that strong climate targets and measures are important to reduce its own emissions of greenhouse gases but also to gain credibility internationally. At the Kyoto Protocol, the EU adopted an ambitious goal of reducing emissions by 8% by 2010 compared to the level in 1990. The EU has achieved that goal. The EU has now adopted a new and more ambitious target: to reduce its emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. In addition, the EU is also working to become climate neutral by 2050.

During COP 28, the EU jointly pushed to phase out fossil fuels such as coal, gas, and oil, and for a while the negotiations looked like it would go through. However, the wording was changed to require the countries of the world to switch from fossil fuels. It is the first time that all the countries of the world agree on something like this, and it is the first time that fossil fuels are mentioned in a final agreement from the UN climate negotiations and much of that is thanks to how high the EU prioritized the issue and how hard it was pushed.

73.3% of the EU's energy consumption comes from fossil fuels. By reducing the consumption of fossil fuels, it is possible to secure the EU's energy supply and at the same time limit climate change. In addition, the EU's own fossil fuel resources will be consumed at a faster rate than global consumption. The EU is becoming increasingly dependent on imports and thus also increasingly vulnerable to rapid supply and price changes on, for example, Russian oil and natural gas.

Emission reductions and NDC

The EU's heads of state and government already decided in 2008 to limit climate change to a maximum of two degrees of temperature increase above pre-industrial levels. This goal was also the outcome at COP 15 in Copenhagen. It was then established in Cancun the following year, in 2010, as the long-term goal of the Climate Convention. The EU worked hard for there to be a globally binding agreement in Paris that includes all parties to the convention to be in line with the 2-degree target.

The EU submitted an updated NDC in December 2020 with a goal to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels and to be climate neutral by 2050. Furthermore, the NDC describes that the EU should invest in a green recovery after the pandemic.

In February 2024, the Climate Action Tracker assessed the EU's updated NDC as insufficient.

Other questions

Deforestation

Deforestation is not a major problem within the EU. In this matter, the EU participates in the negotiations primarily as a financier of measures in tropical rainforest countries, for example REDD+ (reduced deforestation, sustainable forestry, and increased storage of carbon in the forest).

Adaption

The EU believes that funding adaptation should be prioritized and then primarily for LDCs (Least Developed Countries), SIDS (Small Island Developing States) and members of AOSIS (Alliance Of Small Island States). The EU sees a clear connection between climate and development, and points to the serious consequences that can affect vulnerable countries that are not given support. By extension, environmental and climate-related problems can also increase involuntary migration flows, contribute to political instability, conflicts, and severe health problems.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

The EU's program for competitiveness and innovation funds many projects that directly or indirectly deal with climate change. The EU also sees that emissions of greenhouse gases largely come from the production and use of energy. Energy policy, renewable energy and energy efficiency are therefore important to reach the climate goals.

Funding

The EU protects the Union's economic growth but believes that the costs of measures against climate change will be limited and lower if the world acts now, compared to the large costs of damages that occur if the world does not act in time. The costs of achieving the 1.5-degree target increase the longer we wait to start the necessary transition to a fossil-free society. EU Member States contribute almost half of the financing of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and are thus the largest contributor.

Alliances

The EU finds allies in all actors who have long-term goals for emission reductions and constructive proposals for climate agreements. The EU has great diplomatic resources and would like to find a bridge-building role. The Union has a conscious investment in building good relations with the low-income countries.

Role profile/ character

As a delegate from the EU, you represent the European Union's common climate policy. You have a very ambitious agenda for the climate negotiations and a strong position with the EU's resources at your back. Your goal is to bring about an ambitious decision on the application of the Paris Agreement in which as many states as possible commit to and raise their level of ambition in terms of emission reductions. You understand that the industrialized countries are historically responsible for the largest part of greenhouse gas emissions, but at the same time believe that this does not mean that other countries must be compensated for future losses. The EU also wants to push for all countries to fulfill their financing commitments according to the Paris Agreement and the Climate Convention and wants to set a good example.

India

Background

India is a country with rich natural resources, fertile soils, and long coastlines. Nevertheless, India ranks on the list of the world's 40 poorest countries. 21.1% of the population of 1.2 billion is considered poor based on figures from 2011. At the same time, there is a large growing middle class with high incomes. In 2020, India's emissions of greenhouse gases per capita were 2.3 tons, but overall, India ranks third in the emissions league after China and the USA with 6.9% of the world's emissions of greenhouse gases. In total, they release more than 3 gigatons of greenhouse gases as carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e).

India's emissions are expected to increase sharply until the year 2030. India is the world's largest coal producer, but the country also invests in renewable energy sources, such as solar energy. The country has major problems with energy shortages. 90% of the country's energy consumption comes from oil, coal, and natural gas. Nationally, India is working to develop energy-saving measures but also to get a greater mix of energy sources. Over the past two years, India has greatly increased its efforts to transition from coal power to renewable energy. India also sees nuclear power as an environmentally friendly alternative to fossil fuels.

Important positions

For India, the climate convention (UNFCCC) principle of common but different responsibilities is of utmost importance. India emphasizes the responsibility of the high-income countries for the historical emissions along with the fact that the per capita consumption of the high-income countries is many times greater than that of the middle and low-income countries. Therefore, India believes that it cannot be relevant to discuss emission reductions for the low-income countries before the high-income countries have shown that they are keeping their commitments. In addition, India stresses the importance that per capita emissions should be equal for all countries. India's per capita emissions are very low – about one-fifth of the equivalent US figure. India believes that technology transfer and international research cooperation are very important and emphasizes that the right to development must be respected in the climate negotiations.

Emission reductions and NDC

India has submitted an updated NDC in 2022 (Intended nationally determined contribution) which focuses particularly on the area of adaptation. India undertakes several new goals, including that 50% of the electricity supply should be renewable by 2030 with the help of the UN's Green Climate Fund. India intends to reduce its emissions by 45% by 2030, compared to 2005. India's NDC is based on the country receiving international funding. India wants to gradually transition to electricity generation that comes from non-fossil fuels and plans to plant large amounts of forests to create carbon sinks.

The Climate Action Tracker (CAT) rated India's NDC as highly inadequate in December 2023.

Other questions

Deforestation

India's national action plan includes an investment in carbon sinks by replanting forests. There are large areas of underutilized land available for planting. However, India has already tried afforestation with poor results throughout the 1980s and 1990s under the name of village forests (social forestry) but now intends to raise the level of ambition.

Adaption

India is vulnerable to climate change, which is expected to affect the country's economic and social

development and make poverty reduction more difficult. Therefore, adaptation is an important issue for India.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

India's interest in Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) projects has been weak. Projects within CCS are ongoing in India today, but the country does not want to be a test country for such new technology. India and China have the most projects in Asia within the framework of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). India also believes that strong patent protection hinders technology transfer. The country emphasizes the importance of international research and development cooperation and sees itself as a potential leader in a future world market for environmental technology.

Funding

Funding is a very important issue for India as the country's NDC presupposes the availability of financial support. India has accepted the Green Climate Fund (GCF) as the main instrument for climate finance and has actively participated in shaping its rules. However, the country is suspicious of the willingness of high-income countries to contribute sufficient resources to the GCF but emphasizes that this is a prerequisite. India depends on the GCF to offer the country sufficient long-term financial contributions to implement the necessary measures.

Alliances

India is an active member G77 in the climate negotiations. They were originally 77 countries but are now over 120 developing countries working together on common issues. India also belongs to the BRICS countries along with Brazil, Russia, China, and South Africa. Those countries are five of the largest economies in the world. From the first of January 2024, five more countries have been added to the collaboration. Now Egypt, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Saudi Arabia are also part of the BRICS cooperation.

The relationship between India and China has been very significant and the countries have held unofficial climate discussions with each other. However, that relationship has been damaged by conflicts between the countries in recent years. The two countries have a similar situation in terms of economic growth and population development. For India, it is significant that China also takes an uncompromising stance on the climate issue, which means that India does not have to pursue such a line alone.

Role profile/ character

As part of the Indian delegation, you have one of the key roles in the climate negotiations. Together with China, you will largely set the tone for the negotiations. You know that your country has a very small debt, historically and per capita, to climate change and you act accordingly. You mean that India, through its NDC, stands for a fair and ambitious contribution to reaching the 2-degree target, but also that the richer countries must do more and take their historic responsibility. You constantly emphasize your country's right to development.

Japan

Background

Japan is one of the world's leading countries economically and technologically. Japan has for a long time worked on energy efficiency in order to, among other things, reduce its dependence on oil and have a competitive industry. The country sees nuclear power as an important part of its future energy supply, but the nuclear accident in Fukushima has led to a complete reconsideration of Japan's energy plans. However, nuclear power will remain for a long time to come.

In total, Japan emitted more than 1000 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) greenhouse gases in 2022. The country accounts for approximately 2.5% of the world's total emissions and 9 tons per CO₂e/capita.

Over the years, Japan has been very active in the climate negotiations by quickly committing to one of the largest emission reductions of greenhouse gases (6% from the 1990 level to 2010) in the Kyoto Protocol. But Japan failed to meet its climate commitments and has therefore received international criticism. The system of voluntary commitments, so-called NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution), suits Japan well.

Important positions

Japan has long, together with the US, pushed for an international climate agreement to entail emission reductions from all leading economies, including India and China. The country once again wants to pursue a more ambitious climate policy and win international trust in the matter.

Emission reductions and NDC

Japan did not adopt a new target under the Kyoto Protocol by 2020 but has submitted an NDC as its contribution to the Paris Agreement and a global solution. In 2020, Japan also submitted an updated NDC, which is more ambitious than the original one.

Japan intends to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 26% compared to 2013 (or 25.4% compared to the year 2005). This includes LULUCF (Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry). In its NDC, Japan has made an account of various sectors, and believes that more countries should do so in their international reporting in order to get a clear overview of global emissions.

In November 2023, the Climate Action Tracker (CAT) rated Japan's NDC as insufficient, but the updated version is more ambitious.

Japan has created its own variant of CDM called JCM (Joint Crediting Mechanism), which should enable bilateral agreements between Japan and other countries. The JCM will be a way for Japan to continue to take credit for emission reductions in other countries.

Other questions

Deforestation

Japan has an interest in global forest availability and therefore has no need to prevent global conversion of natural forest to grazing and agricultural land. The country requests that developing countries individually state their definition of forest so that Japan can act accordingly. Japan does not support REDD and REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation) but has nevertheless accepted the new regulations. REDD means that countries must be credited with reducing emissions by preventing deforestation and forest degradation. It is a way for countries with large forest areas to get credit for the amounts of carbon dioxide stored in forests. The proposal should result in developing countries actively working to reduce the felling of their rainforests.

Adaption

Japan is greatly affected by climate change and has a great need for adaptation measures, but as a rich country, its own adaptation is a national issue and not a negotiation issue in the international climate negotiations. Instead, Japan contributes financially to adaptation in middle and low-income countries via the UN's Green Climate Fund (GCF), which is described more under financing.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

Japan has great faith in innovative technology and plans to invest 30 billion in new technology over the next five years. Japan is open to increased international research and development cooperation in the field of climate technology and (like the USA and the EU) does not want to abolish patent protection then because the country believes that it would inhibit the development of new technology and not have a major positive effect on technology transfer.

Japanese companies are investing heavily in CCS (Carbon Capture and Storage) technology, mainly for a future export market because Japan's geology is not suitable for the technology. In addition to CCS, Japan is investing heavily in areas such as solar cell technology and hybrid technology (electricity and hydrogen) for vehicles.

Funding

Japan has contributed to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) of USD 1.5 million. Japan accepts its role as a rich country that should contribute to middle and low-income countries' financing of adaptation measures and emission reductions.

Alliances

Historically, Japan has a close relationship with Australia and the United States in the climate negotiations and is included together with the United States, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Norway, Iceland, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Russia in the so-called Umbrella Group. It is a collection of most industrialized countries that are not members of the EU that was created during the negotiations of the Kyoto Protocol. The group is usually seen as a brake block during climate negotiations. They have some common positions but still act in accordance with their own nation's goals. Japan cannot therefore count on automatic support from the Umbrella Group.

Role profile/ character

As a delegate for Japan, you show great faith in climate-smart technology and believe that Japan will achieve its emission reductions through technology transfer and innovative technologies. Japan as a country has great faith in the business community's ability to contribute constructively with new climate-smart solutions. You actively participate in the negotiations and advocate for increased international research and development cooperation about climate technology as soon as you get the chance and speak about the importance of ensuring the efficiency and separate reporting of the sectors. You like to talk about Japan's goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2050.

Maldives /AOSIS

Background

The Maldives is one of the countries most threatened by climate change. 80% of the Maldives' land surface is less than one meter above sea level, making the country very vulnerable to sea level rise caused by global warming. According to the IPCC's calculations, sea level rises threaten to flood large parts of the island kingdom within this century. Main industries for the Maldives, with its 300,000 inhabitants, are tourism and fishing. Both sectors have expanded strongly and provided good growth for a long time. If the fragile ecosystem of the Maldives is destroyed, the consequences in lost income from the tourism industry and the fishing industry would also be very large.

In 2020, the Maldives emitted 1.9 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) of greenhouse gases, which is only 0.0002% of the world's emissions. In the same year, emissions per capita were 3.6 tons.

The Maldives takes the work on climate change very seriously. From September 2021 to September 2022, the country's then foreign minister, Abdulla Shahid, was elected president of the UN General Assembly, where he promises to work to counteract the negative effects of climate change. The country is part of AOSIS (The Alliance Of Small Island States), which is a confederation of small islands and low-lying coastal countries. These states share similar environmental challenges and concerns and are working together to make their voices heard in the climate negotiations. In addition to countering the negative effects of climate change, AOSIS works together with issues such as coastal zones, freshwater supply, and waste management.

Important positions

The Maldives and AOSIS emphasize that climate change is a global cross-border problem and advocate a new climate agreement in which all countries jointly contribute to emission reductions. The Paris Agreement largely corresponded to this requirement. But the Maldives and AOSIS believe that the target should be a temperature increase of no more than 1.5°C.

The Maldives is very concerned and takes climate change very seriously. The country believes that it is very important to listen to researchers, stay informed and to develop democracy so that the population takes an active part in developing methods for adaptation.

AOSIS does believe that all countries should contribute to reduced emissions of greenhouse gases, but in a fair and solidarity way. The high-income countries that historically account for the largest emissions must therefore commit to the largest emission reductions. AOSIS also believes that it may be necessary for large middle- and low-income countries such as China, India, and Brazil to adopt quantitative commitments on emission reductions within a few years. Countries within AOSIS and the so-called LDCs (Least Developed Countries) should not have to take on such quantitative commitments in the foreseeable future due to the countries' historically low emissions and their right to development.

Emission reductions and NDC

As a party to the climate convention, the Maldives has submitted a national climate plan, so-called NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution) to the UNFCCC and an updated NDC in 2020.

Previously, there was a vision of a fossil-free Maldives by 2020, which has been abandoned. However, the Maldives is prepared to reduce its emissions by 26% by 2030 and aims to achieve net zero emissions if supported with financial resources and technology transfer.

The Maldives' electricity needs are increasing sharply in line with the country's modernization, but the expansion of solar energy, wind energy and wave energy is progressing slowly. It is mainly the large

tourist facilities that increasingly require electricity supply and their electricity needs are mainly generated via diesel generators.

The Climate Action Tracker (CAT) has not given the Maldives a rating or rating.

Other questions

Deforestation

The Maldives has no forest to speak of and deforestation is therefore not a priority negotiation issue.

Adaption

Adaptation is a high priority issue for the Maldives and AOSIS. Small island nations like the Maldives are already suffering badly from the negative effects of climate change. A rising sea level together with devastating hurricanes and cyclones threatens to destroy the entire economy of the small island kingdoms. AOSIS believes that the Maldives and its member countries need international support to be able to climate-adapt their vulnerable communities and to be able to rebuild communities exposed to extreme weather conditions and other climate-related effects.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

Maldives and AOSIS believe that CDM (Clean Development Mechanism) is a small but important step in the right direction to create a market that is open to renewable energy and energy efficient technologies.

Funding

GCF, the UN's Green Climate Fund, is the financing mechanism of the Paris Agreement. The Maldives believes that high-income countries must continue to take responsibility and ensure that the fund's money is replenished so that middle- and low-income countries can implement measures. The Maldives believes that the most vulnerable countries, where the Maldives counts itself and other countries in AOSIS, should be prioritized in receiving funding from the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Alliances

The Maldives and AOSIS support all countries that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol and have already committed to emission reductions. But the country is generally dissatisfied with the low level of ambition of the world's countries when it comes to promises about emission reductions. The Maldives and AOSIS also believe that the 2-degree target is insufficient, the target must instead be 1.5°C.

AOSIS is happy to collaborate with countries that prioritize the environment and show great consideration for countries' vulnerability and different levels of development. The Maldives and AOSIS support many of the positions highlighted by the G77 and China as they agree that poor countries need to prioritize economic development. But the Maldives and AOSIS believe that emissions from countries such as China, India and Brazil should also be greatly reduced.

Role profile/ character

As a delegate for the Maldives, you also represent AOSIS. As the Maldives and other participating AOSIS nations are threatened by the consequences of climate change in the form of rising sea levels, drought and freshwater scarcity, your negotiation technique is appealing and emotional. You always repeat the 1.5-degree target in all contexts. You actively participate in the climate negotiations and are assertive. One of your most important tasks is to remind the other delegations of the human dimension of climate change and to persuade the other delegations that they must agree on measures to keep the temperature rise below 1.5°C.

Mexico

Background

Mexico is the world's 12th largest economy (2022) and a member of the OECD, yet over 48% of the country's population is estimated to be poor. Mexico risks being hit hard by climate change as it borders both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts where tropical cyclones are common. Mexico has approximately 130 million inhabitants (2023) and most of them live in the central parts of the country. There are also active volcanoes in Mexico and the country is heavily affected by earthquakes due to the geographical position with the land plates.

The country has oil deposits and has previously been very dependent on oil exports. In recent years, Mexico has instead invested in the manufacturing industry, which has led the country to reduce its dependence on oil. However, oil still accounts for a large part of the state's revenue. The state oil company accounts for a third of the state treasury. Mexico's oil is one of the US's largest oil suppliers, but despite that, the country is not a member of OPEC.

Mexico's emissions of greenhouse gases in 2020 corresponded to approximately 1.3% of the total emissions in the world, with per capita emissions of 4.7 tons/person. In the same year, the total emissions amounted to 600 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e).

Important positions

Environmental and climate issues have previously played a relatively hidden role in the Mexican debate but have recently been highlighted and have also led to strong environmental policy initiatives. Today, the country has strict environmental legislation, but corruption, lack of money and low interest in environmental issues among the population undermine the investments. Mexico has ratified the Kyoto Protocol but is not among the countries that have commitments to limit emissions. Mexico still sees itself as a low-income country, which means it is difficult to commit to large emission reductions.

Mexico has previously played an active role in climate negotiations and hosted the 2010 Climate Summit held in Cancun. However, there are signs that the country is backing down in its level of ambition, the country submitted, among other things, a less ambitious NDC 2020 than its original one and the latest NDC was not that much better.

Emission reductions and NDC

Mexico has been at the forefront of documenting and measuring its emissions levels. In 2009, Mexico adopted a special climate change program to reduce the country's emissions. However, the country's climate work has suffered setbacks because of the pandemic. Government policy now favors fossil fuels over renewables.

In Mexico's first NDC, the country intended to reduce its emissions by 25% relative to a business-as-usual scenario (BAU) by the year 2030, regardless of what other countries decide. With financial and technical support from the outside world, the country could imagine reducing emissions by 40% by 2030. In its updated NDC, the targets have been lowered. Now Mexico states that the country must reduce its emissions of greenhouse gases by 22% and by 36% if the outside world helps.

Mexico has also set a target for reducing soot in its first NDC (black carbon) by 51% and 70% respectively under the same conditions. This goal also remains in the country's updated NDC. Soot is a powerful short-lived climate-affecting air pollutant (SLCP). Mexico also intends to completely stop deforestation by 2030.

CAT (Climate Action Tracker) rated Mexico's December 2022 NDC critically inadequate, the lowest rating on the scale. Furthermore, it is also noted that the country has not submitted a more ambitious NDC.

Other questions

Deforestation

Deforestation has led to almost half of the country's primeval forest that existed half a century ago now being gone. Deforestation and the forest industry contribute almost 20% of the country's total emissions of carbon dioxide. Mexico is also an active player in the discussion for the UN's worldwide program REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) and REDD+, which also includes forest conservation, sustainable forestry, and increased storage of carbon in the forest.

Adaption

Climate change poses a concrete environmental threat to Mexico in the form of extreme weather phenomena such as tropical storms, floods, and droughts. The availability of fresh water is already a serious problem in metropolitan areas, but risks becoming even more serious. It is therefore important for the country to focus on future adaptation.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

Mexico emphasizes the important role of technology in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and especially for renewable energy, energy efficiency and adaptation.

Funding

As a developing country, Mexico is in need of financing. Financial and technical support would make Mexico willing to commit to greater emission reductions.

Alliances

Mexico is a member of the EIG (Environmental Integrity Group), one of the UNFCCC's negotiating groups. EIG is a loose association of the countries Mexico, Liechtenstein, Monaco, South Korea, Georgia, and Switzerland. Mexico is also part of the G20 and since 2016 has been collaborating with the US and Canada within the North American Climate, Clean Energy and Environment Partnership. Mexico has good research work with the US and the UK.

Role profile/ character

As a delegate for Mexico, you play a driving role in the climate negotiations, mainly on the side of the developing countries. You want to take part in the negotiations rather than watch them and are proud of your country's actionable efforts at the national level. You know that you have the competence and the diplomatic ability required to be able to contribute to a good negotiation result. You compare yourself to and feel a sense of community with middle- and low-income countries, while at the same time seeing that your country can set a good example for middle- and low-income countries. Likewise, you can act as a bridge to the high-income countries. Together with Brazil, China, India and South Africa, you are calling for more action and stronger commitment from the high-income countries.

Nigeria

Background

Nigeria is West Africa's most populous state and is estimated to have the world's seventh largest population with approximately 230 million inhabitants (2023). The country has major problems with poverty where approximately 40% of the country's population in 2022 lived below the poverty line of USD 1.9/day.

Oil accounts for almost 90% of the country's export revenue and 50% of the government's revenue. Nigeria's oil reserves are expected to last for several decades. The oil wells also contain natural gas. Nigeria's economy will be hit hard if the world stops consuming fossil fuels, just like all oil-producing middle and low-income countries that have already seen their incomes drop drastically as a result of low oil prices. Nigeria also has the world's largest reserves of natural gas and is one of the world's largest exporters of this commodity. Unfortunately, not all gas is used and is largely treated as a residual product in the extraction of oil.

Nigeria's oil is of very high quality and commands a high price, making it a sought-after commodity. The largest importer of the oil is Europe, followed by India, followed by the United States. The country's population, however, gets to share in an extremely small part of the income. Instead, oil dependence has created a culture of corruption and inefficiency.

Nigeria's greenhouse gas emissions come mainly from deforestation and the energy sector. Nigeria's greenhouse gas emissions were 370 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) including LULUCF, in 2020. A very large part comes from deforestation. Per capita emissions including deforestation are 1.8 tons. The country accounts for 0.8% of the world's total emissions.

Important positions

Nigeria is in both the G77 and OPEC. The country also strongly sympathizes with the views of many middle- and low-income countries regarding the fact that they should not be forced to pay for the development of the rich countries. It is not possible to ignore the historical debt that the high-income countries are facing. Nigeria has no mandate to criticize the multinational oil companies because the country's economy is dependent on them. The country believes that middle- and low-income countries must be supported by other more developed countries for them to be able to reduce their emissions. Nigeria is also positively disposed to both REDD and REDD+, as well as CDM.

Emission reductions and NDC

In 2015, Nigeria submitted its NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution). In it, Nigeria projected economic growth of 5% every year until 2030 with a corresponding increase in greenhouse gas emissions (excluding LULUCF, Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry). Nigeria has committed to unconditionally reduce emissions by 20%, and 45% if they receive financial support from other countries. In 2022, the country submitted its latest updated NDC with more ambitious goals. In the updated version, it is described that the waste sector must also be included in the calculation. Its new goal is a 20% reduction in emissions by 2030, or 48% if they receive financial support from the outside world.

In July 2023, the Climate Action Tracker (CAT) rated Nigeria's NDC as nearly adequate.

Other questions

Deforestation

Deforestation is a major issue in Nigeria. Forests are mainly used as fuel and to produce charcoal. However, Nigeria does not address emissions from deforestation in its NDC but believes that rapid action is necessary to prevent total deforestation.

Adaption

Nigeria will be hit hard by climate change due to fragile economy, weak resilience, and low capacity for adaptation. Climate change has already caused problems and the country could suffer huge economic losses if nothing is done.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

Nigeria supports the creation of systems for data collection and knowledge dissemination on climate change in the African countries. The country also wants to work to climate-proof development projects in developing countries.

Funding

Nigeria believes that the UN's Green Climate Fund GCF (Green Climate Fund) must have enough money to be able to finance all the needs of interventions. High-income countries must increase funding to the fund and keep their pledge to deliver \$100 billion per year to the fund, which would be achieved starting in 2020.

Alliances

Nigeria is a heavy player in the climate negotiations. Nigeria is part of the G77 group, which speaks for the middle and low-income countries in various UN bodies. But Nigeria is also part of OPEC, which can be problematic because OPEC is often a brake on the negotiations that prioritize the interests of the oil countries. This could lead to conflicts between Nigeria's position within the African group, of which Nigeria is also a member, and richer members of OPEC (e.g. the Arab group). The Nigerian delegation may therefore have to try different allies on different issues.

Role profile/ character

Nigeria is divided with its various alliances and you, as a Nigerian delegate, come to the negotiation meeting without a very clear instruction on where you stand in terms of emission reductions. Nigeria's NDC may be perceived as weak but that does not risk your key position within the African Group and the G77. You are also clear on several of the difficult negotiation issues such as level of ambition, division of responsibility (including historical responsibility) and demands for funding for adaptation from the richer countries. In addition to that, you are also in solidarity with the African group where you expect to be able to have a great influence. Likewise, the G77 is also the natural platform. Finally, you are also a member of OPEC, which can complicate your situation if you must go against the other OPEC countries.

Russia

Background

On the surface, Russia is one of the world's largest countries, but is relatively sparsely populated with just over 144 million inhabitants (2023). The country wants to be counted as one of the world's great powers, and since the formation of the UN has one of the five permanent seats on the UN Security Council. Russia's exports consist largely of oil. In 2020, Russia accounted for 4% of global greenhouse gas emissions including LULUCF (Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry). The country's per capita emissions are 12.5 tons. In total, emissions in 2020 amounted to 1,800 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalents.

Russia has a tradition of acting primarily on its own agenda and has had less faith in global institutions such as the United Nations and its capacity to take on global challenges. Despite this, Russia has participated in the UN climate negotiations since the beginning. The country ratified the Kyoto Protocol after great pressure, and it entered into force in February 2005. Until now, Russia's participation in international climate negotiations has been driven mainly by the possibility of obtaining economic and political benefits and less by an ambition to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. There is a pronounced climate skepticism in the Russian government, but Russian reports at the same time show that there are negative consequences of climate change for Russia that should be taken seriously.

Important positions

Russia believes that a new climate policy system is required to concretize the principle of common but different responsibilities. The country believes that the distribution of countries' responsibility for reduced emissions of greenhouse gases must consider national circumstances, for example GDP per capita and how dependent the countries are on fossil fuels. Russia is one of the countries that has difficulty converting to renewable energy because the country is highly dependent on income from the production, processing, and export of fossil fuels.

Russia recognizes that the climate issue can only be solved with the help of global efforts and especially through the participation of all major economies. With the Paris Agreement, Russia, like all other countries, has accepted the 2-degree target.

Emission reductions and NDC

As a condition for Russia's participation in the Paris Agreement, Russia expected all major emitters, including the United States and China, to also participate. When this happened, Russia submitted an INDC (Intended Nationally Determined Contribution) for 2030. Russia only ratified the Paris Agreement in 2019, in connection with this submission, the country's INDC was converted into an NDC.

Russia has made no commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 under the Kyoto Protocol. Russia says in its NDC that it intends to reduce its emissions by 25-30% compared to 1990 levels. This can be achieved by Russia without any real action due to the large reduction in emissions, around 50%, that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union after 1990. In this way, Russia can create a safe space for economic growth with emissions increases without having to come into conflict with the Paris Agreement.

Climate Action Tracker places its lowest rating of critically inadequate on Russia's November 2022 NDC.

Other questions

Deforestation

Deforestation, or rather forest, is for Russia one of the major issues in the climate negotiations. The Russian forest reserves must be recognized as full carbon sinks, which Russia has made a condition in its INDC for its commitments.

Adaption

Climate change is not considered an urgent problem for Russia. Positive consequences of a temperature increase of up to 2–3°C could be, for example, greater agricultural yields, lower mortality from winter-related diseases, lower heating costs and a potential boost to tourism. However, the general opinion of Russian researchers is that the disadvantages outweigh the advantages.

Among the negative consequences of a higher average temperature is a significant increase in damage to buildings and roads in the parts of Russia that are today built on permafrost, as well as a decrease in biodiversity. A further negative consequence is more and longer dry periods, which bring with them reduced harvests that can lead to regional conflicts in an already divided country. The effects of climate change on Russia's ecosystem include the gradual decline of the tundra. The forest cover will migrate north and move the tundra towards the arctic coast.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

This is not a big issue for Russia in the context of negotiations. Russia's low level of ambition and little investment in renewable energy does not put any pressure on the development or use of new environmental technology.

Funding

For a long period, Russia chose not to contribute to the UN Green Climate Fund (GCF) and kept a low profile on these issues. In 2018, however, Russia made its first contribution to the fund. In its NDC, Russia emphasizes that it contributes to the fund and developing countries on a voluntary basis.

Alliances

Russia is included together with Japan, New Zealand, the USA, Canada, Norway, Iceland, Ukraine, Australia, and Kazakhstan in the so-called Umbrella Group. It is a collection of most industrialized countries that are not members of the EU that was created during the negotiations of the Kyoto Protocol. The group is usually seen as a brake block during climate negotiations. They have some common positions but still act in accordance with their own nation's goals. Russia cannot therefore count on automatic support from the Umbrella Group. In the context of negotiations, Russia usually appears alone.

Role profile/ character

As a Russian delegate, you have a relatively relaxed approach to the climate negotiations. You know that your country can not only be disadvantaged but also benefit from the increase in temperature resulting from the emissions of greenhouse gases. In addition, Russia is a major exporter of fossil fuels. You follow the climate negotiations but do not want to bind the country to any additional future demanding commitments regarding emission reductions. But you also don't want to be left out if all other countries agree. You are particularly interested in monitoring the forest issues and settlement methods for forest sinks.

Saudi Arabia /OPEC

Background

Saudi Arabia takes up most of the Arabian Peninsula and had 37 million inhabitants in 2023. Saudi Arabia is a member of OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) and is one of the world's most oil-rich countries with approximately 20% of the world's oil resources. Oil and gas account for 50% of the country's export earnings. Saudi Arabia's greenhouse gas emissions are over 700 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalents and 20 tons per capita, corresponding to 1.5% of total greenhouse gas emissions (year 2020).

OPEC consists of oil-producing nations in, among other places, the Middle East and Africa. Saudi Arabia is the second largest member state. OPEC was formed in 1960 as a counterweight to the major oil companies, which come almost exclusively from the US and Europe, and their influence over the international oil market. Oil ministers from the OPEC countries meet regularly to try to control international oil prices, including by deciding how much crude oil to pump up. OPEC countries produce about 40% of the world's oil and own almost four-fifths of the world's oil reserves.

The OPEC countries' per capita emissions of carbon dioxide are among the highest in the world. OPEC's decision has great significance for the international oil market, the energy market, and the entire world economy. The climate issue is a real issue of fate for the OPEC countries as many of the countries lack other significant natural resources to replace oil with. Many countries are also developing countries with economies that are highly dependent on oil exports.

Important positions

Saudi Arabia believes that although climate change is a global problem, it is unfair and unrealistic to request binding commitments from middle- and low-income countries, except from those already included in the Kyoto Protocol. The OPEC countries like to emphasize that the high-income countries are largely responsible for the historical carbon dioxide emissions. Even today, the high-income countries account for nearly half of the emissions of greenhouse gases, even though the countries represent only one fifth of the world's population. Saudi Arabia therefore emphasizes the important role of high-income countries in the climate issue and opposes middle- and low-income countries taking on far-reaching climate commitments.

One of the OPEC countries', especially Saudi Arabia's, major problems is precisely their one-sided dependence on oil revenues. As other countries reduce their use of fossil fuels, OPEC countries' incomes will drop drastically. During COP28, Saudi Arabia emphasized that it is of the utmost importance that the countries that depend on their oil can continue to extract it and that they have methods to capture the carbon dioxide.

Emission reductions and NDC

In 2016, Saudi Arabia submitted its NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution), and in 2021 submitted an updated version. Saudi Arabia promises in its NDC to develop its economy and its adaptation measures in order for the country to reduce its dependence on oil. Saudi Arabia also wants to reduce its emissions by 16% relative to the levels it will achieve by 2030 if it makes no effort at all. This means in practice that the country is increasing its emissions compared to today's levels. In 2019, the state published a new strategy, Vision 2030. In the new strategy, somewhat more ambitious goals regarding renewable energy are stated, which are also found in the latest NDC.

The Climate Action Tracker rates Saudi Arabia's NDC critically inadequate, which is the lowest rating on the scale.

Other questions

Deforestation

Saudi Arabia supports the REDD+ program, which means that countries must be credited with reducing emissions by preventing deforestation and forest degradation. It is a way for countries with large forest areas to utilize the amounts of carbon dioxide stored in forests. The proposal should result in middle- and low-income countries actively working to stop the felling of their rainforests.

Adaption

Adaptation is not a priority negotiation issue in the climate negotiations for Saudi Arabia because it can manage its own adaptation measures without support from others.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

Saudi Arabia and OPEC welcome the use of different forms of energy but believe that fossil energy will continue to play a central role in meeting the world's increasing energy needs in the coming decades. Saudi Arabia and OPEC believe that technology can play a significant role in solutions to the climate issue but that this technology must be distributed fairly among the countries of the world.

Saudi Arabia is positive about CCS (Carbon Capture and Storage) and wants to develop wind and solar energy, as well as the production and use of natural gas.

Funding

Saudi Arabia believes that the high-income countries should take on financial commitments but believes that it is against the principles of the climate convention (UNFCCC) to require the middle and low-income countries to contribute financially.

Alliances

Allies of Saudi Arabia above all other OPEC countries, but also low- and middle-income countries such as China and India. Saudi Arabia is also the spokesperson for the Arab Group (Arab Group) in the negotiations within the climate convention, UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). China is an important ally and during COP28 those who followed the negotiations assumed that Saudi Arabia would agree to the agreement that China endorsed as proof of that.

Role profile/ character

As Saudi Arabia's representative, you have a key role as a spokesperson for the Arab group in the negotiations. Your overall attitude is based on concern for it, for your country and all of OPEC, as well as the important future oil market. You therefore emphasize that the climate work must not proceed too quickly. Furthermore, you can also try to delay the negotiations, for example with reference to legal process issues. You are trying to be close to the demands of the large low- and middle-income countries that it is mainly the industrialized countries that should be responsible for proper investments in the climate issue. Your most central demand is that the oil-producing countries also need help with adaptation, not only to climate change but also to the large economic effects for OPEC countries that measures against climate change can lead to.

In conclusion, Saudi Arabia and OPEC are assertive and detail-oriented negotiators, but also capable of compromise, especially if they do not feel the support of the other countries in the G77 group.

United Kingdom

Background

Great Britain is one of Europe's most populous countries with approximately 68 million inhabitants. It is today the world's sixth largest economy. The country wants to be counted as one of the world's great powers, and since the formation of the UN has one of the five permanent seats on the UN Security Council. Britain has been an influential great power and has a colonial history. Today, London is the world's leading financial center, making the country an important player. The country has natural resources in terms of oil, coal and natural gas. The UK exports crude oil but is also dependent on imported oil. Historically, the country's economy has been dominated by heavy industry, such as coal mining and shipbuilding. However, the country's economic dependence on the manufacturing industry has decreased significantly since the 1970s, and today the financial sector and the service industry instead account for the largest part of the country's GDP. The development means that the country's national carbon dioxide emissions have gradually decreased. Due to its geographical location, the country risks being hit hard by climate change in the form of rising sea levels and floods.

The UK accounts for 0.9% (2020) of the world's global greenhouse gas emissions. In the same year, the country emitted over 400 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalents. In terms of per capita, the country emitted just over 6 tons, which is somewhat lower than in the EU, where the average figure per capita is just over 7 tons.

In June 2016, British voters voted yes to leave the EU, which is referred to as Brexit. The UK and the EU signed and ratified the Withdrawal Agreement which entered into force on February 1, 2020. Since then, the UK is not part of the EU. It also means that the UK is no longer part of the EU's common climate policy and reporting.

Important positions

Britain wants to be a leading country in the fight against climate change and strives to get other countries on board. The country has an ambitious climate policy, which has not been affected by changes in government over the years. In 2008, the UK's climate law came into place: The Climate Change Act, which forms the basis of the country's climate policy. Under the law, the UK government commits to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050. On 20 April 2021, the government set stricter climate targets. According to the new targets, the country must reduce emissions by 78% until 2035 compared to the levels of 1990. Many feared that the UK's climate policy would be negatively affected by Brexit, but the result has been the opposite. The country's new climate goals are more ambitious than what was required within the EU.

Emission reductions and NDC

The UK has previously been part of the EU and its joint climate reporting. There is therefore no previous NDC from the country. In 2020, the country submitted its first own NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution) after Brexit. The UK's NDC says the country should reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 68% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. The Climate Action Tracker points out that the UK has yet to adopt and implement the necessary policy measures to achieve its new and more ambitious targets, but if this is done it will be one of the first in the world to actually reduce its national emissions to the level required under the Paris Agreement.

The Climate Action Tracker has rated the UK inadequate in September 2023.

Other questions

Deforestation

Deforestation is not a major problem nationally in the UK. In this matter, the UK mainly focuses on financially supporting the more affected countries to reduce deforestation. Together with Norway and Germany, Great Britain is financing a project to combat deforestation.

Adaption

The UK believes that support and funding for developing countries is important. By investing in climate adaptation globally, future costs can be reduced.

Funding

The UK has stated that it has provided at least £6 billion in aid to developing countries through its International Climate Finance (ICF) since 2016. A goal for the UK is for the world's rich countries to increase their funding to less developed countries to combat climate change.

Alliances

The UK will continue to cooperate with the EU, but at the same time there is some tension in the wake of Brexit. The country is part of the G7 group. The Group of Seven (G7 group) is a group consisting of seven of the world's largest industrialized economies: France, Italy, Japan, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, and the United States. The EU is also a member of the group. The countries in the G7 group will cooperate during the negotiations regarding the economy and aid to developing countries.

Role profile/ character

As a delegate for Great Britain, you have an important role during the climate negotiations. You emphasize the country's new ambitious climate goals and want to urge other states to raise the level of ambition in their climate work. As a former host of COP26, you have a good grasp of how the negotiations at the climate conference go and have many alliances to turn to. However, there may be conflicts of interest between the various alliances and then you have an important role in getting everyone to agree.

South Africa

Background

South Africa has over 60 million inhabitants and is Africa's third largest economy. The democratic elections in 1994 meant the end of the apartheid system, but there are still very large differences in living conditions between different groups in society. Economic growth and political stability have created prosperity, but elsewhere poverty is widespread and unemployment high.

The country has an energy-intensive production, mainly based on fossil fuels. South Africa's coal is cheap to mine and provides the country with electricity, but the country also imports oil to meet its energy needs. Renewable energy sources are slowly emerging, such as hydropower. 15% of South Africans still lack access to electricity.

South Africa accounts for 1.1% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. In 2020, the country emitted 8.5 tons of greenhouse gases per capita, a total of just over 500 million tons of CO₂e (carbon dioxide equivalents).

Important positions

South Africa can consider contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gases but to a lesser extent than richer countries. Restrictions on emissions can hinder economic growth and the possibility of improving the situation of the poor in the country. It is therefore central to South Africa that the negotiations consider the country's right to develop. For the same reason, the country believes that technology transfer is important.

Emission reductions and NDC

South Africa submitted its NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution) in 2016 and submitted an updated and more ambitious NDC in September 2021. In general, the country wants to see continued work on the possibilities of reaching a 1.5-degree target. However, South Africa believes that they themselves must first be allowed to increase their emissions before they can reduce them. They plan to reach their highest emission level between 2020 and 2025 and then remain at that level for ten years before the curve can turn downward. This means an increase of between 20-82% from 1990 levels. South Africa believes that this is fair as the country must prioritize poverty reduction. Furthermore, the country points out that they are still dependent on coal power. South Africa believes that the high-income countries' historical debt to climate change means that these countries must contribute more than the low-income countries in the fight to limit climate change. South Africa also assumes that they receive international financial support to contribute to lower emissions. In 2019, the country implemented an energy plan called IRP2019 which will take the country from coal to renewable energy sources. The Climate Action Tracker notes that South Africa can meet its environmental targets by implementing the plan.

The Climate Action Tracker rated South Africa's emissions commitments as insufficient based on its November 2023 NDC.

Other questions

Deforestation

One of the most important measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is to increase the number of carbon sinks. South Africa has introduced an action plan to combat forest fires and manage the forest in a sustainable manner.

Adaption

The IPCC writes in its report that Africa is one of the most exposed continents regarding the climate threat due to the continent's geographical location and the low adaptation capacity. South Africa has a

better adaptability thanks to the well-developed industrial sector but will nevertheless suffer impacts on ecosystems and society. There is currently a major water shortage in South Africa, and even without climate change, the country will exhaust its water reserves within a few decades. Another example is that the production of maize, which is an important staple in the country, will be severely affected by climate change due to the risk of longer dry periods and desertification.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

South Africa is very interested in technology for renewable energy and energy efficiency, which can also contribute to the country's climate adaptation. South Africa is keen to explore opportunities for new types of energy but is concerned that it will slow down its economic growth. Furthermore, South Africa is positive about CCS and sees itself as a country of the future when it comes to solar energy.

Funding

South Africa believes that substantial financial support is required for middle and low-income countries to be able to adapt to climate change and implement emission reductions. High-income countries must meet their commitment of USD 100 billion/year from 2020.

Alliances

South Africa belongs to the BRICS countries together with Brazil, Russia, India, and China. Those countries are five of the largest economies in the world. From the first of January 2024, five more countries have been added to the collaboration. Now Egypt, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Saudi Arabia are also part of the BRICS cooperation. South Africa is also a member of the G77 group. They were originally 77 countries but are now over 120 developing countries working together on common issues.

In addition, South Africa is part of the African Group. The African group focuses on adaptation because the countries are sensitive to climate change and their emissions are very small. The governments of India, Brazil and South Africa consider themselves to have similar political objectives and believe that a collaboration increases their opportunities to, among other things, influence the negotiations within the World Trade Organization, WTO (World Trade Organization). The countries already have significant emissions of greenhouse gases but want to be able to guarantee a space for continued economic growth and energy use in addition to the issues of adaptation and financing.

Role profile/ character

As a delegate from South Africa, you are very willing to negotiate climate-smart solutions that can help the country switch to more modern forms of energy that can also contribute to social and economic development. As a delegate, you have a keen attitude towards research and development collaborations but a reluctance to discuss further commitments on emission reductions. You want the richer countries to do more and make sure that the countries in the negotiations clearly take a stand for the development needs of the poorer countries.

USA

Background

The United States is the third largest country in the world in terms of population. It is also a major power with the world's largest economy and military power. The country wants to be counted as one of the world's great powers, and since the formation of the UN has one of the five permanent seats on the UN Security Council. The United States is the world's largest producer and consumer of energy with an economy built on fossil fuels. The USA is second only to China the country that emits the most greenhouse gases with approx. 12% of the world's emissions and has among the largest emissions per capita of approx. 16 tons of CO₂e in 2020. In total, the same year the USA emitted 5.3 billion tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e) greenhouse gases including LULUCF (Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry). The United States is one of the countries that chose not to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and was for a long time a brake on the climate negotiations. When former President Obama took office, this changed as his government believed that it was possible to reduce emissions without reducing the country's economic development. The Paris Agreement was then approved by the United States and entered into force on November 4, 2016.

During President Trump's 2017-2020 administration, US climate policy was reshaped. Trump declared on June 1, 2017, that the United States would withdraw from the Paris Agreement, which he considered disadvantaged the United States. On August 4 of the same year, the United States submitted its withdrawal application to the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). The decision was condemned by many of the world's leaders. According to the rules of the Paris Agreement, a withdrawal application cannot be processed until at the earliest three years after the agreement entered into force, therefore the United States did not formally leave the agreement until November 4, 2020. Today, the country is governed by President Joe Biden, who has a positive view of climate cooperation and in 2021 joined USA again to the Paris Agreement.

Important positions

During President Biden's first day, the country re-entered the Paris Agreement, which has been seen as a major victory for the climate negotiations. The US has now made climate policy a central part of its foreign policy. In 2021, the United States has raised its level of ambition in the climate issue and it is clear that the country now strives to be a pioneering country. Biden has issued an executive order to combat climate change, both domestically and internationally. The president has also launched a new infrastructure plan to achieve its new ambitious climate goals. The US's new climate goals and rhetoric indicate that the country may strive for global leadership in the climate issue.

Emission reductions and NDC

The US supports the principle of NDC (Nationally Determined Contributions), where each country that is a party to the UN Climate Convention determines which measures the country must implement in a national climate plan by 2025 or 2030. In 2021, the country submitted an NDC after again joining in the Paris Agreement. It is significantly more ambitious than its predecessor.

The new NDC states that the country must reduce emissions by 50-52% below 2005 levels by 2030, including land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF). This translates into a 40-43% reduction from 1990 levels. It is a significant step forward compared to its previous goal which stated that the country would reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 26-28% by the year 2025 compared to 2005. Furthermore, Biden has also determined that the US should be carbon neutral by 2050.

Climate Action Tracker rated US emissions commitments insufficient based on its November 2021 NDC. They say the US's updated NDC is more ambitious, but the country still has a long way to go.

Although the new targets are significantly stronger, it is still about 5–10% below what is required for warming not to exceed 1.5°C.

Other questions

Deforestation

The US has previously highlighted carbon sinks, land use and deforestation as central areas in the Paris Agreement.

Adaption

The US has shown an interest in participating in climate-related adaptation measures both in low- and middle-income countries as well as nationally. The country considers the green climate fund to be an important part of achieving the Paris Agreement. Biden's administration has expressed an ambition to continue investing in the fund going forward.

Technology development, diffusion, and transfer

For the United States, economic growth and the country's energy supply are of great importance. In order to reduce the country's vulnerability, investments are being made in energy efficiency and domestic energy sources. A large part of the world's coal reserves is in the USA and the proportion of coal used for electricity production is high. Therefore, the development of new technology for clean coal use has a high priority and a lot of resources are spent on research in this area. The country's coal consumption has certainly decreased by 50% since 2005, which is largely since biogas is now used to a greater extent in the production of electricity.

The US also believes that nuclear power is an important part of the future energy supply. The United States has opposed weakening patent protection and does not believe that patents prevent technology transfer.

Funding

The US was one of the driving forces in Copenhagen in 2009 when the pledge of USD 100 billion for low- and middle-income countries' adaptation and emission reductions was formulated. The US was also active in the creation of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). However, the US believes that a large part of the financing must come via the private sector. Only a small part can come as a gift contribution from public funds. It is a major conflict issue for the low- and middle-income countries, which want the largest portion of the Climate Fund to come from public funds to guarantee the flow and usability. President Biden has clearly signaled that the US will continue to invest in the climate fund.

Alliances

The USA is included together with Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Norway, Iceland, Russia, and Ukraine in the so-called Umbrella Group. It is a collection of most industrialized countries that are not members of the EU that was created during the negotiations of the Kyoto Protocol. The group is usually seen as a brake block during climate negotiations. They have certain common positions but still act in accordance with their own nation's goals. The US cannot therefore count on automatic support from the Umbrella Group. The US has historically had a close relationship with Australia and Japan in the climate negotiations. The EU and the US share many common interests and their relationship weakened under President Trump. Under the Biden administration, the relationship has become stronger again.

The United States belongs to the Group of Seven (the G7 group), which is a group consisting of seven of the world's largest industrialized economies: France, Italy, Japan, Canada, Great Britain, Germany and the United States. The EU is also a member of the group. The countries in the G7 group will cooperate during the negotiations regarding the economy and aid to developing countries.

Role profile/ character

As a delegate for one of the world's richest and most powerful nations, you have a key role in the climate negotiations. It is therefore important for you to show that the US is once again a player to be reckoned with and to rebuild the country's credibility in the matter. You want to encourage other rich countries to contribute to the Green Climate Fund and increase their level of ambition.

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