



On 12 December 2015, the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP) adopted the Paris Agreement by decision 1/CP.21. The authentic text of the Paris Agreement in all six official UN languages can be found [here](#).

Q: What are the most significant aspects of the Paris Agreement?

The Paris Agreement builds on the Climate Change Convention and – for the first time – unites all nations in an ambitious effort to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support for developing countries to do so. As such, it charts a new course in the global climate effort.

The Paris Agreement’s central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it even further, to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Additionally, the Agreement aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change. To reach these ambitious goals, appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity-building framework are envisioned, supporting action by developing countries and the most vulnerable countries in line with their own national objectives. The Agreement also provides for enhanced transparency of action and support through a more robust transparency framework. Further details can be found [here](#).

Q: When will the Paris Agreement enter into force?

The Paris Agreement enters into force and thereby becomes legally binding for those Parties to the Convention that have ratified it, on the thirtieth day after the two conditions specified in Article 21, paragraph 1, have been fulfilled:¹

- a. At least 55 Parties to the Convention have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary; and
- b. These Parties account in total for at least 55 per cent of the total global greenhouse gas emissions.

Once these two conditions have been fulfilled, the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Depositary, will formally notify Parties to the Convention, the permanent missions to the United Nations, international organizations and the UNFCCC secretariat that the conditions for the entry into force of the Paris Agreement as specified in its Article 21, paragraph 1, have been met and will state the date when the Agreement will enter into force.

¹ References to articles in this document are to Articles of the Paris Agreement, unless otherwise stated.



For a Party to the Convention that deposits its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary after the Agreement has entered into force, the Agreement will enter into force and become legally binding for that Party on the thirtieth day after the deposit of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary (see Article 21).

Q: How many countries have ratified the Paris Agreement so far?

Up-to-date information on the number of Parties that have ratified the Paris Agreement and the percentage of the total global greenhouse gas emissions those Parties account for can be found [here](#).

Q: How does a country become a Party to the Paris Agreement?

According to Article 20, paragraph 1, to become a Party to the Agreement a State or regional economic integration organization must be a Party to the Convention and deposit its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary.

For a Party to the Convention to become a Party to the Paris Agreement in time to be able to participate in the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 1), in the event CMA 1 is convened in conjunction with COP 22 in Marrakech, the Party must deposit its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary by 19 October 2016.

Instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession should be sent to the Treaty Section, Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations Headquarters, New York.

Q: How is the 55 per cent of the total global greenhouse gas emissions calculated?

In Paris, the COP requested the secretariat, solely for the purpose of determining entry into force of the Paris Agreement, to make available on its website information on the most up-to-date total and per cent of greenhouse gas emissions communicated by Parties to the Convention in their national communications, greenhouse gas inventory reports, biennial reports or biennial update reports. This information is contained in a table in annex I to the report on COP 21 and can be found [here](#).

Q: Can additional countries ratify the Agreement after it has entered into force?

Parties to the Convention can deposit their instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary at any time either before or after it has entered into force. For a Party to the Convention that deposits its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary after the Agreement has entered into force, the Agreement will enter into force and become



legally binding for that Party on the thirtieth day after the deposit of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary (see Article 21).

Q: Have all countries submitted their nationally determined contributions?

The COP invited Parties to communicate their first nationally determined contribution (NDC) no later than when the Party submits its respective instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

Current NDCs can be found [here](#).

In accordance with decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 22, if a Party has communicated an intended nationally determined contribution (INDC) prior to joining the Agreement, then that INDC shall be considered its first NDC under the Agreement unless that Party decides otherwise. A Party has the opportunity to enhance its INDC by communicating a more ambitious NDC, if it so desires, before or when submitting its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. So far, 188 countries have submitted their [INDCs](#).

Q: What will happen with the ongoing negotiations on the Paris Agreement rule book once the Agreement enters into force?

In accordance with Article 16, paragraphs 1 and 2, upon the entry into force of the Paris Agreement and the opening of the first session of the CMA, the CMA becomes the sole body with the authority to take decisions on matters concerning the Paris Agreement. As the governing body of the Agreement, the authority of the CMA extends to all substantive, procedural, administrative and operational matters.

CMA 1 is expected to adopt decisions on matters such as:

- a. The Paris Agreement work programme (see decision 1/CP.21);
- b. Procedural, institutional and administrative matters;
- c. Arrangements to complete work on unfinished elements of the Paris Agreement work programme, as needed (information on progress on the work programme resulting from the relevant requests contained in decision 1/CP.21 can be found [here](#)).

As per Article 16, paragraph 2, only Parties to the Paris Agreement will be in a position to fully participate in the proceedings of and decision-making by the CMA. However, during the Bonn Climate Change Conference in May 2016, the Presidency of COP 21/CMP 11 and the Incoming-Presidency of COP 22/CMP 12 convened consultations with Parties on modalities for “inclusiveness” in the event of an entry into force of the Paris Agreement in 2016 or 2017. Such modalities would ensure that all Parties to the Convention can continue to contribute fully to the development of the rule book of the Paris Agreement, including those Parties that are in the process of joining the Agreement. An aide-memoire by the Presidency of COP 21/CMP 11 and



the incoming Presidency of COP 22/CMP 12 on the informal consultations convened on this matter can be found [here](#).

Q: When will the first session of the CMA be convened?

Pursuant to Article 16, paragraph 6, CMA 1 shall be convened by the secretariat in conjunction with the first session of the COP scheduled after the date of entry into force of the Agreement.

For CMA 1 to be convened in conjunction with COP 22 in Marrakech, the two triggers for entry into force must be fulfilled by Friday, 7 October 2016, in which case the Agreement will enter into force on Sunday, 6 November 2016, the eve of the opening of COP 22/CMP 12.

For a Party to the Convention to become a Party to the Paris Agreement in time to be able to participate in CMA 1 in the event CMA 1 is convened in conjunction with COP 22 in Marrakech, the Party must deposit its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary by 19 October 2016.

If the Paris Agreement enters into force on or before 5 November 2017, CMA 1 will be convened in conjunction with COP 23 and CMP 13, to be held from 6 to 17 November 2017. If the Paris Agreement enters into force on or before 4 November 2018, CMA 1 will be convened in conjunction with COP 24 and CMP 14, to be held from 5 to 16 November 2018.

Further information on preparing for the entry into force of the Paris Agreement and for the convening of CMA 1 can be found [here](#).

Q: How are climate change and the Paris Agreement linked to the Sustainable Development Goals?

In 2015, the global community converged on an integrated vision for the future and set in motion the economic, societal and environmental transformation needed to realize that vision. That vision is articulated through the Paris Agreement and the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

The unity of purpose reflected in these momentous agreements will need to leverage unprecedented universal action, involving all actors at all levels in all regions of the world. The challenges will be enormous but the rewards from success are even greater.

This is as true for reaching the objectives of the Paris Agreement as it is for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The deep synergy between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda is manifested through the policies and measures national governments have committed to in their



nationally determined contributions and in their adaptation planning and actions. These policies and measures are relevant to all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Taken together, the 2015 outcomes define one universal agenda for the well-being of all peoples. At its core, this agenda is about achieving human welfare and prosperity while respecting natural cycles and services and planetary boundaries.