



COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND INSTRUMENTS

United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Paris Agreement

SUBJECT CATEGORY:

Climate Change

TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:

Multilateral

FORM:

Legally-binding treaty

STATUS:

**United Nations Framework Convention on
Climate Change**

- Signed by Canada June 12, 1992
- Ratified by Canada December 4, 1992
- In force in Canada March 21, 1994
- In force internationally March 21, 1994

Paris Agreement

- Signed by Canada April 22, 2016
- Ratified by Canada October 5, 2016
- In force in Canada November 6, 2016
- In force internationally November 4, 2016

LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:

Lead: Environment and Climate Change
Canada

Partners: Global Affairs Canada; Natural
Resources Canada; Agriculture & Agrifood
Canada

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Web Links:

- [The Paris Agreement](#)
- [United Nations Framework Convention on
Climate Change](#)
- [Environment and Climate Change Canada](#)
- [Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Canada](#)

Contacts:

[ECCC Inquiry Centre](#)

COMPENDIUM EDITION:

October 2018

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

In 2015 Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiated the Paris Agreement, which aims to keep the global average temperature from rising to dangerous levels that would create irreversible damage to the environment, i.e., "holding the increase in the global average surface temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius". As part of the agreement, countries also committed to increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emission development, without threatening food production and making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low-emission and climate-resilient development.

Canada strongly supports the Paris Agreement. The Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate is Canada's plan to meet its GHG emission reduction goals. The plan includes putting a price on carbon pollution and investments in clean technologies.

Canada has also committed \$2.65 billion to help developing countries adapt to climate change, to deploy renewable energy technologies, and to manage risks related to severe weather events.

OBJECTIVE

The ultimate objective of the UNFCCC is to "stabilize GHG concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system." The UNFCCC Paris Agreement aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty.

KEY ELEMENTS

The UNFCCC is one of the three Rio Conventions adopted at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 – the others being UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification. The UNFCCC

entered into force on 21 March 1994 and has been ratified by 195 countries.

The Paris Agreement is a key element under the UNFCCC and it contains several principles and initiatives that will help countries reach the Paris Agreement goals including:

Nationally determined contributions (NDCs): All Parties are to put forward national greenhouse gas targets or other mitigation goals; these are to be communicated every 5 years.

Adaptation actions: In order to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change a global goal was established for adaptation. All Parties engage in adaptation planning, and are also encouraged to submit and periodically update an adaptation communication on their priorities, implementation and support needs, plans and actions.

Carbon Market: Parties can take part in carbon market mechanisms in order to contribute to the mitigation of GHG emissions. The Paris Agreement recognizes any cooperation that involves internationally transferal of mitigation outcomes (ITMOs), including ensuring environmental integrity, transparency and avoidance of double counting.

Global stock take: A global stock take will take place every five years starting in 2023 to assess the collective progress in implementing the provisions of the Agreement. The stock take will consider mitigation and adaptation actions undertaken by all countries, and the adequacy of financial, technical and capacity building support.

Transparency framework: The Paris Agreement relies on a robust transparency and accounting system to provide clarity on action and support by Parties, with flexibility for their differing capabilities. The framework will include reporting standards for GHG emissions, mitigation and adaptation actions and support.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Under the Paris Agreement, countries have agreed to work together to strengthen their efforts and lead the transformation towards a low-carbon, climate resilient global economy including by setting targets (NDCs) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit the temperature increase.

To accomplish the objective, the Agreement is designed with a built-in “ambition cycle” wherein all countries – including major emitters – must take on progressively more ambitious efforts to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions over time. Furthermore,

the cycle of ambition is informed by a regular assessment of global progress that is based in the best available climate science – including the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In this way, the Paris Agreement will help ensure that the policies and measures implemented by countries to address climate change are informed by the latest scientific evidence on the causes and impacts of anthropogenic climate change.

CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

Canada plays an active and constructive role in the UNFCCC negotiations and was a strong voice in the negotiations towards the establishment of the Paris Agreement.

Canada's [NDC](#) is to reduce its economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions to 30% below 2005 levels by 2030.

Canada will continue to work with its international partners both under the UNFCCC and in other fora to implement our commitments.

RESULTS / PROGRESS

Activities

Environment and Climate Change Canada is the Government of Canada lead on both international and domestic climate change. Canada's approach to global climate action is built on:

- Fact-based decision making and robust science, reflecting the latest findings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
- Recognition of the necessity of transitioning to a low-carbon, climate resilient economy.
- Strong collaboration with provinces and territories, Indigenous peoples, and non-state actors to take concrete climate action.
- Support for climate resilient development and adaptation in countries that need it.

International Action

Canada continues to be committed to providing leadership and working with its international partners to help us move to a more sustainable, low-carbon and climate-resilient world. Under the Paris Agreement, developed countries continue to have an obligation to provide financial resources to assist developing countries and other Parties are encouraged to provide support on a voluntary basis. Parties will set a new long-term finance goal by 2025 from the floor of US \$100 billion per year, taking into

account the needs and priorities of developing countries. Parties agreed that scaled-up financing should aim to achieve a balance between mitigation and adaptation and that financing will continue to flow from a variety of sources.

Canada recognizes that global climate change action will be most effective when women and girls play an active role. Canada was an early supporter of mainstreaming gender throughout the UNFCCC and is a champion of the implementation for Gender Action Plan. In support of the Action Plan, Canada has supported two regional workshops (Caribbean and Francophone Africa) to assist women leaders meaningfully engage in international climate change negotiations, including for COP 23 (2017) and COP 24 (2018).

In addition, for Canada it is fundamentally important that when taking action on climate change, local communities, and the rights of Indigenous peoples should be respected and considered. This is why Canada is committed to further advancing the local communities and Indigenous people's platform under the UNFCCC in a way that meaningfully enhances the engagement and participation of Indigenous peoples and local communities.

Canada is working with the UK and more than 70 other members including governments, businesses, and civil society groups committed to the sustainable phase-out of unabated coal power through the Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA). Phasing-out coal-fired electricity is among the most important steps the international community can take in support of the Paris Agreement.

Canada was also proud to have played a key role in the ratification of the Kigali Amendment of the Montreal Protocol, which will pursue efforts to phase down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), a potent GHG.

Domestic Action

The Government of Canada views climate change as not just a challenge but as an historic opportunity to build a climate resilient, low carbon economy. Domestically, the Government is committed to put a price on carbon, and reduce emissions.

The federal government will build on the efforts of provinces and territories, local governments, Indigenous organizations, businesses, youth, the academic community, and non-governmental organizations. The Government of Canada is working with the provinces and territories to implement the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change. The framework will ensure that the

provinces have the flexibility to implement climate policies while working together to achieve Canada's national emissions reduction targets.

The Government of Canada will also ensure that this country capitalizes on the investment and job opportunities associated with the global transition to a low carbon economy. We will support and leverage the strengths of Canada's clean technology sector to position our industries' innovative and access growing export markets.

Finally, the Government of Canada will prioritize climate preparedness and resilience to help Canadians adapt to the impacts of climate change, working with provinces and territories, Indigenous organizations, and municipalities and supporting new investments in green infrastructure.

Reports

Under the UNFCCC, Canada prepares and submits to the Secretariat a [National Inventory Report](#) on GHG emissions on an annual basis, a [Biennial Report](#) on Canada's progress in achieving emission reductions and provisions of financial, technology, and capacity building support to developing countries and a quadrennial [National Communications](#). We look forward to providing revised and updated UNFCCC transparency reports as will be required by the Paris Agreement Work Programme.

Domestically, Canada produces an annual [Synthesis Report on the Status of Implementation of the Pan-Canadian Framework](#);