

Glossary of Terms for the Climate Talks

This is a condensed list of terms defined by the UN Framework Convention.¹ Additional definitions have been added and sources noted.

Assigned amount unit (AAU)

A Kyoto Protocol unit equal to 1 metric ton of CO₂ equivalent. Each Annex I Party issues AAUs up to the level of its assigned amount, established pursuant to Article 3, paragraphs 7 and 8, of the Kyoto Protocol. Assigned amount units may be exchanged through emissions trading.

Adaptation

Adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities.

Adaptation Fund

The Adaptation Fund was established to finance concrete adaptation projects and programs in developing countries that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The Fund is to be financed with a share of proceeds from clean development mechanism (CDM) project activities and receive funds from other sources.

Afforestation

Planting of new forests on lands that historically have not contained forests.

Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)

An ad hoc coalition of low-lying and island countries. These nations are particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels and share common positions on climate change. The 43 members and observers are American Samoa, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cape Verde, Comoros, Cook Islands, Cuba, Cyprus, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Grenada, Guam, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Nauru, Netherlands Antilles, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Islands, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, US Virgin Islands, and Vanuatu.

Annex I Parties

The industrialized countries listed in this annex to the Convention committed to return their greenhouse-gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000 as per Article 4.2 (a) and (b). They have also accepted emissions targets for the period 2008-12 as per Article 3 and Annex B of the Kyoto Protocol. They include the 24 original OECD members, the European Union, and 14 countries with economies in transition. (Croatia, Liechtenstein, Monaco, and Slovenia joined Annex 1 at COP-3, and the Czech Republic and Slovakia replaced Czechoslovakia.)

Annex II Parties

The countries listed in Annex II to the Convention which have a special obligation to provide financial resources and facilitate technology transfer to developing countries. Annex II Parties include the 24 original OECD members plus the European Union.

Anthropogenic greenhouse emissions

Greenhouse-gas emissions resulting from human activities.

Article 4.2

Article of the Convention stating the specific commitments of developed-country (Annex I) Parties only -- notably that they would take measures aimed to return greenhouse-gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000.

AWG-LCA

At its thirteenth session, the Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 1/CP.13 (the Bali Action Plan), launched a comprehensive process to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action now, up to and beyond 2012, in order to reach an agreed outcome and adopt a decision at its fifteenth session. The process shall be conducted under a subsidiary body of the Convention, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA), that shall complete its work in 2009 and present the outcome of its work to the Conference of the Parties for adoption at its fifteenth session.

AWG-KP

To discuss future commitments for industrialized countries under the Kyoto Protocol, the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol established a working group in December 2005 called the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex 1 Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP). The AWG-KP is set to complete its work by the end of 2009.

Bali Action Plan (BAP)

The Bali Action Plan, adopted by the Conference of the Parties (COP) as decision 1/CP.13, launched a comprehensive process to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action now, up to and beyond 2012, in order to reach an agreed outcome and adopt a decision at its fifteenth session in Copenhagen in December 2009. The Bali Action Plan is centered on four main building blocks – mitigation, adaptation, technology and financing.

Berlin Mandate

Adopted at COP-1, the mandate that launched negotiations leading to the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol.

Biomass fuels or biofuels

Fuels produced from dry organic matter or combustible oils produced by plants. These fuels are considered renewable as long as the vegetation producing them is maintained or replanted, such as firewood, alcohol fermented from sugar, and combustible oils extracted from soy beans. Greenhouse gas reductions from biofuel use are controversial; effectiveness as a gasoline-substitute depends on the type feedstock (plant). Evaluation of climate benefits should take into consideration lifecycle emissions such as land use changes and energy inputs in the production and refining processes.

Bracketed Text

Typographical symbols [--] placed around text under negotiation to indicate that the language enclosed is being discussed but has not yet been agreed upon.

Bunker fuels

Term used to refer to fuels consumed for international marine and air transport.

Capacity building

In the context of climate change, the process of developing the technical skills and institutional capability in developing countries and economies in transition to enable them to address effectively the causes and results of climate change.

Carbon market

A popular but misleading term for a trading system through which countries may buy or sell units of greenhouse-gas emissions in an effort to meet their national limits on emissions, either under the Kyoto Protocol or under other agreements, such as that among member states of the European Union. The term comes from the fact that carbon dioxide is the predominant greenhouse gas and other gases are measured in units called "carbon-dioxide equivalents."

Carbon Capture and Sequestration (CCS)

Carbon capture and sequestration, or storage, is an approach to mitigating global warming based on capturing carbon dioxide (CO₂) from large point sources such as fossil fuel power plants and storing it instead of releasing it into the atmosphere.

Certified emission reductions (CER)

A Kyoto Protocol unit equal to 1 metric tonne of CO₂ equivalent. CERs are issued for emission reductions from CDM project activities. Two special types of CERs, called temporary certified emission reduction (tCERs) and long-term certified emission reductions (lCERs), are issued for emission removals from afforestation and reforestation CDM projects.

Chlorofluorocarbon (CFC)

CFCs, along with other chlorine- and bromine-containing compounds, have been implicated in the accelerated depletion of ozone in the Earth's stratosphere. CFCs were developed in the early 1930s and are used in a variety of industrial, commercial, and household applications. These substances are non-toxic, non-flammable, and non-reactive with other chemical compounds.

Chair's Summary

A document issued by the Chair of the Ad Hoc Working groups which summarizes the main points of discussion. The Chair's summary is not a decision by the group, and not subject to amendment by the parties, but aims to move the deliberations along by identifying emerging areas of consensus and issues needing further clarification, discussion and debate.

Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)

A mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol through which developed countries may finance greenhouse-gas emission reduction or removal projects in developing countries, and receive credits for doing so which they may apply towards meeting mandatory limits on their own emissions.

Committee of the Whole

Often created by a COP to aid in negotiating text. It consists of the same membership as the COP. When the Committee has finished its work, it turns the text over to the COP, which finalizes and then adopts the text during a plenary session.

Comparability of Effort

This term refers to Section 1(b) (i) of the Bali Action Plan stating that the mitigation commitments of all developed countries must be similar or "comparable." Sometimes called the "U.S. provision," this section is designed to open negotiations on the terms of U.S. participation in the new agreement.

Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR)

The principle of 'common but differentiated responsibility' evolved from the notion of the 'common heritage of mankind' and is a manifestation of general principles of equity in international law. The principle recognizes historical differences in the contributions of developed and developing States to global environmental problems, in this case historical GhG emissions, and differences in their respective economic and technical capacity to tackle these problems.

Compliance Committee

A committee that helps facilitate, promote and enforce compliance with the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol. It has 20 members with representation spread among various regions, small-island developing states, Annex I and non-Annex I parties, and functions through a plenary, a bureau, a facilitative branch and an enforcement branch.

Compliance

Fulfillment of commitments by countries/businesses/individuals of emission and reporting under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol.

Conference of the Parties (COP)

The supreme body of the Convention. It currently meets once a year to review the Convention's progress. The word "conference" is not used here in the sense of "meeting" but rather of "association," which explains the seemingly redundant expression "fourth session of the Conference of the Parties."

Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties (CMP)

The Convention's supreme body is the COP, which serves as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The sessions of the COP and the CMP are held during the same period to reduce costs and improve coordination between the Convention and the Protocol.

Conference room papers (CRPs)

A category of in-session documents containing new proposals or outcomes of in-session work. CRPs are for use only during the session concerned.

Contact group

An open-ended meeting that may be established by the COP, a subsidiary body or a Committee of the Whole wherein Parties may negotiate before forwarding agreed text to a plenary for formal adoption. Closed to press but sometimes open to observers.

Countries with Economies in Transition (EIT)

Those Central and East European countries and former republics of the Soviet Union in transition from state-controlled to market economies.

Decision

A formal agreement that (unlike a resolution) leads to binding actions. It becomes part of the agreed body of decisions that direct the work of the COP.

Declaration

A non-binding political statement made by ministers attending a major meeting (*e.g.* the Geneva Ministerial Declaration of COP-2).

Deforestation

Conversion of forest to non-forest.

Degradation

Biological, chemical or physical processes which result in the loss of the productive potential of natural resources in areas covered by forests and/or used by agriculture. Degradation may be permanent, although some forest areas may recover naturally or with human assistance.

Designated National Authority (DNA)

An office, ministry, or other official entity appointed by a Party to the Kyoto Protocol to review and give national approval to projects proposed under the Clean Development Mechanism.

Documents

Documents fall into different categories. Official documents are available to everyone and feature the logos of the United Nations and the Climate Change Convention. They carry a reference number, such as FCCC/CP/1998/1. Pre-session documents are available before a meeting, often in all six UN languages. In-session documents are distributed on-site (see CRPs, L docs, Misc. docs, and non-papers). Informal documents are often distributed outside the meeting room by observers.

Drafting group

A smaller group established by the President or a Chair of a Convention body to meet separately and in private to prepare draft text -- text which must still be formally approved later in a plenary session. Observers generally may not attend drafting group meetings.

Expert Group on Technology Transfer (EGTT)

An expert group established at COP7 with the objective of enhancing the implementation of Article 4.5 of the Convention, by analyzing and identifying ways to facilitate and advance technology transfer activities under the Convention

Emission reduction unit (ERU)

A Kyoto Protocol unit equal to 1 metric tonne of CO₂ equivalent. ERUs are generated for emission reductions or emission removals from joint implementation projects.

Emissions trading

One of the three Kyoto mechanisms, by which an Annex I Party may transfer Kyoto Protocol units to or acquire units from another Annex I Party. An Annex I Party must meet specific eligibility requirements to participate in emissions trading.

Entry into force

The point at which an intergovernmental agreement becomes legally binding -- occurring at a pre-stated interval after a pre-

stated and required number of ratifications by countries has been achieved. The Climate Change Convention required 50 ratifications to enter into force. It now enters into force for each new Party 90 days after that Party ratifies the Convention.

Environmental Integrity Group

A coalition or negotiating alliance consisting of Mexico, the Republic of Korea, and Switzerland.

Expert review teams

Groups of experts, nominated by Parties, who review national reports submitted by Annex I Parties to the UNFCCC, and the Kyoto Protocol.

Financial Mechanism

Developed country Parties (Annex II Parties) are required to provide financial resources to assist developing country Parties implement the Convention. To facilitate this, the Convention established a financial mechanism to provide funds to developing country Parties. The Parties to the Convention assigned operation of the financial mechanism to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on an on-going basis, subject to review every four years. The financial mechanism is accountable to the COP.

Fourth Assessment Report (FAR)

The Fourth Assessment Report refers to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), report which was issued in four parts in 2007 and suggested that the next round of emission reductions by developed countries should be guided in the range of 25 - 40% below 1990 levels.

Friends of the chair

Delegates called upon by the Chair (who takes into account the need for political balance among various interests) to assist in carrying out specific tasks.

Fugitive fuel emissions

Greenhouse-gas emissions as by-products or waste or loss in the process of fuel production, storage, or transport, such as methane given off during oil and gas drilling and refining, or leakage of natural gas from pipelines.

Group of 77 (G-77) and China

A large negotiating alliance of developing countries that focuses on numerous international topics, including climate change. The G-77 was founded in 1967 under the auspices of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). It seeks to harmonize the negotiating positions of its 131 member states.

GRULAC

Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

The GEF is an independent financial organization that provides grants to developing countries for projects that benefit the global environment and promote sustainable livelihoods in local communities. The Parties to the Convention assigned operation of the financial mechanism to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on an on-going basis, subject to review every four years. The financial mechanism is accountable to the COP. For more information see: <http://www.thegef.org/>.

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFC)

HFCs are compounds containing only hydrogen, fluorine, and carbon atoms. They were introduced as alternatives to ozone depleting substances in serving many industrial, commercial, and personal needs. HFCs are emitted as by-products of industrial processes and are also used in manufacturing. HFCs do not significantly deplete the stratospheric ozone layer, but they are powerful greenhouse gases.

"Hot air"

Refers to the concern that some governments will be able to meet their targets for greenhouse-gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol with minimal effort and could then flood the market with emissions credits, reducing the incentive for other countries to cut their own domestic emissions.

International Civil Aviation Organization ICAO

The International Civil Aviation Organization, a UN Specialized Agency, is a global forum for civil aviation. ICAO works to achieve its vision of safe, secure and sustainable development of civil aviation through cooperation amongst its member States.

International Energy Agency (IEA)

The International Energy Agency (IEA) acts as energy policy advisor to 28 member countries in efforts to ensure reliable, affordable and clean energy for citizens. Founded during the oil crisis of 1973-74, the IEA's initial role was to co-ordinate measures in times of oil supply emergencies. As energy markets changed, so has the IEA. Its mandate has broadened to incorporate the "Three E's" of balanced energy policy making: energy security, economic development and environmental protection.

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

The International Maritime Organization is the UN system's regulatory agency for the maritime sector and its global mandate is safer shipping and cleaner oceans. It pursues that mandate by adopting international maritime rules and standards that are then implemented and enforced by Governments in the exercise of flag, port and coastal State jurisdiction.

Implementation

Actions (legislation or regulations, judicial decrees, or other actions) that governments take to translate international accords into domestic law and policy.

Informal contact group or "Informals"

A group of delegates instructed by the President or a Chair to meet in private to discuss a specific matter in an effort to consolidate different views, reach a compromise, and produce an agreed proposal, often in the form of a written text.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization and the UN Environment Programme, the IPCC surveys world-wide scientific and technical literature and publishes assessment reports that are widely recognized as the most credible existing sources of information on climate change. The IPCC also works on methodologies and responds to specific requests from the Convention's subsidiary bodies. The IPCC is independent of the Convention.

Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)

The IOC was created in 1960 to promote international cooperation and coordinate programs in research, sustainable development, protection of the marine environment, capacity-building for improved management, and decision-making. It assists developing countries in strengthening their institutions to obtain self-driven sustainability in marine sciences.

International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

A network of governments, non-government organizations, United Nations agencies, companies and local communities that aims to help the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges. It supports scientific research, manages field projects all over the world.

Joint implementation (JI)

A mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol through which a developed country can receive "emissions reduction units" when it helps to finance projects that reduce net greenhouse-gas emissions in another developed country (in practice, the recipient state is likely to be a country with an "economy in transition"). An Annex I Party must meet specific eligibility requirements to participate in joint implementation.

Kyoto Protocol

An international agreement standing on its own, and requiring separate ratification by governments, but linked to the UNFCCC. The Kyoto Protocol, among other things, sets binding targets for the reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions by industrialized countries.

Kyoto mechanisms

Three procedures established under the Kyoto Protocol to increase the flexibility and reduce the costs of making greenhouse-gas emissions cuts; they are the Clean Development Mechanism, Emissions Trading and Joint Implementation.

Land use, land-use change, and forestry (LULUCF)

A greenhouse gas inventory sector that covers emissions and removals of greenhouse gases resulting from direct human-induced land use, land-use change and forestry activities.

Leakage

That portion of cuts in greenhouse-gas emissions by developed countries -- countries trying to meet mandatory limits under the Kyoto Protocol -- that may reappear in other countries not bound by such limits. For example, multinational corporations may shift factories from developed countries to developing countries to escape restrictions on emissions.

Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

The World's poorest countries. The criteria currently used by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for designation as an LDC include low income, human resource weakness and economic vulnerability. Currently 50 countries have been designated by the UN General Assembly as LDCs.

Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG)

A panel of 12 experts which provides advice to LDCs on the preparation and implementation of national adaptation programs of action (NAPAs) -- plans for addressing the urgent and immediate needs of those countries to adapt to climate change.

Least Developed Country Fund (LDCF)

The LDCF is a fund established to support a work program to assist Least Developed Country Parties to carry out, inter alia, the preparation and implementation of national adaptation programs of action (NAPAs). The Global Environment Facility, as the entity that operates the financial mechanism of the Convention, has been entrusted to operate this fund.

Marrakesh Accords

Agreements reached at COP-7 which set various rules for "operating" the more complex provisions of the Kyoto Protocol. Among other things, the accords include details for establishing a greenhouse-gas emissions trading system; implementing and monitoring the Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism; and setting up and operating three funds to support efforts to adapt to climate change.

Miscellaneous documents (misc. docs)

Documents issued on plain paper with no UN masthead. They generally contain views or comments published as received from a delegation without formal editing.

Mitigation

In the context of climate change, mitigation is a human intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases. Examples include using fossil fuels more efficiently for industrial processes or electricity generation, switching to solar energy or wind power, improving the insulation of buildings, and expanding forests and other "sinks" to remove greater amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Montreal Protocol

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, and international agreement adopted in Montreal in 1987.

MRV - Measureable, Reportable, and Verifiable

Measurable, reportable and verifiable nationally appropriate mitigation commitments or actions, including quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives by all developed country Parties, while ensuring the comparability of efforts among them, taking into account differences in their national circumstances

National adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs)

Documents prepared by least developed countries (LDCs) identifying urgent and immediate needs for adapting to climate change. The NAPAs are then presented to the international donor community for support.

Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA)

Actions taken by developing country Parties in the context of sustainable development, supported and enabled by technology, financing and capacity-building, in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner.

National communications

A document submitted in accordance with the Convention (and the Protocol) by which a Party informs other Parties of activities undertaken to address climate change. Most developed countries have now submitted their fourth national communications; most developing countries have completed their first national communication and are in the process of preparing their second.

Non-Annex I Parties

Refers to countries that have ratified or acceded to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that are not included in Annex I of the Convention.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

Organizations that are not part of a governmental structure. They include environmental groups, research institutions, business groups, and associations of urban and local governments. Many NGOs attend climate talks as observers. To be accredited to attend meetings under the Convention, NGOs must be non-profit.

Non-paper

An in-session document issued informally to facilitate negotiations. A non-paper does not have an official document symbol. It may have an identifying number or carry the name of its author.

Non-Party

A state that has not ratified the Convention but attends meetings as an observer.

"No-regrets options"

Technology for reducing greenhouse-gas emissions whose other benefits (in terms of efficiency or reduced energy costs) are so extensive that the investment is worth it for those reasons alone. For example, combined-cycle gas turbines -- in which the heat from the burning fuel drives steam turbines while the thermal expansion of the exhaust gases drives gas turbines -- may boost the efficiency of electricity generating plants by 70 per cent.

Observers

Observers include agencies, non-governmental organizations, and Governments not Parties to the Convention which are permitted to attend, but not vote, at meetings of the COP and its subsidiary bodies. Observers may include the United Nations and its specialized agencies; other intergovernmental organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency; and accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development is a forum where the governments of 30 market democracies work together to address the economic, social and governance challenges of globalization. The Organization provides a setting where governments can compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practices and co-ordinate domestic and international policies.

Offsets

A greenhouse gas (GHG) offset is generated by the reduction, avoidance, or sequestration of GHG emissions from a specific project. Offsets are so named because they counteract or offset greenhouse gases that would have been emitted into the atmosphere; they are a compensating equivalent for reductions made at a specific source of emissions.

Party

A state (or regional economic integration organization such as the European Union) that agrees to be bound by a treaty and for which the treaty has entered into force.

Plenary

A formal meeting of the entire COP or one of its subsidiary bodies. Formal decisions or conclusions may only be taken during plenary sessions.

Policies and measures (PAMs)

A frequently used phrase -- sometimes abbreviated as PAMs -- referring to the steps taken or to be taken by countries to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. Some possible policies and measures are listed in the Protocol and could offer opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation.

President

The official of a member government elected by the Parties to preside over the COP. The President is often a senior official or minister from the state or region hosting the meeting. The President may not participate in the negotiations as a representative of the member government during the term of presidency.

Protocol

An international agreement linked to an existing convention, but as a separate and additional agreement which must be signed and ratified by the Parties to the convention concerned. Protocols typically strengthen a convention by adding new, more detailed commitments.

Quantified Emissions Limitation and Reduction Commitments (QELROs)

Legally binding targets and timetables under the Kyoto Protocol for the limitation or reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions by developed countries.

Ratification

Formal approval, often by a Parliament or other national legislature, of a convention, protocol, or treaty, enabling a country to become a Party. Ratification is a separate process that occurs after a country has signed an agreement. The instrument of ratification must be deposited with a "depository" (in the case of the Climate Change Convention, the UN Secretary-General) to start the countdown to becoming a Party (in the case of the Convention, the countdown is 90 days).

Reforestation

Replanting of forests on lands that have previously contained forests but that have been converted to some other use.

Regional groups

Alliances of countries, in most cases sharing the same geographic region, which meet privately to discuss issues and nominate bureau members and other officials for activities under the Convention. The five regional groups are Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC), and the Western Europe and Others Group (WEOG).

Registries, registry systems

Electronic databases that will track and record all transactions under the Kyoto Protocol's greenhouse-gas emissions trading system (the "carbon market") and under mechanisms such as the Clean Development Mechanism.

Resolution

Directives that guide the work of the COP -- opinions rather than permanent legal acts. Unlike decisions, resolutions do not generally become part of the formal body of legislation enacted by the COP.

Rio Conventions

Three environmental conventions, two of which were adopted at the 1992 "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro: the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), while the third, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), was adopted in 1994. The issues addressed by the three treaties are related -- in particular, climate change can have adverse effects on desertification and biodiversity -- and through a Joint Liaison Group, the secretariats of the three conventions take steps to coordinate activities to achieve common progress.

Removal unit (RMU)

A Kyoto Protocol unit equal to 1 metric tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent. RMUs are generated in Annex I Parties by LULUCF activities that absorb carbon dioxide.

Sustainable development policies and measures (SD-PAMs)

SD-PAMs is an approach that suggests that developing countries themselves identify more sustainable development paths and commit to implementing these with financial support. It starts by considering a country's own long-term development objectives. Next, policies and measures are identified to make the development path more sustainable. Each country would define what it means by making development more sustainable, but when registering SD-PAMs, the international community would have to agree.

Secretariat

The office staffed by international civil servants responsible for "servicing" the UNFCCC Convention and ensuring its smooth operation. The secretariat makes arrangements for meetings, compiles and prepares reports, and coordinates with other relevant international bodies. The Climate Change Secretariat, which is based in Bonn, Germany, is institutionally linked to the United Nations.

Sectoral Approach

There are several different types of "sectoral approaches" but the common goal of sectoral approaches is to reduce emissions while avoiding competitiveness concerns across countries by applying the same rules for a particular sector, for example the power generation industry, to all countries. Terms related to the sectoral approach include:

- Sector-based crediting ("no-lose target") – Many have proposed GHG crediting on a sectoral basis: countries earn credits for reductions below an agreed sector-wide baseline.
- Sectoral ("policy-based") actions/commitments – Countries could agree internationally to individualized policies (i.e., SD-PAMs) in specific sectors. Actions/commitments could vary in form (e.g., efficiency standards, renewable energy targets, deforestation policies).
- Sectoral agreements – Countries could enter into agreements on actions/commitments in specific sectors, with the form varying by sector (e.g., performance standards, absolute or intensity targets, technology/finance mechanisms) and commitments differentiated.²

Shared Vision*

The focus of paragraph 1 (a) of the Bali Action Plan is for a "shared vision" for "long-term cooperative action" to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention which is to mitigate global warming.

Sink

Any process, activity or mechanism which removes a greenhouse gas, an aerosol or a precursor of a greenhouse gas from the atmosphere. Forests and other vegetation are considered sinks because they remove carbon dioxide through photosynthesis.

Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF)

The SCCF was established to finance projects relating to adaptation; technology transfer and capacity building; energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry and waste management; and economic diversification. This fund should complement other funding mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention. The Global Environment Facility (GEF), as the entity that operates the financial mechanism of the Convention, has been entrusted to operate this fund.

"Spill-over effects"

Reverberations in developing countries caused by actions taken by developed countries to cut greenhouse-gas emissions. For example, emissions reductions in developed countries could lower demand for oil and thus international oil prices, leading to more use of oil and greater emissions in developing nations, partially off-setting the original cuts. Current estimates are that full-scale implementation of the Kyoto Protocol may cause 5 to 20 per cent of emissions reductions in industrialized countries to "leak" into developing countries.

Submissions

Submissions refer to proposals or plans put forward by Parties to the UNFCCC process suggestions ways to deal with the various issues surrounding the talks.

Subsidiary body

A committee that assists the Conference of the Parties. Two permanent subsidiary bodies are created by the Convention: the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA).

Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI)

The SBI makes recommendations on policy and implementation issues to the COP and, if requested, to other bodies.

Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA)

The SBSTA serves as a link between information and assessments provided by expert sources (such as the IPCC) and the COP, which focuses on setting policy.

Sustainable development

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable Development Policies and Measures (SDPAMs)

SDPAMs are policies and measures that developing countries can implement to meet their own sustainable development goals more effectively, while creating significant benefits for the global climate.

Technology transfer

A broad set of processes covering the flows of know-how, experience and equipment for mitigating and adapting to climate change among different stakeholders

Umbrella group

A loose coalition of non-European Union developed countries formed following the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol. Although there is no formal membership list, the group usually includes Australia, Canada, Iceland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and the United States.

United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

The Division for Sustainable Development provides leadership and is a source of expertise within the United Nations system on sustainable development. It promotes sustainable development as the substantive secretariat to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and through technical cooperation and capacity building at international, regional and national levels.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP is the UN's global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. UNDP is in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

The UNEP works to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment amongst nations and peoples to improve quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

The UNFCCC secretariat supports all institutions involved in the climate change process, particularly the COP, the subsidiary bodies and their Bureau.

Voluntary commitments

A draft article considered during the negotiation of the Kyoto Protocol that would have permitted developing countries to voluntarily adhere to legally binding emissions targets. The proposed language was dropped in the final phase of the negotiations. The issue remains important for some delegations and may be discussed at upcoming sessions of the Conference of the Parties.

Vulnerability

The degree to which a system is susceptible to, or unable to cope with, adverse effects of climate change, including climate variability and extremes. Vulnerability is a function of the character, magnitude, and rate of climate variation to which a system is exposed, its sensitivity, and its adaptive capacity.

World Climate Conference (WCC)

Convened by the World Meteorological Organization, WMO, the First and Second World Climate Conferences¹ (1979 and 1990) alerted the world community to the need for a better understanding of climate systems, climate change and mitigation of its harmful effects and resulted in the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, respectively.³

World Health Organization. (WHO)

WHO is the directing and coordinating authority for health within the United Nations system. It is responsible for providing leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research agenda, setting norms and standards, articulating evidence-based policy options, providing technical support to countries and monitoring and assessing health trends.

World Trade Organization (WTO)

The WTO is an international organization that deals with the rules of trade between nations at a global or near-global level.

¹ <unfccc.int/essential_background/glossary/items/3666.php>

² <pewclimate.org/docUploads/Sectoral-Background.pdf>

³ <www.wmo.int/pages/world_climate_conference/index_en.html>