

UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CC (UNFCCC): AN OVERVIEW OF THE TREATY PROCESS

IS 5 is prepared by the NGO/CSW Subcommittee on Women & CC.

1988: An **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** was created by the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

1990: The IPCC issues a **first assessment report** stating that global warming is real and urging that something be done about it.

1992: Governments create the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

The Convention sets a framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle the challenge posed by climate change. It recognizes that the climate system is a shared resource whose stability can be affected by industrial and other emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. The Convention enjoys near universal membership, with 192 countries having ratified by 8/07.

1994 – 2008: The **Conference of the Parties (COP)**, an association of all the countries that are Parties to the Convention and its highest decision-making authority, meet on an annual basis.

The COP reviews the implementation of the Convention and examines the commitments of Parties in light of the Convention's objective, new scientific findings and experience gained in implementing climate change policies.

1997: The **Kyoto Protocol**, a second, more far-reaching international treaty on climate change, is adopted in Kyoto, Japan.

The Protocol sets binding targets for 37 industrialized countries and the European community for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These amount to an average of five per cent against 1990 levels over the five-year period 2008-2012. While the Convention **encouraged** industrialized countries to stabilize GHG emissions, the Protocol **commits** them to do so. It recognizes that developed countries are principally responsible for the current high levels of GHG emissions in the atmosphere as a result of more than 150 years of industrial activity. Therefore, it places a heavier burden on developed nations under the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities."

2001: The detailed rules for the implementation of the Protocol were adopted at COP 7 in Marrakesh in 2001, and are called the **Marrakesh Accords**.

2005: The **Kyoto Protocol entered into force** on 16 February 2005. 184 Parties of the Convention have ratified its Protocol to date.

2007 COP 13 Bali: Member countries agree to begin inclusive and binding negotiations on a **post-2012 framework for reducing GHG emissions**, with a view to completing those negotiations by 2009.

2008 COP 14 Poznan: Parties agree to complete **the first draft of a concrete negotiating text for Copenhagen** at the UNFCCC gathering in Bonn in June of 2009 to follow upon a meeting that will take place in Bonn in March.

2009 March & June meetings in Bonn: The Ad Hoc Working Group on further commitments for industrialized countries (i.e. Annex 1 countries) to the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long Term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) meet in Bonn (March & June) and later in Thailand to reach consensus on further commitments to quantified emission limitations and reductions on the part of Annex 1 countries, i.e. a follow-up to the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) *and* to addressing shared vision, adaptation, mitigation, technology and finance (AWG-LCA).

2009 COP 15 Copenhagen: The **Copenhagen Conference** will negotiate an effective and binding agreement on the reduction of carbon emissions by nation states so as to avoid further negative human induced effects on the climate systems for future generations. The agreement will take effect after 2012, when the Kyoto Protocol expires. For a new global agreement to be in place by the end of 2012, an agreement must be reached by 2009 at the latest to allow time for ratification and implementation.

Information sources

www.UNFCCC.int