



HARVARD PROJECT ON CLIMATE AGREEMENTS



The goal of the Harvard Project on Climate Agreements, which was established in 2007, is to help identify and advance scientifically sound, economically sensible, and politically pragmatic public policy options for addressing global climate change. Drawing upon leading thinkers in countries around the world (including Argentina, Australia, China, Europe, India, Japan, and the United States), the Project conducts research on policy architecture, key design elements, and institutional dimensions of international and domestic climate policy.

INTRODUCTION

The Twenty-First Conference of the Parties (COP-21) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in Paris in December 2015, adopted a major new international agreement to curb the greenhouse-gas emissions that are changing the Earth's climate. The Agreement also supports adaptation to climate change and advances other key functions of the new international climate regime.

The Paris Agreement represents a significant step of progress in global efforts to address climate change. Nearly all of the 195 national governments that are members of the UNFCCC submitted plans to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions—a level of participation far exceeding that of the Kyoto Protocol, which was the first major international climate-change agreement. The Paris Agreement also provides a pathway for member countries to increase the ambition of their mitigation plans over time.

The Paris Agreement will, for many important purposes, become effective in 2020. A great deal of work remains to be done before that time to define how the new regime will operate and how the Agreement will be implemented, if it is to fulfill its promise. The Harvard Project on Climate Agreements is engaging leading scholars and policy practitioners to identify and assess research-based options that might prove useful as the Paris Agreement is elaborated and then implemented.

For More Information: For research results, news of events and presentations, and other information, see the Project's website in the footer of this page. You may sign up there for email updates on the Project's research and events; see the instructions on the right side of the Project home page.

RESEARCH

As of October 2016, the Harvard Project on Climate Agreements had released 91 Discussion Papers, three edited books (published by Cambridge University Press), and a number of policy briefs, all written by leading scholars in the fields of economics, political science, international relations, and law. These documents are available at the Project's website. Examples of topics addressed by Project authors are:

- Options for international policy architectures and institutional venues for global climate change—including alternatives and complements to the UNFCCC (for example, separate aviation or trade agreements—and various types of climate policy clubs)
- Methods for comparing the ambition and effectiveness of heterogeneous mitigation pledges in a voluntary climate-policy regime
- Interaction between international, national, and sub-national climate policy
- Linkage among emissions trading systems—and among the disparate mitigation systems that will be characteristic of the new Paris regime

The Harvard Project has conducted research workshops in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Venice, Italy, Berlin, Germany, and Beijing, China—for Project authors and other scholars studying climate change policy. The Harvard Project has collaborated with leading research institutes focusing on environmental economics and policy: *Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei*, based in Venice and Milan; the Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change, in Berlin; the National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation in Beijing; and Resources for the Future, in Washington, D.C.

POLICY OUTREACH

The Project has conducted numerous roundtables and workshops bringing together researchers, policy makers, and stakeholders (advocates and leaders in business and non-governmental organizations), in Brussels, Washington, D.C., Canberra, Rome, London, Paris, Tokyo, Seoul, Mexico City, Beijing, and Doha. Summaries are available on the Project's website.

The Project has conducted policy-outreach meetings at the Thirteenth (Bali, Indonesia), Fourteenth (Poznan, Poland), Fifteenth (Copenhagen, Denmark), Sixteenth (Cancun, Mexico), Eighteenth (Doha, Qatar), Nineteenth (Warsaw, Poland), Twentieth (Lima, Peru), and Twenty-First (Paris, France) COPs. At the COPs—and at intermediate UNFCCC negotiating sessions—Harvard Project leaders have also held meetings with individual negotiating teams from over 50 countries. At all of these meetings, the Project receives valuable insights, suggestions, and feedback with regard to international climate change policy.

ABOUT THE PROJECT'S DIRECTOR

Robert Stavins is the Albert Pratt Professor of Business and Government and Director of the Harvard Environmental Economics Program, as well as a University Fellow of Resources for the Future and a Research Associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research. He has been a Coordinating Lead Author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and Chair of the U.S. EPA's Environmental Economics Advisory Committee. His research has examined climate strategies, cap-and-trade and pollution tax systems, carbon sequestration, and technology innovation and diffusion.

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