



HARVARD PROJECT ON CLIMATE AGREEMENTS



The goal of the Harvard Project on Climate Agreements, which was established in 2007, is to identify and advance scientifically sound, economically sensible, and politically pragmatic public policy options for addressing global climate change. Drawing upon leading thinkers from around the world, the Project conducts research on policy architecture, key design elements, and institutional dimensions of international and domestic climate-change 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 reduce the greenhouse-gas emissions that are changing the Earth's climate. Nearly all of the 196 national governments that are members of the UNFCCC submitted plans, under the Paris Agreement, 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 most 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 for email updates on the Project's research and events by selecting "Environment & Climate Change" on the subscribe page.

OUR RESEARCH

As of October 2017, the Harvard Project on Climate Agreements had released almost 100 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 on the Project's website: www.hks.harvard.edu/hpca. 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 climate policy clubs)
- Methods for comparing the ambition and effectiveness of the heterogeneous mitigation systems that will be characteristic of the new Paris regime
- Linkage among emissions trading systems — and among heterogeneous mitigation systems
- Interaction between international, national, and sub-national climate policy

The Harvard Project has conducted research workshops in Cambridge, Massachusetts; Venice, Italy; Berlin, Germany; and Beijing and Shanghai, 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

In addition to its research workshops, the Harvard Project has conducted numerous roundtables 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), Twenty-First (Paris, France), Twenty-Second (Marrakech, Morocco), and Twenty-Third (Bonn, Germany) 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 A. J. Meyer Professor of Energy and Economic Development at Harvard Kennedy School 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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