

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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The United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP21 or CMP11 was held in Paris, from 30th November to 12th December 2015. It was the 21st yearly session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 11th session of the Meeting of the Parties to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.

A significant outcome of the Conference was the adoption of the Paris Agreement, a global agreement on the reduction of climate change representing a consensus of the representatives of the 196 attending parties.

According to the organizing committee at the outset of the talks, the expected key result was an agreement to set the goal of limiting global warming to less than 2 degree Celsius (°C, 3-6°F) compared to the pre-industrial levels. The agreement calls for zero net anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions to be reached during the second half of the 21st century.

According to the adopted version of the Paris Agreement, the parties set out to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C. This goal will require zero emissions sometimes between 2030-2050, according to certain scientists.

The Paris Agreement has 29 articles and the aim of the Convention is stipulated in Article 2 as “enhancing the implementation of the UNFCCC through:

- a) Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change;
- b) Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production;
- c) Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate resilient development.

In this respect, a 100 billion dollar fund was set up in order to support developing countries, as of the year 2021. Likewise, the participants emphasized that the world needs a new pattern of growth, a steady, sustainable and beneficial one, for all actors involved.

The US and China will play an essential role in undertaking to reduce carbon pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. The only way to do this is with a mix of technologies including nuclear and renewable.

Education for Sustainable Development was placed firmly on the COP21 map. The implementation of the agreement by all member countries together will be evaluated every five years as of 2023. The outcome is to be used as input for new nationally determined contributions of member states. The stocktaking will not consider the contributions of individual countries, instead it will represent a collective analysis of achievements and further goals to be accomplished.

The US President, Barack Obama, considered the Climate Agreement “the best chance we have to save the one planet we`ve got.”