

Parliamentary action plan on climate change



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Cover photo: Children in Tokyo, Japan touch an electronic globe to learn about the predicted rise in sea levels caused by global warming. © AFP/Toru Yamanaka, 2015

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Scaling up climate action by Parliaments and the IPU

Endorsed by the IPU Governing Council at its 198th session (Lusaka, 23 March 2016)

Abbreviations and basic definitions

- Adaptation - Adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects
- C40 – Cities Climate Leadership Group
- CO₂e – Carbon Dioxide equivalent
- COP – Conference of the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- GCF – Green Climate Fund
- GEF – Global Environment Facility
- GLOBE – Global Legislators’ Organization for a Balanced Environment
- Gt – Gigatonne
- ICLEI – Local Governments For Sustainability
- IIED – International Institute for Environment and Development
- IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- MOP – Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol
- Mitigation - Initiatives to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases
- NDC – Nationally Determined Contribution
- NGO – Non-governmental organization
- PAM – Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean
- R20 – Regions 20
- REDD+ - Mitigation measures related to “Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD)” that also include conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks, thus REDD+
- SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals
- UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
- UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme
- UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- UNISDR – United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
- WMO – World Meteorological Organization

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Introduction

The threat

Climate change is one of the greatest threats to global prosperity and development. Due to human emissions of greenhouse gases, the international community is on a warming trajectory that will leave the world irrevocably changed. Such a pathway risks unmanageable sea-level rise and a vastly different climate, including devastating heat waves, persistent droughts and unprecedented floods. The foundations of human societies, including food and health security, infrastructure, and ecosystem integrity, would be in jeopardy; the most immediate impact would be on the poor and vulnerable.

A child sits in an area severely affected by drought in the capital of Honduras, Tegucigalpa. *El Nino*, a weather phenomenon that occurs because of warm ocean currents, is becoming more severe as the effects of climate change increase. It is causing the worst drought in decades in Central America. © AFP/Orlando Sierra, 2016

The international response

As parliamentarians from around the world, we reaffirm the urgent need to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions in order to limit global average temperature rise to well below 2° Celsius from pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels, recognising that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change¹. The response to that need is based on the new international instrument, known as the Paris Agreement, supplemented by national legislation, policies and regulation combined with regional and subnational action. The United Nations Framework on Climate Change (UNFCCC), under whose auspices the Paris Agreement was adopted, is one of three interlinked international processes to have adopted significant decisions in 2015, all of which, to be effective, must be complementary and mutually reinforcing.

1 See COP Decision FCCC/CP/2015/L.9 Annex ("The Paris Agreement"), Article 2.

"It is important [...] to encourage parliamentarians to support the implementation of disaster risk reduction by developing new or amending relevant legislation and setting budget allocations." [...] "The Inter-Parliamentary Union and other relevant regional bodies and mechanisms for parliamentarians, as appropriate, [should] continue supporting and advocating disaster risk reduction and the strengthening of national legal frameworks."


*Sendai Framework for
Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 - 2030*

First, in March, the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction for 2015-2030. It calls on the IPU and other organizations

to continue to support and advocate for the strengthening of relevant national legal frameworks.

Second, in September, Heads of State and Government meeting in New York adopted the United Nations General Assembly resolution “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which included a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to succeed the Millennium Development Goals and specifically recognized the essential role of parliaments in their realization.

Finally, in December, the 21st Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP21) and the 11th Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP11) adopted a new universal carbon- emissions cutting regime, – The Paris Agreement- to be applied from 2020 onwards.



“We acknowledge also the essential role of national parliaments through their enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets and their role in ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of our commitments.”

Outcome document of the UN Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda

The role of legislators

To be credible, effective and legally enforceable, these international agreements must be transposed into national legislation, supported by appropriate budget allocation and robust oversight of government performance. This puts parliaments at the heart of the response to climate change.

Parliaments are not only well placed to scrutinize how governments are responding to national and international climate change issues, but can also hold their executives to account over their actions, or lack thereof. Furthermore, parliamentarians bridge the gap between constituents, governments and decisions made at the global level.

National legislation and international agreements are mutually reinforcing. Ahead of the 2015 Paris climate change negotiations, national legislation helped to create the conditions for a more ambitious international



Protestors, during the United Nations conference on climate change in Paris in 2015, made their opinions clear that it was time to take serious action to curb emissions of the greenhouse gases that threaten to wreak havoc on the earth's climate.
© Anadolu Agency/AFP/Mustafa Yalcin, 2015

agreement by demonstrating what was possible. After 2015, national laws are required to maximize effective implementation of the commitments and contributions made by governments in Paris.

Well-informed climate legislation can bring significant national and local co-benefits, including strengthened energy security, improved health, reduced disaster risk, increased access to sustainable energy, investment in clean and domestic energy sources, the creation of high-quality jobs and better air quality.

As parliaments consider the legislative response to the Paris Agreement, there is much experience on which to draw. *The 2015 Global Climate Legislation Study*² covered 98 countries and the EU, which are

2 Nachmany et al, 2015, "The 2015 Global Climate Legislation Study – A Review of Climate Change Legislation in 99 countries"

together responsible for 93% of global greenhouse gas emissions. The Study showed that there were 804 climate change-related laws and policies at the end of 2014. This total has risen from only 54 laws and policies in 1997, and 426 in 2009 when the Copenhagen Accord was agreed. Fifty-eight countries have "framework legislation"³, encouraging a strategic approach to climate policy. Importantly, studies show that climate legislation is politically neutral; there is no difference between left-wing and right-wing

3 "Framework Legislation" is defined as "a law or regulation with equivalent status, which serves as a comprehensive, unifying basis for climate change policy, which addresses multiple aspects or areas of climate change mitigation or adaptation (or both) in a holistic, overarching manner."

governments in terms of their inclination to pass climate legislation⁴.

Despite this legislative progress, there remains a large gap between the current cumulative level of ambition and the necessary commitments to ensure the 2°C limit is not breached.

As the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) *Emissions Gap Report 2015*⁵ states, “The emissions gap between what the full implementation of the unconditional INDCs contribute and the least-cost emission level for a pathway to stay below 2°C,

is estimated to be 14 GtCO₂ e (range: 12-17) in 2030 and 7 GtCO₂ e (range: 5-10) in 2025. When conditional INDCs are included as fully implemented, the emissions gap in 2030 is estimated to be 12 GtCO₂ e (range: 10-15) and 5 GtCO₂ e (range: 4-8) in 2025.” Clearly, to reach the target of 1.5° Celsius, the gap is wider.

There are also gaps in the adaptation response. The *2014 UNEP Adaptation Gap Report*⁶ states: “The adaptation gap can be defined generically as the difference between actually implemented adaptation and a societally set goal, determined largely by preferences related to tolerated climate change impacts, and reflecting resource limitations and competing priorities.” Finance, technology and knowledge are three key determinants for realizing

4 Fankhauser et al, 2014, “Domestic dynamics and international influence: What explains the passage of climate change legislation?”. See URL: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/GranthamInstitute/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Wp156-Domestic-dynamics-and-international-influence-what-explains-the-passage-of-climate-change-legislation.pdf>

5 UNEP 2015. The Emissions Gap Report 2015. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi

6 UNEP 2014. The Adaptation Gap Report 2014. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi

adaptation potential, making it possible to reduce risks and impacts in the short and long term. All three determinants are not yet sufficiently available.

The gaps in the international response to climate change are why this Action Plan is so important. Parliamentarians must be empowered to translate climate issues from the local to the national and international levels and vice versa.

The action plan

This *Parliamentary action plan on climate change* focuses on parliaments' role in strengthening the international response to climate change. The Plan should be viewed in the context of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, specifically targets (a) to (d), and the SDGs, and every effort should be made to ensure the legislative responses to the three United Nations processes are consistent and mutually reinforcing.

The action plan has been designed to:

- Guide parliamentarians and parliaments (including their reporting structures and systems) as they respond to the Paris Agreement to ensure that the legislative response to climate change is both nationally appropriate and consistent with the aims of the UNFCCC;

- Illustrate and communicate the broad progress that has been made and make accessible the deep experience already available;
- Suggest and develop mechanisms for effective oversight of government;
- Recommend methods of engagement to strengthen links between the executive and legislative branches of government and between parliaments and civil society on the climate change agenda.

The action plan identifies four key action areas for legislators and four for the IPU, and makes recommendations about their delivery.

Climate change refugees struggle to survive in Bangladesh's capital city, Dhaka. As extreme weather, floods and drought force them to flee their homes, the only solution for most people is to move to the capital. © Nur Photo/AFP/Jonathan Raa, 2013



Expected outcomes

- By end of 2016: A comprehensive review of the existing national legislative response in each member country to climate change, in order to assess its consistency with the Paris Agreement and the related goals of the Sendai Agreement and SDGs. That review should include an institutional mapping and effectiveness assessment.
- By end of 2017: Where appropriate, parliaments should put forward amendments to existing legislation and develop new legislation, to ensure that their legislative base is nationally appropriate and consistent with the Paris Agreement.
- By end of 2017: Implementation of robust mechanisms to monitor performance of governments towards delivery of their national and international obligations.
- By end of 2017: Introduction of mechanisms to strengthen links between the executive and legislative branches of government.
- By end of June 2018: Ratification, acceptance, approval or accession of the Paris Agreement, as appropriate.

Key action areas for legislators and the IPU

For legislators

Action area 1 Ensuring all efforts and measures are taken to establish a national legislative response to climate change that is consistent with national climate goals and the Paris Agreement. On mitigation, this means legislation must be in line with the aim of limiting global average temperature rise to well below 2° Celsius above pre- industrial levels; and on adaptation, minimizing and managing national climate risk through existing or new tools and mechanisms, including risk assessment and modelling, national disaster loss databases and early warning systems.

Action area 2 Accelerating the ratification and implementation of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol and promoting rapid ratification, acceptance, approval or accession of the Paris Agreement by the end of June 2018 at the latest.



Chinese students wear masks against heavy smog in Jinan City, in east China. China pledged to reduce toxic emissions from coal-burning factories during the COP21 Climate Conference in Paris. © Imagine China/AFP/ Chen Ning, 2015

Action area 3 Strengthening oversight of national and international commitments, including government implementation of national legislation and enhancing transparency and accountability of climate action and reporting.

Action area 4 Improving consistency and complementarity between national climate legislation and other societal goals, including poverty reduction, disaster risk reduction, improving access to energy, gender equality and protecting ecosystems.

For the IPU

Action area 1 Raising awareness of climate change among parliamentarians and building cross-party support for addressing national climate risk.

Action area 2 Promoting and facilitating the showcasing of good practice on legislation and oversight.

Action area 3 Strengthening the link between legislators and the United Nations, including facilitating greater interaction between legislators and senior officials from UN processes and championing greater access to UN negotiations for legislators.

Action area 4 Supporting stronger links between legislators and relevant civil society organisations.

Action areas for legislators in detail

Action area 1 Ensuring all efforts and measures are taken to establish a national legislative response to climate change that is consistent with national climate goals and the Paris Agreement. On mitigation, this means legislation must be in line with the aim of limiting global average temperature rise to well below 2° Celsius from pre-industrial levels; and on adaptation, minimizing and managing national climate risk through existing or new tools and mechanisms, including risk assessment and modelling, national disaster loss databases and early warning systems.

There is no 'one size fits all' approach. Legislation must be nationally appropriate and take into account factors such as economic structure, stage of development, exposure to climate risk, legislative culture, public opinion and political leadership. As well as setting the framework for national policies and measures, legislation should also be used to stimulate subnational action.

Recommendations on process

- 1 Detailed audit of existing climate-related legislation to understand the current legislative base and to identify gaps;
- 2 Where appropriate, make amendments to existing legislation to ensure consistency with climate goals, including NDCs, the Sendai Framework and SDGs, and terminology;
- 3 Consider whether new legislation is needed.

Recommendations on the content of national legislation

An effective legislative response to climate change consists of several layers:

- 1 Information: the basis for decision making;
- 2 Targets: setting the trajectory towards a long-term goal;
- 3 Policies: developing robust policies and measures to implement the targets, addressing country-specific challenges and stimulating subnational action;
- 4 Institutional arrangements: facilitating the formulation, delegation and oversight of implementation; and
- 5 Finance: enabling implementation of policies to meet the targets and fulfilling international obligations on climate finance, where appropriate.

Information

This basic layer is the foundation that informs targets and policies. It should be updated regularly and systematically, and be based on international accounting standards.

- Mitigation: a greenhouse gas inventory, supported and maintained by compulsory, timely, systematic reporting of greenhouse gas emissions from all sectors;
- Adaptation: national disaster loss data and a periodic national risk assessment, for consideration of measures needed to adapt to climate-related risks.

Targets

Targets should be defined for the long term, and supported by short- and medium-term goals. It is important to set a long-term trajectory and to send a political signal that the economy will be transforming from high carbon to low carbon and managing climate risk. The combination of a long- term target with short- and medium-term targets creates credibility and minimises investor risk.

- Compulsory greenhouse gas emission reduction targets should be set following explicit debate regarding their impact on affordability and competitiveness;
- Sectoral targets should be explored (e.g. energy intensity, renewable energy, energy efficiency, access

to energy, transportation, deforestation rate and emissions from agriculture);

- Following explicit debate on acceptable tolerance of risk and target reductions in vulnerability and exposure, a national adaptation plan should be formulated.

Policies

Policies can be set in a single framework law, or in a group of laws, regulations, decrees or binding plans, depending on the legislative culture in each country.

Mitigation policies – to reduce and limit emissions of greenhouse gases

- Pricing carbon (and other greenhouse gases): a uniform carbon price across all sectors is the

most cost-effective way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. That can be achieved either by taxation or by a trading scheme;

- Measures to promote innovation and deployment of efficient low-carbon technologies:
 - Economic measures to encourage deployment of existing low-carbon technologies, such as renewable energy subsidies (e.g. feed-in tariffs); differentiated vehicle taxation;
 - R&D support: promoting research and development of new low-carbon technologies;
- Measures to overcome barriers to efficiency: including spatial planning, energy efficiency standards in building regulations and appliances;
- Measures to tackle greenhouse gas emissions from land use: including the Reduced Emissions from

Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) scheme and changes in agricultural practice;

- Measures to support structural change: including re-training schemes for workers, temporary compensation schemes for carbon-intensive industries and education.

Adaptation policies to reduce the risks and damages of climate change

- Costing risk: a requirement to include disaster risk considerations and measures in decisions concerning public and private investments;
- Policies on climate-sensitive public goods: for example, reinforcement of coastal defences; natural resources and ecosystems protection; investment in adaptation- specific infrastructure (e.g. flood control); and research (e.g. on crops and medicines);

- Social protection: supporting vulnerable communities with health, food, education, shelter, public work programmes, risk insurance and emergency services to empower these communities to increase their resilience; and measures to protect and support “environmental refugees” displaced from their homes by extreme weather events, including across borders;
- Removing barriers to adaptation: for example, investment in data, information and early-warning information distribution and sharing systems; addressing market imperfections, for example constraints to insurance schemes; and working with private sector organisations to incentivise and de-risk adaptation activities.
- Creating incentives to adaptation: including spatial planning (e.g. avoiding building in risk-prone areas); building codes to ensure more durable buildings; and water pricing.



Residents of Mukuru Kwa Njega slum waded through water following heavy rainfall in Nairobi, Kenya. The 2015 *El Nino* in Kenya was the most severe in 15 years. © AFP PHOTO / Simon Maina, 2015

Institutional arrangements

The following institutional arrangements are important in facilitating the development, and implementation oversight of policy and legislation:

- Forming and/or maintaining an independent expert, apolitical advisory board responsible for providing transparent advice to government on the policies and measures needed to meet the mitigation and adaptation targets set out in the legislation, and requiring a formal public response by the government;
- Delegation of responsibilities to the relevant authorities, taking an inter-ministerial and multilevel approach as appropriate. For example, while energy production issues are likely to be dealt with by a central authority, many adaptation issues are likely to be localised and should be delegated to the relevant local authorities;
- Parliamentary oversight: a requirement for the minister/s responsible for climate change to report to parliament, at least annually, on the progress of the government towards the targets in the legislation and commitments under the Paris Agreement, including in relation to climate finance, and for a full parliamentary debate;
- Including in legislation clear provisions for enforcement and monitoring;
- Ensuring interaction between legislation and relevant policy to ensure consistency and to avoid conflicting signals or incentives.

Finance

Securing sufficient funding for effective implementation can be aided by:

- Establishing processes for efficiently accessing international climate funds (e.g. GEF, GCF);
- Ensuring adequate funding in national budgets to implement climate change policies;
- Creating national development institutions or banks and enabling public-private partnerships to channel investment into relevant climate initiatives;
- Developed countries must ensure that they fulfil their commitments to jointly provide USD 100 billion annually by 2020 to developing countries for mitigation and adaptation.

Action area 2 Accelerating the ratification and implementation of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol and promoting rapid ratification, acceptance, approval or accession of the Paris Agreement by the end of June 2018 at the latest.

As legislators, we recognize our responsibility to support and encourage our parliaments to ratify, as soon as possible, the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol and to ratify, accept, approve or accede the Paris Agreement as soon as possible and no later than the end of June 2018 so as to ensure that the Agreement enters into force (Article 21.1 of the Paris Agreement states that the Agreement shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the

date on which at least 55 Parties to the Convention accounting for at least an estimated 55 per cent of the total greenhouse gas emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the United Nations Headquarters in New York).

For those parliaments where ratification, acceptance, approval or accession is slow or delayed, parliamentarians should:

- Identify the reasons: for example lack of political will, administrative red tape and/or technical capacity issues, such as difficulties in drafting or implementing legislation and a lack of trained personnel to deal with ratification or accession issues; and
- Develop national policies and strategies aimed at addressing these issues and renewing a national commitment to respect and implement international obligations enshrined in the Kyoto Protocol and Paris

Agreement by adopting the necessary legislative and administrative measures to operationalize at the national level the agreements made in Kyoto and Paris.

Action area 3 Strengthening oversight of national and international commitments, including government implementation of national legislation and enhancing transparency and accountability of climate action and reporting.

As parliamentarians, we accept the responsibility to oversee the performance of our governments in implementing national and international climate-related commitments and domestic legislation. We commit to supporting the inclusion of robust accountability measures and transparency into national climate change legislation and to use the full range of parliamentary procedures available, including maximizing the effectiveness of Select Committees, to ensure our governments are fulfilling their obligations.

In particular, we commit to:

- Requiring the minister/s responsible for climate change and disaster risk reduction to report to parliament, at least annually, on the progress of the government towards the targets in national legislation and their international obligations, and for a full parliamentary debate;
- Holding regular meetings between cross-party groups of legislators and the minister responsible for climate change to discuss, inter alia, national positions ahead of the United Nations negotiations and, post-negotiations, to discuss outcomes and implications for national legislation and policy;

- Ensuring clear legislative provision for enforcement and monitoring, using the full suite of parliamentary procedures available;
- Ensuring public debate on the setting and periodic review of national targets on climate mitigation, adaptation and risk reduction;
- Fostering greater interaction between legislation and relevant policy to ensure consistency and to avoid conflicting signals or incentives.

Action area 4 Improving consistency and complementarity between national climate legislation and other societal goals, including poverty reduction, disaster risk reduction, improving access to energy, gender equality and protecting ecosystems.

Climate change presents both threats to, and opportunities for, sustainable development. It is vital to ensure that climate change legislation and policies are consistent with, and mutually reinforcing of, legislation and policies to advance other societal goals including poverty reduction, disaster risk reduction, access to energy and gender equality.

We commit to:

- A review of existing relevant climate legislation and policies to ensure that other societal goals, in particular, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the SDGs and the IPU Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments, are appropriately reflected;
- Take into consideration these societal goals when further developing the legislative response to climate change;

Action areas for the IPU in detail

Action area 1 Raising awareness of climate change among parliamentarians and building cross-party support for addressing national climate risk.

There is an important role for the IPU in raising awareness of, and encouraging action on, climate change among parliamentarians from all parts of the political spectrum. This includes not only those legislators with direct responsibility for, or a natural interest in, climate change but also those with responsibilities related to critical elements of effective climate policies and legislation, including finance, energy, transport, health and disaster risk management.



An agreement between IPU and Arnold Schwarzenegger's R20 Regions of Climate Action will work to strengthen the parliamentary response to climate change. © French National Assembly, 2015

The IPU commits to:

- Ensuring that climate change, in particular the response to the Paris Agreement and oversight of government commitments, is a prominent element in IPU activities and events in 2016 and beyond, including not only events and activities dedicated to climate change but also those relating to other relevant areas including finance, energy, transport, health, sustainable development and disaster risk management;
- Promoting the development of, and supporting national cross-party groups and suitable institutional architectures related to climate change (for example national committee structures) and to interaction with regional and international parliaments and parliamentary groups;
- Capacity building of parliamentarians and the parliamentary services so that a long- term perspective on climate change is adopted, irrespective of the current parliamentary structure or any subsequent changes heralded by a potential change of government.

Action area 2 Promoting and facilitating the showcasing of good practice on legislation and oversight.

The IPU is as an unrivalled platform for parliamentary cooperation and its members have rich and valuable experience of designing, passing and monitoring the implementation of climate-related legislation.

Drawing on this experience, the IPU commits to:

- Develop case studies, from both developed and developing countries, showcasing good practice in climate legislation (covering mitigation, adaptation and oversight of governments), for promotion at IPU events, dissemination to members and for use by legislators in their national parliaments;
- Initiate bilateral, regional and international parliament-to-parliament engagement to facilitate the sharing of good practice.

Action area 3 Strengthening the link between legislators and the United Nations, including facilitating greater interaction between legislators and senior officials from UN processes and championing greater access to UN negotiations for legislators.

Given parliaments' central role in the national and international responses to climate change, there is much value in strengthening links between the UNFCCC process and parliamentarians.

The IPU commits to:

- Promote and facilitate greater interaction between parliaments and senior officials from United Nations processes, including before, during and after the UNFCCC negotiating sessions;
- Champion greater and more consistent access to UN negotiations for parliamentarians, in particular for those with a formal responsibility for oversight on climate change; that will enable legislators to fulfill their oversight role more effectively;
- Hold parliamentary events in conjunction with annual COP/CMP sessions with a view to providing parliamentarians with first-hand information on the main issues and approaches of intergovernmental sessions and facilitating interaction with government negotiators participating in the UNFCCC process.

Action area 4 Supporting stronger links between legislators and relevant civil society organisations.

Policy and legislation on climate change is stronger and more effective if it takes into consideration the views and experience of relevant civil society organizations.

The IPU commits to:

- Encourage and facilitate stronger links between parliamentarians and relevant civil society organisations on climate change and sustainable development, including environment and development NGOs, academics, youth groups, business groups and industry associations, trade unions and think-tanks; that will help to ensure civil society representation at relevant IPU events and promote the participation of parliamentarians in relevant civil society events;
- Through international, regional and national events, provide a platform for interaction between parliamentarians and the most appropriate scientific, economic, civil society and public and private sector experts.



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Partnerships and advocacy coalitions

The efforts of parliamentarians and the IPU in promoting greater involvement and ambition on climate change and sustainable development can be multiplied if they work in partnership with organisations that have similar or overlapping interests.

Parliamentarians are the link between the local level and national policy and legislation. There are many impressive examples of climate action at the local and subnational levels, including from local governments, cities and regions. Parliamentarians have a role in identifying and highlighting good practice at the local level in order to inform national policies and legislation and to promote such good practice internationally through the IPU.

French Foreign Affairs Minister and President of COP21 Laurent Fabius, raises hands with Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon and France's President Francois Hollande after adoption of a historic global warming pact at the Climate Conference in Paris. © Citizenside/AFP/Jonathan Raa, 2015

It is vital, therefore, that the IPU and its members proactively seek partnerships and structured dialogue with a range of actors. The IPU and its members commit to identifying new partnerships and strengthening existing collaboration with relevant organizations at the subnational, national and supra-national levels and with business and civil society.

Parliamentary organizations, networks and structures

The IPU is devoted to working closely with its traditional and new partners from among global and regional parliamentary organizations, networks and structures which focus on environmental and climate change issues, including but not exclusively:

- **IPU Associate Members and permanent observers** (Andean Parliament, Assemblée

parlementaire de la Francophonie, European Parliament, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, etc.);

- **Parliamentary networks** (GLOBE International, Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and IMF, Climate Parliament, etc.).

Intergovernmental and other organizations and structures

The IPU will continue its close and mutually beneficial cooperation with intergovernmental organizations and agencies that lead the way in global efforts to provide sustainable development and combat climate change. Particular attention will be devoted to working with:

- The Secretariat of the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC) as

the driving force behind global climate change negotiations and the organizer of COP/CMP sessions, in which the IPU enjoys observer status in the category of intergovernmental organizations;

- The **United Nations Environment Programme** (UNEP) as the leading global environmental authority that sets the agenda and promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the UN system and beyond, including in the world parliamentary community;
- **World Meteorological Organization** (WMO) as the UN system's authoritative voice on the state and behavior of the Earth's atmosphere, its interaction with the oceans, the climate it produces and the resulting distribution of water resources;

- The **United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction** (UNISDR) as the focal point for the coordination of disaster reduction activities both within and outside the UN system and as the implementing agency of the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, with its special provisions relating to parliaments;
- The **United Nations Development Programme** (UNDP) as the leading UN agency helping countries to meet their development aspirations and to develop policies, institutional capabilities and partnering abilities, including through multifaceted support to national legislative institutions;
- The **International Renewable Energy Agency** (IRENA) as an intergovernmental organization supporting countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future and serving as a centre of excellence and a repository of policy,

technology, resource and financial knowledge on renewable energy;

- The **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** (IFRC) as the world's largest humanitarian network that helps reduce vulnerabilities, strengthen resilience and foster a culture of peace around the world by improving humanitarian standards, working as partners in development, responding to disasters, and supporting healthier and safer communities.

Local and subnational governments and authorities

National legislators, subnational governments and local authorities share the responsibility for providing adequate regulatory responses to the challenge of climate change. The IPU will step up its cooperation with:

- **ICLEI: Local Governments for Sustainability** as the world's leading association of over 1,000 metropolises, cities, and urban regions dedicated to promoting global sustainability through local action, and an IPU partner in organizing various side events at UNFCCC meetings;
- **R20: Regions of Climate Action** as a worldwide coalition of actors focused on green economic development at the subnational level, bringing together public and private partners, including legislators, with a view to converging green policies, technology and finance;
- **C40** as a network of the world's megacities committed to addressing climate change through effective collaboration, sharing knowledge and driving meaningful, measurable and sustainable climate action.

Climate science and research institutions

In the domain of climate change, policy makers particularly depend on information and advice provided by climate science bodies. The IPU intends to broaden the scope of its cooperation with such institutions as:

- **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change** (IPCC) as the leading international body for the assessment of climate change, established by UNEP and WMO, with a view to providing policy makers, including legislators, with a scientific view on the current state of knowledge in climate change and its potential environmental and socio-economic impacts;
- **The Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment** (London School of Economics and Political Science) as a world-leading centre for policy-relevant research and training on

climate change and the environment, renowned for work such as the ground-breaking *Global Climate Legislation Study*;

- **International Institute for Environment and Development** (IIED) as one of the world's most influential international development and environmental policy research organizations, which builds bridges between policy and practice, including through assisting parliamentarians in their work;
- **Earth League** as an international alliance of prominent scientists from world-class research institutions, who work together to respond to pressing issues linked with climate change, depletion of natural resources, land degradation and water scarcity;
- **Environmental Law Centre** of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as a body

assisting decision-makers with information, legal analysis, advisory services, legislative drafting, mentoring and capacity building at national, regional and global levels.

Private sector organisations

The role of the private sector, in particular through public-private partnerships, is critical in tackling climate change. Effective legislation will reflect an understanding of the regulatory frameworks required to stimulate private sector investment to accelerate the transition to a low carbon economy. The IPU is therefore committed to strengthening existing and building new links with key private sector organisations including the:

- **World Economic Forum** (WEF), the International Organization for Public-Private Cooperation. The Forum engages the foremost political, business and

other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

- **World Business Council for Sustainable Development** (WBCSD), a CEO-led organization of forward-thinking companies that galvanizes the global business community to create a sustainable future for business, society and the environment.
- **Global Sustainable Electricity Partnership** (GSEP), a not-for-profit organisation, whose members are the world's leading electricity companies, which promotes sustainable energy development through electricity sector projects and human capacity building activities in developing and emerging nations worldwide.

The use of petroleum in the production of plastics is one of the leading contributors to fossil fuel emissions, a major cause of climate change. © AFP/Fred Dufour, 2015





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