

Glossary and Abbreviations

Annex I Parties. The industrialized and transitioning countries listed in this Annex to the Climate Convention. These countries accepted emission targets for the period 2008 to 2012 in Annex B of the Kyoto Protocol.

Annex II Parties. The wealthy countries listed in this Annex to the Climate Convention that have a special obligation to help developing countries with financial and technological resources. They include the 24 original members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) plus the European Union.

Annex B. An Annex to the Kyoto Protocol that lists agreed emission targets taken by the industrialized and transitioning countries for the so-called first commitment period, which runs from 2008 to 2012.

AOSIS. Alliance of Small Island States. An ad hoc coalition of 42 low-lying and island countries that are particularly vulnerable to sea-level rise and share common positions on climate change.

BAU. Business as usual. A scenario that represents the most plausible projection of the future. BAU embodies the notion of what would happen, hypothetically, if climate-friendly actions were not taken.

Berlin Mandate. An agreement reached in 1995 in Berlin, Germany, at the first Conference of the Parties to the Climate Convention, in which the industrialized countries first agreed to take on targets and timetables for quantified reductions and limitations on greenhouse gas emissions.

Capacity Building. Increasing skilled personnel and technical and institutional abilities.

CDF. Clean Development Fund. An element of the original Brazilian Proposal that was adapted to become the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol.

CDM. Clean Development Mechanism. A project-based emissions trading system under the Kyoto Protocol that allows industrialized countries to use emission reduction credits from projects in developing countries that both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable development.

Climate Convention. See UNFCCC.

COP. Conference of the Parties to the Climate Convention. The supreme body of the Convention. It currently meets once a year to review the Convention's progress. The word "conference" is not used here in the sense of "meeting" but rather of "association," which explains the seemingly redundant expression "fourth session of the Conference of the Parties."

COP/MOP. Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol's supreme body, which will serve as the Protocol's meeting of the Parties. The sessions of the COP and the COP/MOP will be held during the same period. This will improve cost-effectiveness and coordination with the Convention.

CO₂. Carbon dioxide, a naturally occurring gas. It is also a by-product of burning fossil fuels and biomass and other industrial processes as well as land use changes. CO₂ is the principal anthropogenic greenhouse gas affecting the Earth's temperature.

EIT. Economy in transition. EITs typically include the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (e.g., Poland), the former Soviet Union (e.g., Russia), and Central Asian Republics (e.g., Kazakhstan).

EU. European Union. Includes 15 member states.

GDP. Gross domestic product. The total value of goods and services produced by an economy.

GEF. Global Environment Facility. The designated financial mechanism for international agreements on biodiversity, climate change (i.e., the UNFCCC), and persistent organic pollutants. Established in 1991, the GEF helps developing countries fund projects and programs that protect the global environment.

Global Warming Potential (GWP). An index that allows for comparison of the various greenhouse gases. It is the radiative forcing that results from the addition of 1 kilogram of a gas to the atmosphere compared to an equal mass of carbon dioxide. Over 100 years, methane has a GWP of 21 and nitrous oxide of 310.

Greenhouse Effect. The effect produced as greenhouse gases allow incoming solar radiation to pass through the Earth's atmosphere but prevent most of the outgoing long-wave infrared radiation from the surface and lower atmosphere from escaping into outer space. This envelope of heat-trapping gases keeps the Earth about 30° C warmer than if these gases did not exist.

GHG. Greenhouse gas. Any gas that absorbs and re-emits infrared radiation into the atmosphere. The main greenhouse gases include water vapor (H₂O), carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and nitrous oxide (N₂O).

G-77. Group of 77. Founded in 1967 under the auspices of the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD); seeks to harmonize the negotiating positions of its 133 developing-country members.

Hot Air. A term developed by the nongovernmental community to describe the gap between a country's emissions target agreed to under the Kyoto Protocol and its actual emissions, when its emissions have been reduced due to reasons unrelated to climate change mitigation. The changes in the economies of reunified Germany, Russia, and other economies in transition, for example, have resulted in emission trajectories that are below their Kyoto targets.

IMF. International Monetary Fund. An international organization of 184 member countries established to promote international monetary cooperation and foster economic growth.

IPCC. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. An organization established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme. It conducts rigorous surveys of the worldwide technical and scientific literature and publishes assessment reports widely recognized as the most credible existing sources on climate change.

JI. Joint implementation. The mechanism established by the Kyoto Protocol whereby an Annex I country can receive "emissions reductions units" when it helps to finance projects that reduce net emissions in another Annex I country.

Kyoto Protocol. An international agreement adopted by all Parties to the Climate Convention in Kyoto, Japan, in December 1997.

LDC. Least developed country. A category of countries (currently 49) deemed by the United Nations to be structurally handicapped in their development process, facing more than other developing countries the risk of failing to come out of poverty as a result of these handicaps, and in need of the highest degree of consideration from the international community in support of their development efforts.

Marrakesh Accords. A set of detailed rules for implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, adopted in 2001 at the seventh Conference of the Parties in Marrakesh, Morocco.

OECD. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. An international organization consisting of the major industrialized countries. The OECD includes Mexico and the Republic of Korea, which are non-Annex I countries under the Kyoto Protocol.

Party. A state (or regional economic integration organization, such as the European Union) that agrees to be bound by a treaty and for which the treaty has entered into force.

PAMs. Policies and measures. The promotion of renewable energy, energy efficiency, forest conservation, or other actions for the reduction or limitation of greenhouse gases or for sustainable development.

ppmv. Parts per million by volume. A unit of concentration for a particular substance (e.g., CO₂).

PPP. Purchasing power parity. An international dollar “currency” for GDP that has the same purchasing power over local GDP as a U.S. dollar has in the United States.

SBI. Subsidiary Body for Implementation. An official body of the Climate Convention, open to all Parties, that makes recommendations on policy and implementation issues to the Conference of the Parties and, if requested, other bodies.

SBSTA. Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice. An official body of the Climate Convention, open to all Parties, that serves as the link between the information and assessment provided by expert sources (such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) on the one hand, and the policy-oriented needs of the Conference of the Parties on the other.

S-CDM. Sector-Based Clean Development Mechanism. An approach to expanding the Clean Development Mechanism to encompass entire sectors, geographic regions, and combinations of sectors and regions. See Chapter 4.

SD-PAMs. Sustainable Development Policies and Measures. An approach to climate protection that builds on sustainable development priorities. See Chapter 3.

Sequestration. Absorption of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through the process of photosynthesis.

UNFCCC. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Climate Convention, or Convention). A treaty signed at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro by more than 150 countries.

Website Sources: UNFCCC (<http://unfccc.int/siteinfo/glossary.html>); UNCTAD (<http://www.unctad.org/ldcs>); World Bank (www.worldbank.org/data/); Center for Sustainable Development in the Americas (<http://www.csdanet.org/English/publications/glossary.htm>).