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CLIMATE CHANGE – KEY ELEMENTS OF KEY DOCUMENTS

Framework Convention on Climate Change – Concluded 1992, entered into force 1994.

- Vague commitments on stabilization of emissions of greenhouse gases for industrialized countries at 1990 by 2000, no rules on compliance.
- Principle of “common but differentiated responsibility”.
- Financial and technical support for developing countries recognized.
- Institutional and process rules established, including an annual Conference of Parties.
- Most important result: adoption of an “ultimate objective”: “stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system”.

Kyoto Protocol – Concluded 1997, entered into force 2005.

- Precise, differentiated, quantitative commitments for industrialized countries covering the period 1990-2008/12, (EU -8%, US -7%, Japan -6%, Russia 0 etc.), on average calculated at -5.2%.
- Provisions for accounting for the removal of carbon through sinks (forests and soils).
- Establishment of a crediting system through mechanisms such as emissions trading, joint implementation and/or Clean Development Mechanism.
- Establishment of a compliance system.
- A separate Meeting of the Parties of the Protocol.
- Rules on sinks, mechanisms, and compliance were not complete in the Kyoto text.

Marrakech Accords – Agreed in 2001.

- Agreement on details concerning outstanding issues in Kyoto Protocol such as sinks, market mechanisms, and compliance.
- Formalisation of funding offer from a group of developed countries and agreement on structure of support funds, concerning i.a. adaptation and least developed countries.

Montreal Decisions – (COP 11 - COP/MOP 1) – 2005.¹

- Formal adoption of Marrakech Accords.
- Improvement of operation of Clean Development Mechanism.
- Review of Annex I commitments after 2012.
- Establishment of dialogue on post-2012 general climate regime.

¹ COP = Conference of Parties to the Convention; COP/MOP = Conference of Parties serving as Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. In practice, this has meant that USA is only an observer in COP/MOP.

Bali Plan of Action – (COP 13 – COP/MOP 3) – 2007.

- Agreement on “Road Map” for negotiation of the post-2012 regime, to be concluded by 2009 at COP 15 – COP/MOP 5 in Copenhagen. Agreement on main components of this regime: Mitigation, adaptation, technology, and financial resources.
- Announcement of ratification of Kyoto Protocol by Australia. USA is now only major country which has not accepted the Protocol. Nevertheless, USA agrees to participate in forthcoming negotiations for a post-2012 regime.
- Developing countries, including China and India, agree in principle to consider reduction of emissions, supported by technology and finance transfers, in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner.
- Agreement on negotiations to elaborate approaches to reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries.

COP 14 – COP/MOP 4 (Poznan December 2008).

- Conference noted negotiating positions presented by different parties and confirmed an intensified work programme for 2009.
- The Chairmen of the two main negotiating groups (Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action – AWG/LCA and Ad hoc Working Group on Kyoto Protocol – AWG/KP) were invited to present negotiating texts before June 2009.

COP 15 – COP/MOP 5 (Copenhagen December 2009).

- Copenhagen Accord: Conference took note of high-level political agreement related to 2-centigrade objective, containing references to main elements of Bali Plan of Action. Status of accord and its impact still uncertain.
- Decisions by COP to continue work in the two negotiating groups (AWG/LCA and AWG/KP) and mandating host country of COP 16 - COP/MOP 5 (Mexico) to facilitate work towards the success of the session.

COP 16 – COP/MOP 6 (Mexico November/December 2010).