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COP22: What to look for? What has changed since COP21?

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COP22 will open in Marrakesh on the 7th of November with the great news that the Paris Agreement has entered into force, [in record time](#) for a multilateral agreement. The diplomatic push to bring it into force showed that the Agreement can create a snowball effect that motivated countries, like the EU, to accelerate their ratification processes. Other signs of that momentum have emerged as well. The Paris Agreement paved the way for two new global climate deals in 2016 to regulate emissions from the aviation sector and the emission of HFCs, so called super greenhouse gasses. This is not to say that all this is yet sufficient (in particular the agreement on aviation is too weak).

COP22 will thus open new era in climate negotiations where implementation will be the main focus of discussions. **Now, the critical test will be whether 2017-2018 will be able to demonstrate a critical mass of countries starting to implement their national contributions.**

What to expect for COP22?

We can set out three criteria for the success of COP22 in Marrakesh:

Progress on capacity building, adaptation, and finance

COP21 represented a huge step forward by developing countries, which accepted significant new responsibilities in the fight against climate change. They did so on the back of assurances that tools to support their domestic action would be strengthened and made more accessible, notably in finance, adaptation and capacity building. COP22 should thus deliver an important package of new tools to support capacity building in developing countries. This includes the launch of a new initiative by the Global Environment Facility to support capacity building for emissions accounting in developing countries, as well as a new institution under the UNFCCC to coordinate ongoing capacity building efforts. On adaptation, the negotiations should make progress on defining indicators and metrics for better assessing progress towards the global goal on adaptation established in the Paris Agreement. On finance, the key issue is how the developing countries receive the roadmap published by developed countries on how to achieve their commitment to collectively mobilise \$100 billion by 2020. These three topics – capacity building, adaptation, and finance – often considered highly technical but actually central political issues which are all dear to developing countries, and hence the Moroccan hosts of COP22. How these issues are handled will be crucial to ensure that the grand bargain reached at COP21 remains stable. They will be viewed as a signal to continue building collective trust in the system.

A clear deadline for closing the technical negotiations in 2018, to make way for the next political phase in 2020.

COP22 should set a clear deadline of 2018 for the reconvening of the CMA (meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement) and the adoption of the detailed technical rulebook of the Paris Agreement. This would give a clear deadline for these technical negotiations, which otherwise may drag on unnecessarily. It would also “clear the decks” for the next political phase, which should start in 2018 with the so-called facilitative dialogue to assess the progress towards the objectives of the Paris Agreement. This political phase should culminate in a new round of more ambitious contributions in 2020. These will require preparation domestically, and informal coordination and consultation internationally, in order to be truly transformational. Having a clear agenda from 2018 to 2020, with the technical negotiations out of the way, would create the space for this. Doing so is critical, since revising collective ambition is necessary to reach the objective set unanimously last year to limit warming well under 2°C, as current contributions still exceed this target.

Progress in implementing the initiatives of non-state actors

One of the big innovations of COP21 was the inclusion of numerous initiatives from “non-state actors”, such as cities, regions and companies. These helped to create the political space for the agreement, as well as representing (potentially) significant commitments in and of themselves. COP22 can contribute to the pursuit of this non-state actor agenda, by continuing to provide a platform for the scrutiny of these commitments and their formalisation in different sectoral bodies (for example, as the work of the Financial Stability Board will start to formalise the various

efforts of NGOs and companies on financial sector disclosure of climate risks). The real challenge for these more than 75 coalitions will be to demonstrate the credibility of the promises made in Paris, the reality of actions undertaken since, and their capacity to attract new players and stakeholders. This Action Agenda was one of the pillars that allowed the Paris Agreement to emerge, and its role will remain critical in making the necessary economic transformation a reality.

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