

BLOG POST April 30th 2018

Implementing the Paris Agreement: challenges of the Bonn negotiation session

Authors

David Levai

Associate Researcher

Lola Vallejo

Climate Special Adviser

🕒 Reading time: 3 min



The year 2018 is one of intense negotiation activity to accelerate the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Two important milestones of the new climate regime will have to be finalized during COP24 in Katowice, Poland:

- the enactment of all rules for the implementation of the Paris Agreement;

- the conclusion of a technical and political process to take stock of the global climate action, to highlight the areas for acceleration, and to support States so that they can show more ambition in their transition towards a carbon-free world.

We focus here on this first dimension - that of the rules - and next week we will analyse the first assessment process to be conducted in Bonn.

The Rulebook: a political topic

When in 2015 the world celebrated a new agreement on the international climate regime, the negotiators were well aware that much work remained to be done in the years ahead: **the translation of these important principles adopted in Paris into a set of rules of international law**. The international community decided that this rulebook must be finalized by COP24. As the deadline approaches, concern is rapidly growing because despite the long hours of work and discussion, we are still a long way from achieving this goal, and it seems difficult to put aside differences of interpretation and to agree on common rules during the five weeks of formal negotiations this year. These negotiations are technical and relate to rules on emission accounting and use of carbon markets, information required to specify countries NDCs and transparency on NDCs, adaptation and finance. This work requires expertise and time, but is far from impossible. **However, hiding behind this technical dimension are some highly political issues**. The question of transparency, on which subject IDDRI has recently published an issue brief, is one illustration:

[Issue Brief](#)

[April 2018](#)

[Read also](#)

[Article 13 of the Paris Agreement: Reflecting “Flexibility” in the Enhanced Transparency Framework](#)

[Author:](#)

- [Sue Biniarz](#)

Being able to monitor and compare not only each country's greenhouse gas emissions, but also their public policies, practical actions and financial efforts for mitigation and adaptation is a foundation of the climate regime established at COP21 and of its political balance. Indeed, a solid transparency framework is the counterpart of non-binding commitments that are freely determined by each State: each decides its level of **effort provided that we can collectively monitor and verify their implementation**. Furthermore, while some countries are reluctant and afraid to be singled out if they struggle, **the underlying philosophy of this architecture is to build trust**: both in the reality of the actions of other countries, but also in our collective ability to measure and assess our progress towards a resilient and decarbonized world. Finally, a transparent climate system is a **guarantee of credibility**: countries subject to regular examinations will have to assume their responsibilities. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate the success of efforts undertaken and progress made, and therefore to attract both public and private capital flows to fund the low-carbon transition.

Keeping to the deadlines will therefore be a challenge. For this, the Polish Presidency of COP24 will have to show real leadership, by setting clear expectations and objectives, steering the debates, and proposing solutions to allow compromise when necessary. There is mounting concern and the Presidency must act to reassure, but also ensure that stakeholders acknowledge their responsibilities in the conduct of debates: “we must not waste the precious time we have left”. Missing this year's deadline would mark a worrying setback on the viability of the Paris Agreement and would strengthen the most reluctant countries and those who consider the current architecture to be useless or ineffective. It is therefore crucial that significant progress is made at this session to ensure that the year's objectives

do not rapidly slide out of reach.

-
- CLIMATE

NÉGOCIATIONS INTERNATIONALES

PARIS AGREEMENT

TRANSPARENCY