

# UNFCCC

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The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an **international environmental treaty** adopted and implemented by countries all around the world in 1994 to address the issue of climate change. The **197 countries that ratified** the agreement represent almost universal global involvement.

## Features of UNFCCC

- The UNFCCC is a **Rio Convention**, one of two opened for signature at the **Rio Earth Summit in 1992**. Its sister Rio Conventions are the **UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification**. The three are intrinsically linked.
- It is in this context that the Joint Liaison Group was set up to boost cooperation among the three Conventions.
- The UNFCCC sets an **overall framework for intergovernmental efforts** to tackle the challenge posed by climate change.
- It meets yearly to discuss progress and take bold action. The **Kyoto Protocol and more recent Paris Agreement** are other landmark treaties that have emerged from these annual meetings.
- Its objectives are:
  - . **stabilize greenhouse-gas concentrations** in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system
  - . stabilization should be within a **time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change**.
  - . ensure that food production is not threatened.
  - . enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable

manner.

- The Convention puts the **onus on developed countries** to lead the way. As they are the source of most past and current greenhouse gas emissions, industrialized countries are expected to do the most to cut emissions on home ground.

### Role of Developed Countries

- Developed countries are called **Annex I countries and belong to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**.
- Industrialized nations agree under the Convention to support climate change activities in developing countries by providing **financial support** for action on climate change, above and beyond any financial assistance they already provide to these countries.
- A **system of grants and loans** has been set up through the Convention and is managed by the **Global Environment Facility**. Industrialized countries also agree to **share technology** with less advanced nations.
- Industrialized countries (Annex I) have to **report regularly** on their climate change policies and measures, including issues governed by the Kyoto Protocol (for countries which have ratified it). They must also **submit an annual inventory of their greenhouse gas emissions**, including data for their base year (1990) and all the years since.
- Developing countries (Non-Annex I Parties) **report in more general terms on their actions** both to address climate change and to adapt to its impacts – but less regularly than Annex I Parties do, and their **reporting is contingent on their getting funding** for the preparation of the reports, particularly in the case of the Least Developed Countries.