

Background infos
29 November 2018

Elements for a Successful COP24 in Katowice

Subsequent points reflect the expectations the Wuppertal Institute has

Mitigation Contributions: Strengthen and Orientate towards the Long Term

- Katowice is to conclude the so-called “Talanoa Dialogue”. This dialogue process is a first test run for the five-yearly Global Stocktakes envisaged by the Paris Agreement. In this process, the Parties to the Agreement reflect on the current status of climate policy and what further efforts are needed to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement. Subsequently, Parties are to submit new or updated climate protection contributions (called nationally determined contributions, NDCs).
- This ambition cycle of regular stocktake and subsequent improvement of NDCs provides the heartbeat of the Paris Agreement. The contributions that have so far been submitted are too weak to achieve the objectives of the Agreement: Instead of keeping global warming well below 2°C or even 1.5°C, they would probably lead to warming of 3-4°C.
- Parties should therefore adopt a decision in Katowice that clearly acknowledges that the current NDCs are far too weak and need to be improved as soon as possible. The political dynamic would be best served if there were already concrete announcements of ambition raising in Katowice. The COP decision should urge Parties to start national consultation processes in 2019 and to submit new contributions by 2020 at the latest. Parties should also be urged to report on what progress they are making towards revising their NDCs at each of the negotiating sessions until the end of 2020. The Marshall Islands already submitted an update on their NDCs. The heavyweights need to follow.
- The UK Committee on Climate Change – an independent advisory body created in the framework of the UK Climate Change Act – suggested already some years ago that the EU should reduce its emissions by 55 per cent below 1990 levels by 2030. The European Parliament and some member states have in the meantime adopted similar positions. Currently, the EU aims only for a reduction of 40 per cent. This can and should be improved substantially.

- NDCs have a time horizon of only five to ten years. The COP decision in Katowice should renew the call on Parties to develop long-term climate strategies. These strategies should aim for full decarbonisation by the year 2050 in order to be consistent with the Paris Agreement. The NDCs should be consistent with and embedded into these long-term strategies.

Implementation Guidelines to the Paris Agreement: Create Transparency and Enable Ambition Raising

- The implementation guidelines for the Paris Agreement need to ensure that Parties' contributions can be assessed transparently and that there are no loopholes.
- So far, it has not been possible to agree on rules for the content and structure of the NDCs. Comparing contributions requires detailed information according to binding, common requirements, e.g. the quantification of contributions in tonnes CO₂-equivalent, common timeframes, coverage of all sectors and gases, information on national planning processes and methodological assumptions, and on the question of why the contribution is fair and equitable in international comparison.
- In addition, robust rules need to be adopted for reporting and review of the implementation of the contributions in the framework of the Paris Agreement's Transparency Framework.
- In addition, it needs to be ensured that the cooperative mechanisms under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement do not again become loopholes for the transfer of 'hot air', as was the case under the Kyoto Protocol. The possibility to participate in these mechanisms should be a privilege only for those countries that submit robust and ambitious NDCs. This goes especially for the participation in 'cooperative approaches' according to Article 6.2, for which – different from the new sustainability mechanism under Article 6.4 – no international oversight is envisaged.
- The rules for the five-yearly Global Stocktakes should envisage a discussion process of one and a half to two years that is also open to non-Party actors.

Climate Finance: Increase and Make Tractable

- Many developing countries require substantial financial support for reducing their emissions, adapting to the impacts of climate change, and for dealing with climate-induced loss and damage. A central channel for climate finance is the Green Climate Fund (GFC). The GCF currently needs to be replenished.

- In addition, the predictability of financial flows should be improved. Industrialised countries have committed to increasing annual flows to US\$ 100 billion by 2020. The Paris Agreement envisages to adopt a new finance target for 2025. COP24 should start the process of setting this new target on the basis of the requirements of the 1.5°C limit. At the same time, support for adaptation and loss and damage needs to be improved and take account of the fact that current climate policy is steering towards warming of 3-4°C. Evidently, this degree of warming requires a very different order of magnitude of actions and financial support than if warming was limited to 1,5°C.
- In addition to new finance commitments transparency in this area also needs to be improved. Parties should adopt a clear definition of which financial flows can be counted towards their finance commitments; as well as clear reporting formats for donors and recipients of climate finance.