

# The Time is Now

Climate Change Newsletter

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Issue 1



## The Copenhagen Summit (COP15)

### What is it?

The 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference, commonly known as the Copenhagen Summit, was held at the Bella Centre in Copenhagen, Denmark, between 7 December and 18 December 2009.

Environment Ministers and diplomats met under the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) that was established during the Rio Summit in 1992. The conference included the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the UNFCCC and the 5th Meeting of the Parties (MOP 5) to the Kyoto Protocol.

The aim of the conference was to hammer out a successor to the Kyoto Protocol, which set a framework for binding greenhouse gas emission reductions for both developed and developing countries. The Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012 and a new agreement is needed to run from that point onwards.

### Who attended?

The Summit essentially was a political one, but other attendees were also present. The main groups were:

- Representatives of governments
- UN agencies and international organisations e.g. Global Environment Facility (GEF), World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and the World Bank
- Media
- Observer organisations including businesses and NGOs
- Protestors



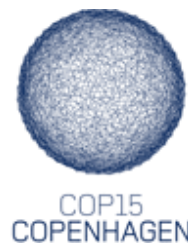
### Who were the main players at the Summit?

The key players, as the world's largest emitters of carbon, were the US and China. There was some doubt as to the likelihood of ratifying a replacement deal to Kyoto since the US and China had not met for substantive bilateral negotiations ahead of Copenhagen. The EU was also an important player since it is a large emitter and is also the most progressive of the three main players in seeking a deal in Copenhagen. India, as a large country with a fast growing economy, was also crucially important.

### What was to be achieved in the Summit?

Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, identified the following key questions that had to be addressed to achieve an international agreement at Copenhagen:

1. How much are industrialised countries willing to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases?
2. How much are the major developing countries, such as China and India, willing to do to limit the growth of emissions?
3. How is the help needed by developing countries to reduce their emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change going to be financed?
4. How is that money going to be managed?





### One thing I can do...

Insert a 500ml plastic bottle in your home and school toilet cistern, this will save 500ml of water every time you flush. A school with 250 pupils, flushing twice a day, can save 45000 litres of water per year



*“The key points of the accord include the objective to keep the maximum temperature rise to below 2 degrees Celsius; the commitment to list developed country emission reduction targets and mitigation action by developing countries for 2020.”*

## What role is there for businesses?

Ahead of the Summit, many companies signed the Copenhagen Communiqué - a document which reinforces the message to governments that a large part of the international business community wants a strong and effective international climate framework. It was signed by many companies, including Kingfisher, Tesco, Marks and Spencer, Cadbury, Pepsico and Barclays. There were a number of initiatives from the NGO community (e.g. ActionAid, Friends of the Earth, Oxfam, WWF etc), some of which were suitable for businesses to engage in. For example, the 10:10 campaign encourages businesses, as well as individuals, to cut their carbon emissions by 10% by the end of 2010.

## Message from Youth NGOs

Christina Ora from the Solomon Islands made a moving speech on behalf of the global youth constituency. Ms Ora said that youth are mobilizing support from millions of people all over the world for the fair, adequate and legally binding agreement that youth deserve.

“I speak on behalf of the international youth to express the urgency of the climate crises for my generation, your children and your grandchildren.

“I was born in 1992, you have been negotiating all my life you cannot tell us that you need more time, commit now to decisions that will guarantee our future,” Ora said.

She said this is the first year for youths to be recognized as an official constituency representing the global youth movement in which young people and youth organizations have joined hands to prevent the negotiators from negotiating their future away.

“It is now your responsibility to build on this support to finally take political action,” Ora said.

After the speech, Ora said that she was honoured to be given the privilege of speaking for the youth constituency.

See her speech on:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjG2-7ANe1g>

## What was achieved?

Briefing the press at the end of the two-week conference, Yvo de Boer said an accord has been reached that has significant elements, but that is not legally binding.

He described the accord as “politically important,” demonstrating a willingness to move forward. It brings together a diversity of countries that have put in place a letter of intent with the ingredients of architecture for a response to climate change.

The key points of the accord include the objective to keep the maximum temperature rise to below 2 degrees Celsius; the commitment to list developed country emission reduction targets and mitigation action by developing countries for 2020; USD 30 billion short-term funding for immediate action till 2012 and USD 100 billion annually by 2020 in long-term financing, as well as mechanisms to support technology transfer and forestry.

The challenge now is to turn what was agreed into something that is legally binding in Mexico one year from now.

## Related Links

<http://unfccc.int/2860.php>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Nations\\_Climate\\_Change\\_Conference\\_2009](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Climate_Change_Conference_2009)

<http://www.teachers.tv/search/video/?page=1&q=copenhagen+climate+change&t=&tn=>

<http://en.cop15.dk/>

[http://www.danskerhverv.dk/OmDanskErhverv/Kampagner-og-temaer/cop15\\_english/Sider/Overview-cop15-activities.aspx](http://www.danskerhverv.dk/OmDanskErhverv/Kampagner-og-temaer/cop15_english/Sider/Overview-cop15-activities.aspx)

<http://www.earthhour.org/showsupport/Schools.aspx>