

Committee/Council: Environmental and Cultural Committee
Issue: Preparing for the completion of the successor-agreement for the extended Kyoto protocol in 2015
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Introduction

In the year 1997 the Kyoto protocol was drawn up in Kyoto, Japan. Its aim was to implement the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC). This protocol was an attempt to create new international regulations on greenhouse gas emissions and it is officially the first global binding contract to reduce greenhouse emissions. The treaty became an international law in 2004 after many years of debate between leaders, politicians and scientists. In 2012 the Kyoto protocol expired.

Now conferences are held within those the Conference of the Parties (COD) in order to extend the protocol. In the United Nations Climate Change Conference of 2012 which was held in Doha, Qatar it was decided to extend the Kyoto protocol until 2020. A successor of the Kyoto protocol is set to be developed by 2015 and implemented by 2020.

Definition of Key-Terms

Global Warming

It is defined as an increase in the earth's average atmospheric temperature that causes corresponding changes in climate. It is caused mainly by the greenhouse gases emissions.

Greenhouse gases (GHGs)

According to the latest research the greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydro fluorocarbons (HFCs), per fluorocarbons (PFCs), sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆) and nitrogen trifluoride (NF₃). When rising into the air they cause the

greenhouse effect which blocks dispensable rays in the atmosphere. That leads to rising temperatures.

Emission Trading

Every country becomes a warrant that states how many emissions the country can have in a certain period of time. Developed countries usually become warrants with lower limits of emissions. Wanting to have more emissions they buy the warrants of countries which have less emissions. The total of emissions in a region stays the same.

Signing and Ratification

There is an explicit difference between signing a treaty and ratifying it. While signing is usually just symbolic and has no meaning ratifying is what makes the final decision. When a country signs a treaty it is not obligated to fulfil the terms of that treaty. Ratification is needed to show that a country is willing to action the terms of the treaty.

Annex I

Almost all industrialized countries and the countries with economies in transition such as e.g. Russian Federation are parties of the Annex I countries. Most of the Articles in the Kyoto protocol refer to the countries included in the Annex I. It is important to notice that the Annex I countries are parties to the UNFCCC and not directly to the Kyoto protocol.

Annex II

Annex II countries are mainly industrialized nations and there function is to support developing nations financially in order to assist them with cutting emissions. Furthermore they have to take action helping the developing countries to use environmentally friendly technologies.

Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)

Activities in the LULUCF sector can lead to the growth of the removals of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere for example by planting trees and to the reduction of emissions. All in all, the LULUCF sector has effects of the emissions of that country.

Background Information

Global Warming

The actual background of the Kyoto protocol is the Global Warming. Greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydro fluorocarbons (HFC's), per fluorocarbons (PFC's), sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆) or nitrogen trifluoride (NF₃) are rising into the air and causing the greenhouse effect. That effect is when those gases concentrate in a great number in the atmosphere some rays which are reflected by the earth and should exit the atmosphere are reflected again by those gases. The rays stay on earth and cause global warming. The Kyoto protocol tries to reduce those gases making countries use other energy sources less harmful to the environment especially the developed countries. Its goal was to reduce the rising temperature to 2° Celsius as it was planned that the world's temperature would rise for 4° Celsius.

History of the Kyoto protocol

Countries joined the international treaty the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992. Their goal was to cooperate with each other in order to find ways to limit the rising global temperature. Five years later, on 11 December 1997, during the 3rd Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UNFCCC they adopted the Kyoto protocol which legally binds developed countries to emission reduction targets. But the protocol needed another 7 years to enter into force due to the conditions which had been decided on in 1997 and which had to be fulfilled in order for the protocol to be a law. The first terms of Kyoto required at least 55 parties to ratify the agreement and the second term of Kyoto demanded for the total of those parties emissions had to be at least 55% of global production of greenhouse gases. In 2002 with the ratification of Iceland the first condition was covered. The second condition was fulfilled with the ratification of the Russian Federation in 2004 and so the Kyoto protocol entered into force on 24 November 2004. The reason why Russia decided to ratify the treaty although they didn't plan to in first place was the establishment of the emission trading. Russia thought of that as a benefit since it has many square miles of forests in its land which would mean a warranty with a higher limit of emissions. The first commitment period took place from 2008 to 2012. In this time period 37 industrialized countries and all the members of the European Community (15 members of the European Union) which have committed themselves to binding targets to greenhouses gases emissions have to reduce their greenhouse gases emission from 5% to 21%. It is for each country different since it is based on each countries emission of 1990. The first commitment period didn't turn out to be as successful as expected since many countries didn't manage to reduce their emissions enough and others increased them. There are many bad critics about the Kyoto protocol and many people believe that it isn't effective enough.

Successor of Kyoto protocol

In 2012 the first commitment period expired. According to the Kyoto protocol there is to be a second commitment period from 2013 to 2020. Not every country which agreed on the first commitment period has committed itself to binding targets to greenhouse gases emissions in the second commitment period. The Russian Federation, Japan and New Zealand have not taken on new targets in the second commitment period. Due to that and to the withdrawing of the protocol by Canada it was decided in the 2013 United Nations Climate Change Conference which was held on 8 December 2012 in Doha, Qatar and which was also the 19th session of the Conference of the Parties that an amendment will extend the Kyoto protocol until 2020. This amendment includes new regulations for the countries which have agreed on taking part in the second commitment period, a report which has to be delivered by the attending countries on new greenhouse gases and changes to several articles in the Kyoto protocol which refer to the first commitment period and need to be reconditioned for the second commitment period.

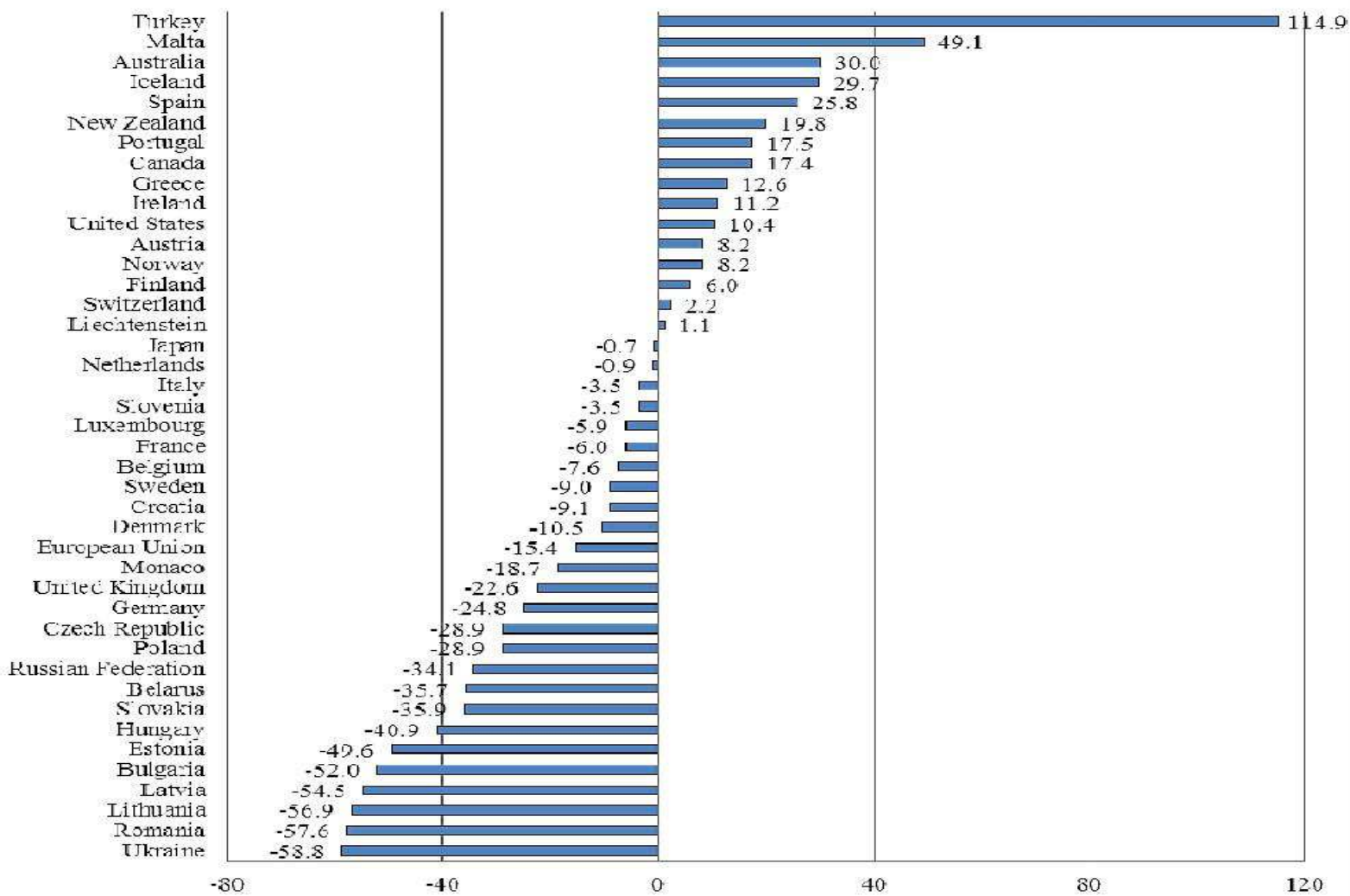
Changes in total aggregate emissions of individual Annex I Parties, 1990–2010

The figure above shows in what percentage each Annex I party managed to reduce or increase their greenhouse gases emission from 1990 to 2010.

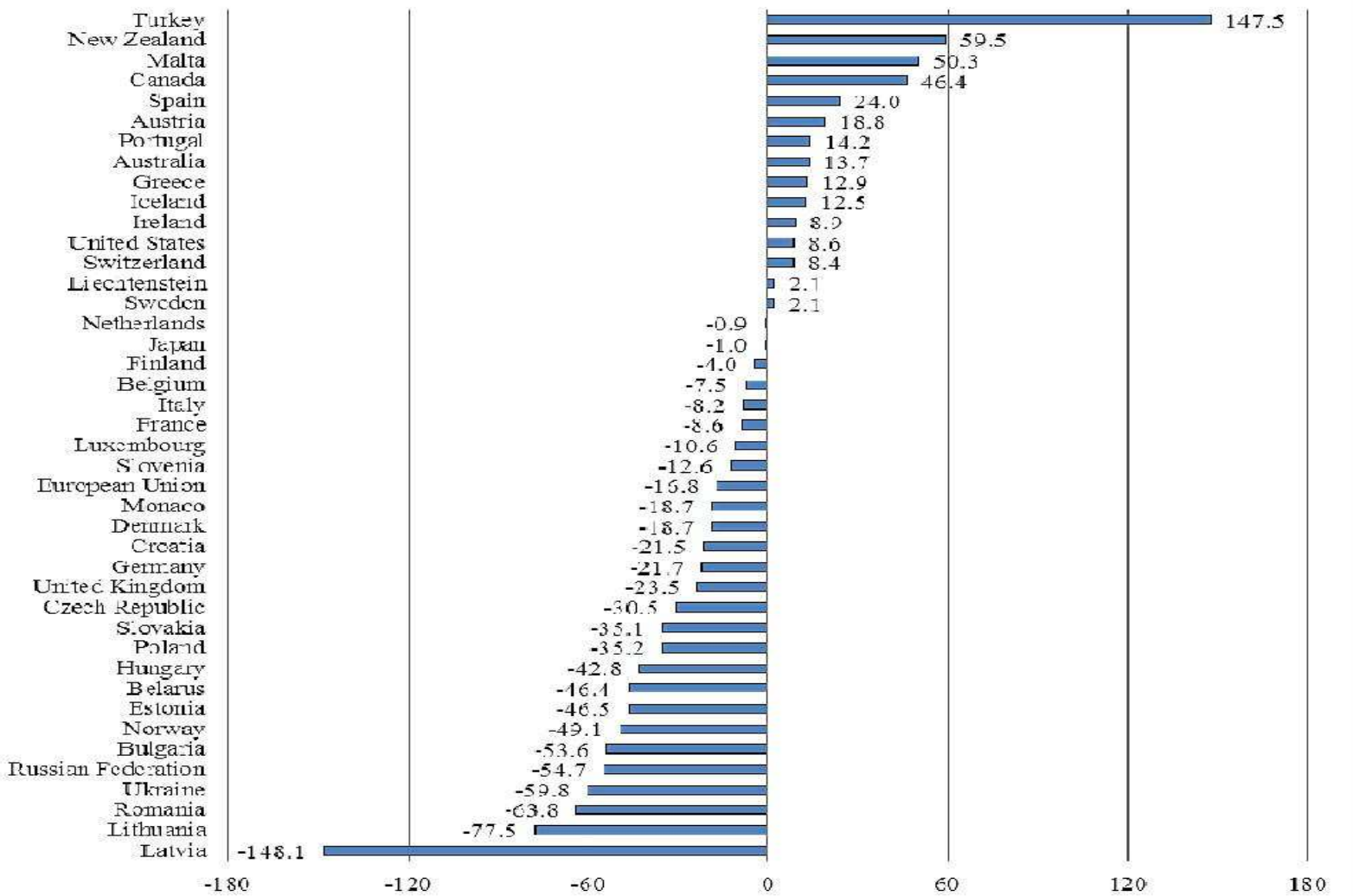
(Sorry for the bad formation. I didn't manage to make it any clearer. You better see it in the link)

Source: <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2012/sbi/eng/31.pdf>

Changes in GHG emissions excluding LULUCF (%)



Changes in GHG emissions including LULUCF (%)



Major Countries and Organizations Involved

United States of America

The United States of America were never really part of the Kyoto treaty. In July 1997 the Senate adopted the Byrd-Hagel Resolution which states that the US won't ratify any treaty harming its economy and not including developing countries. In 1998 Al Gore signed the Kyoto protocol but without ratifying it. In 2001 George W. Bush took the signing back and refused to ratify the treaty saying that the protocol is harming the US economy. Furthermore the US was afraid that the Kyoto protocol would increase the unemployment and that a cut in the carbon dioxide emission would lead to a cut in the energy usage of the country.

Canada

Canada having ratified the Kyoto protocol in 2002 withdraws it in 2011. Not being able to reduce its emissions with the prescriptions of the Kyoto protocol Canada had to pay great amounts of money as penalty. That may be the reason for its withdrawal of the treaty.

China

China has ratified the Kyoto protocol but is not a Annex I party and is not obligated to reduce its greenhouse gases emissions. China does not want to ratify it as an Annex I country.

European Union

The European Union being the world second largest emitter of carbon dioxide has signed and ratified the Kyoto protocol. It attended in the first commitment period of the protocol and is willing to attend the second, too. However, the European Union believes that the treaty is weak. It is disappointed that many countries such as United States of America, Canada etc. have not ratified the treaty. The European Union remains one of the first in reducing carbon dioxide emissions since it began in 1991 to do so.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1979	First World Climate Conference is held in Geneva.
1988	Climate change is proclaimed as a common humanity concern by the UN General Assembly. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is established to provide scientific analysis of current, global information about the risk of climate change.
1990	First IPCC report which announces that human activity has caused global warming For most countries this is the base year for the limitations of its emissions.
1992	In the Second Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro was decided on a stabilization of the greenhouse gases emissions by 2000 and on the creation of the UNFCCC
1997	The Kyoto protocol was adopted in December during the 3rd Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UNFCCC in Kyoto, Japan.
2004	The Russian Federation ratifies the Kyoto protocol which enters into force.
2007	The 2007 United Nations Climate Change Conference took place in Bali and included negotiations on a successor of the Kyoto protocol.
2011	The 2011 United Nations Climate Change Conference took place in Durban, South Africa. Decisions were made to prepare a new treaty to limit greenhouse gases emissions by 2015 which will be implemented by 2020.
2012	The 2012 United Nations Climate Change Conference was held in Doha, Qatar where the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto protocol was adopted.

Relevant UN Treaties, Resolutions and Events

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

The UNFCCC is a treaty which was adopted in 1992 and came into force in 1994. In 2011 the member parties reached the number of 195. Its goal was to stabilize the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere in order to prevent the dangerous interference in the climate system. The treaty provides negotiations between the member states upon the issue of climate change and the impacts of a

enormous concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. It is not proposing any limitations for the emissions of each country.

Doha Amendment (1/CMP.8)

The Doha Amendment which was adopted in the 2012 United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Doha, Qatar includes changes to several articles of the Kyoto protocol. The amendment was adopted due to several countries as the Russian Federation, Japan and Australia not willing to attend the second commitment period of the Kyoto protocol. Until today only the United Arab Emirates have signed and ratified the Doha Amendment.

Byrd-Hagel Resolution (S.Res.98)

The Byrd-Hagel Resolution is a resolution which was adopted by the Senate of the United States in July of 1997. It states that the United States of America refuse to sign any treaty on climate protection if it harms the US economy and if developing countries are bound to cut emissions, too.

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Attempts to solve the problem, to unite the member states and to make them work together in order to improve their climate-related problems began in 2007 in the UN General Assembly plenary debate which was devoted exclusively to climate change. Many countries were able to state their opinion and describe their climate-related situation. In September of the same year Secretary Ban Ki-moon held discussions on the post-Kyoto treaty in the United Nations General Assembly meeting. In December in the United Nations Climate Change Conference many discussions were held about a successor of the Kyoto protocol with conclude the decision to reach an agreement until 2009. In the United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2011 no new treaty to reduce greenhouse gases emissions was established as planned. Instead they decided on a legally-binding deal which included the member states until 2015 and had to be implemented until 2020. The final decision was made in the United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2012 in Qatar where the agreement was reached to establish a successor of the Kyoto protocol and to extend its lifetime until 2020.

Possible Solutions

The problem is based in the lack of cooperation and unity between industrialized nations and developing countries. Competition and egoism was dominating and that

was blocking the finding of a solution. Some countries didn't want to continue with the Kyoto protocol because they were afraid of destroying their economy, for others reducing their emissions would be very expensive and some didn't have the possibility due to lack of modern, environmentally friendly technologies. The key to a successful reduction of greenhouse gases emission all over the world is the cooperation between nations. In order to find effective solutions countries have to overcome their competition and their egoism. Nations have to start thinking not only for themselves but for the good of the whole world. To accomplish that, nations could start by forming small alliances within their region where discussions and negotiations will lead to exchange of information and technologies. Furthermore ambitious countries like India, Brasilia and Indonesia which support climate goals could form partnerships in order to make other countries to think the same way. In those partnerships and alliances talks about deforestation and an environmentally friendly infrastructure could be made. Through that way the competition between nations and the mutual blocking of countries in the issue of the Kyoto protocol will be overcome. Now countries will realize that only with cooperation and coordination both aspects of global warming and industrial development will be accomplished. With signing the Kyoto treaty and its successor cooperation and coordination between nations can be achieved.

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