

# Korean energy economist to head UN climate science panel

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This photo provided by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change shows Hoesung Lee. Lee, a South Korean professor of climate change economics will lead the Nobel Prize winning group of climate scientists that keeps track of global warming. The United Nations affiliated Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change announced Tuesday it had elected Lee, one of its vice chairmen, to its top post. (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change via AP)

A South Korean professor of climate change economics will lead the Nobel Prize-winning group of climate scientists who keep track of global

warming.

Hoesung Lee, elected chairman Tuesday of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, told The Associated Press that the United Nations-affiliated science group will do more to examine the effects of man-made [global warming](#) on more local levels, "especially in developing countries."

Lee, who had been one of the panel's vice chairmen, was elected in a meeting in Dubrovnik, Croatia, beating Jean-Pascale van Ypersele of Belgium, another vice chairman, in a run-off. Chris Field of the United States was one of three other candidates. Each country is allowed one vote for climate panel leader

Lee is president of the government affiliated Korea Energy Economics Institute and past dean of the College of Environment at Keimyung University. In his campaign for the job, Lee pledged to work more closely with business and industry and pay special attention to job creation, health, poverty reduction and technology development.

Several [climate change](#) scientists said they didn't know Lee. Princeton's Michael Oppenheimer said Lee is known for being "relatively quiet."

In a brief telephone interview, Lee talked about the "carbon budget"—the amount of carbon dioxide that can still be emitted before the world warms another two degrees—and thinking about those figures "in the context of a financial budget." He added that "the linking of science and policy requires a very close understanding of the carbon budget."

Lee said international negotiators who will meet later this year in Paris have been given a document that gives them pathways to prevent that dangerous two-degree warming, but the key is "we need to act very, very

soon."

The previous chairman, Rajendra Pachauri, resigned in February after charges of sexual harassment were leveled against him in his native India.

**More information:** The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: [www.ipcc.ch/](http://www.ipcc.ch/)

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