

# The players who can make or break a Paris climate deal

November 27 2015, by Marlowe Hood

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A picture taken on November 20, 2015 shows the "Earth Crisis" globe displayed by US artist Shepard Fairey on the Eiffel tower in Paris, as part of the organisation of the Conference on Climate Change COP21-CMP11

Negotiators from 195 nations gather in Paris on Monday to try to broker a universal climate pact to rein in global warming and keep Earth liveable for humanity.

From the world's biggest polluters to the tiniest island states at risk of disappearing under the waves, they must find a way to compromise on half a dozen potential deal breakers.

These are the players—nations and alliances—that could make or break the chance of making deal by the December 11 deadline for the end of the talks:

## CHINA

The world's top carbon polluter since 2007, China has made substantial commitments to curb greenhouse gas output, pledging to peak emissions around 2030, if not sooner.

Unlike other developing nations, notably India, China favours the early implementation of a system for monitoring progress on countries' carbon-cutting pledges.

**POTENTIAL DEAL BREAKERS:** China has joined the mainly rich-country club of climate finance donors, but insists it does not want this voluntary role to be inscribed in the Paris agreement. Only rich nations should have a finance obligation, it insists.

## THE UNITED STATES

Working around a Republican-dominated Congress hostile to action on [climate change](#), President Barack Obama's administration has used its executive authority to curb emissions in industry, the energy sector and from vehicles.

## The Paris Climate Conference

The conference, from Nov 29 - Dec 11, will take place amid heightened security



### Aim of the conference

A universal agreement to:

- ✓ cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in order to
- ✓ limit global warming to +2°C by 2100

### Warming by numbers

**40 to 70%**

The cut in GHG emissions required by 2050 to stop global warming exceeding +2°C

**+3.7 to 4.8°C**

Temperature rise by 2100 if GHG emissions continue at current rates

### Citizens' events

**Paris CentQuatre**  
centre  
Climate  
Action  
Zone

Dec  
7-11

PARIS

**Grand Palais**  
exhibition hall  
The Climate  
Experience

Dec  
4-10

Dec  
5-6

**Montreuil**  
town  
Citizens  
Climate  
Summit

Source: Climate Action Tracker

### Climate Generations areas

Open to the public  
22,000 m<sup>2</sup>

- 10 conference rooms
- 105 stands
- 18 exhibitions

### Conference Centre

Accredited persons  
140,000 m<sup>2</sup>

32 negotiating rooms

Plenary rooms

Press centre

### Gallery

Open to  
businesses

AFP

Presentation of the Paris CLimate Conference venues and participants. 135 x 116 mm

Like Beijing, Washington favours a periodic review of country pledges, which are currently not enough to meet the UN target of capping [global warming](#) under two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) from pre-industrial levels.

**POTENTIAL DEAL BREAKERS:** The United States insists that the concept of "differentiated responsibilities" for rich and developing nations—enshrined in the 1992 climate convention—is out of date and has no place in a new accord. Since refusing to ratify the 1997 Kyoto

Protocol, Washington has specifically balked at taking on legally binding commitments to reduce emissions.

Backed by the European Union, the United States is also wary of efforts by developing countries to make rich ones pay "loss and damage" for climate change harms—this is too close, it says, to liability for compensation.

## INDIA

Number two in terms of in population, and number four in emissions behind China, the United States and European Union, India has dug its heels in on a number of key issues.

Along with other developing countries, New Delhi insists that any deal must make it clear that nations which industrialised first must lead the fight against global warming.

## POTENTIAL DEAL BREAKERS:

New Delhi says it cannot reduce its carbon output or boost renewables without guarantees of financial aid and green technology. It also opposes language in the core agreement calling for "decarbonisation" of the world economy. With 300,000 people still bereft of electricity, India cannot afford to foreswear coal, environment minister Prakash Javadekar has said. He has also called a proposal for reviewing carbon-cutting pledges in 2017/18—two years before they go into effect—"absolutely ridiculous".

## VULNERABLE NATIONS

Forty-three nations home to a billion people particularly exposed to rising seas, superstorms and expanding deserts, have banded together

under the Climate Vulnerable Forum to push for key demands.

**POTENTIAL DEAL BREAKERS:** The bloc insists that half of the promised \$100 billion (94 billion euros) per year in climate finance from 2020 must come from governments, and seeks assurances that the amount will increase over time.

Calling it an existential issue, the group—which includes Bangladesh, the Philippines, small island states and poor nations in Africa—wants the 2 C target lowered to 1.5 C. At the very least, analysts say, the forum will push for the lower target to be retained as an option.

## SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Arabia is regarded as a potential obstacle to a deal in Paris. While other countries seek to move away from fossil fuels, Riyadh has called for sustained investment in oil output capacity, on which its economy is largely based.

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