

India, Brazil resist bid for long-term carbon goals

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United Nations climate chief Christiana Figueres attends a news conference at the COP21, the United Nations Climate Change Conference Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2015 in Le Bourget, north of Paris. Figueres and French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said Wednesday the climate talks are off to a good start thanks to 150 world leaders who came to Paris earlier this week, but now negotiations have to speed up and will get more complicated. (AP Photo/Christophe Ena)

Attempts to inscribe a long-term goal to phase out carbon emissions in an envisioned global climate pact are facing pushback at U.N. talks from big developing countries including India and Brazil.

Negotiators from both countries said Wednesday they favor sticking to the already established goal of limiting [global warming](#) to 2 degrees C (3.6 degrees F) above pre-industrial times—a level that scientists say could avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

That goal was formally introduced in the U.N. talks in 2010. But many countries are calling for the Paris deal to include a road map on how to achieve it, such as a joint target for phasing out the emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases blamed for global warming.

Various options have been proposed. The United States and other members of the Group of Seven wealthy countries earlier this year endorsed a "decarbonization of the [global economy](#) over the course of this century."

"Decarbonization is something that has appeared recently. We don't even know what that means," Indian delegate Ajay Mathur told reporters. "Does it mean zero carbon? Does it mean net zero carbon?"

The term is generally understood to mean sharp reductions of carbon emissions from the burning of [fossil fuels](#), but it hasn't been defined precisely.

Brazil's lead negotiator Antonio Marcondes told The Associated Press that there was no need to come up with a new joint climate goal.



United Nations climate chief Christiana Figueres attends a news conference as French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius is seen on the screen, at the COP21, the United Nations Climate Change Conference Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2015 in Le Bourget, north of Paris. Figueres and Fabius said Wednesday the climate talks are off to a good start thanks to 150 world leaders who came to Paris earlier this week, but now negotiations have to speed up and will get more complicated. (AP Photo/Christophe Ena)

"The long-term goal is already there: It's 2 degree Celsius," he said.

Marcondes added that Brazil would consider options that emphasize that phasing out fossil fuels will be easier for some countries than others. He referred to a joint Brazilian-German declaration in August that backed a "decarbonization of the global economy" while noting that some countries will need financial and technological help to make the transition to cleaner energy.

The long-term goal is one of the issues that split the larger group of developing countries in the [climate talks](#). Oil-rich Saudi Arabia opposes wording calling for a phase-out of [carbon emissions](#), while small island nations that face an existential risk from rising seas are among the strongest advocates. China has largely stayed silent.

It's among the crunch issues that need to be resolved before negotiators can ink what would be the first climate deal to ask all [countries](#) to limit their [greenhouse gas emissions](#). Another is how to ramp up the individual emissions targets that nations have proposed because scientific analyses show they're not consistent with the 2-degree target.

"We must speed the process up because we have much work to do," French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius told a news conference on Wednesday.

Fabius said negotiators need to come up with a new draft agreement by noon Saturday so that environment and foreign ministers have something to work with when they arrive for the second week of talks.



An activist protesting against polluters holds a banners at the Climate Generations Areas, part of the COP21, the United Nations Climate Change Conference Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2015 in Le Bourget, north of Paris. (AP Photo/Christophe Ena)

Speaking at a NATO conference in Brussels, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said he thought the climate talks "got off to an encouraging start" with 150 world leaders—the biggest ever gathering of heads of state and government—attending the opening day. Kerry is expected to join the meeting next week.

However, the talks have made little progress after the leaders left. At a stock-taking meeting Wednesday evening delegates noted that they had reached compromises on only a few of the scores of issues being negotiated.

That's not unusual though in the climate talks, where compromises are typically reached only in the final hours.

U.N. climate chief Christiana Figueres said there was no reason to worry just yet.

Negotiations "will go through ups and downs," she said. "There will be many commas inserted and many commas removed because that is the nature of this."

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