

How fair are countries' climate pledges? Incorporating fairness into cutting global emissions

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A new study published in *Nature Climate Change* analyzes the national climate targets needed to meet the 1.5 and 2°C goals according to five different equity principles, and how these compare with the current climate pledges.

Benchmarks to guide countries in ratcheting-up their ambition to remain well-below 2°C and pursue 1.5°C in an equitable manner are critical but not yet determined in the context of the Paris Agreement.

The study's lead author PhD candidate Yann Robiou du Pont, of the Australian-German Climate & Energy College at the University of Melbourne said that following the [equity](#) categories outlined by the IPCC, we show that the G8 and China together could close the emissions mitigation gap to keep warming to below 2°C.

"However, equitably limiting warming to 1.5°C would require individual countries to achieve mitigation milestones like peaking emissions or reaching net-zero emissions much earlier," adds Mr Robiou du Pont.

"Our study presents for the first time emissions allocations of global cost-optimal emissions pathways consistent with the Paris Agreement goals, in particular the 1.5°C goal."

"Equity refers to the fairness and comparability of climate pledges. Fairness can be interpreted in many ways; our paper quantifies these different interpretations so that the quantitative implications can be compared," co-author Louise Jeffery of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research adds.

"Equity concepts include those that assign lower future emissions allowances to countries with high past emissions and wealthier [countries](#), those that aim for equal [emissions](#) per person, and those that preserve the right to development and accommodate national circumstances".

The results of the study will also be available on a new website called [Paris Equity Check](#), the first website to offer a multi-dimensional and completely peer-reviewed overview on climate pledges with regard to equity principles, consistent with the Paris Agreement.

More information: Yann Robiou du Pont et al. Equitable mitigation to achieve the Paris Agreement goals, *Nature Climate Change* (2016). [DOI: 10.1038/nclimate3186](https://doi.org/10.1038/nclimate3186)

Provided by University of Melbourne

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