



United Nations
Climate Change

United Nations Climate Change Annual Report 2019



Scope of this report

This report encompasses the key achievements under the UNFCCC intergovernmental process and the activities of the secretariat, particularly the impacts of those activities in support of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.

A note on terminology

In this publication, “UN Climate Change” refers collectively to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC or Convention), the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, and their bodies, institutional arrangements and organs, including the secretariat.

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United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement

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1. Dima Zel/Shutterstock.com
2. Eco Wave Power is a winner of the 2019 UN Global Action Awards for its innovative technology that produces clean electricity from ocean and sea waves.
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Foreword by António Guterres

United Nations Secretary-General

The year 2019 saw some evidence of increased ambition to address climate change, such as the commitments made at the United Nations Climate Action Summit convened in September, the replenishment of the Green Climate Fund and the many other activities covered in this report. But these steps were simply overwhelmed by two overarching realities: the continued intensification of the pattern of destruction and losses associated with climate change, and a lack of decisions on key elements of the Paris Agreement implementation guidance needed to fully unlock its potential.

The best available science from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the World Meteorological Organization and academic institutions continues to show that going beyond a 1.5 °C increase in average surface temperature will lead us to catastrophic disaster and extreme weather events. The United Nations Environment Programme's Emissions Gap Report 2019 warned that unless global greenhouse gas emissions fall by 7.6 per cent each year between 2020 and 2030, the world will not put itself on track towards the goals of the Paris Agreement.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the postponement of COP 26 until 2021, but the climate emergency endures, and 2020 remains the year in which countries are slated to submit new or enhanced nationally determined contributions, in which mitigation and finance commitments made in past years will be assessed, and in which we need to start seeing tangible outcomes from

the initiatives launched at the 2019 Summit, along with significant additional actions from State and non-State actors.

Leaders are rightly focused on saving lives and livelihoods, and on easing the devastating economic and social impacts of COVID-19. But, as we strive to recover better, we must steer our world onto a more sustainable and inclusive path that tackles climate change, protects the environment, reverses biodiversity loss and ensures the long-term health and security of humankind.

In that context, climate-related actions can help guide our recovery, from investing in green jobs and ending subsidies for fossil fuels, to avoiding bailouts for polluting industries and taking climate risks and opportunities into account in all financial and policy decisions.

We are already seeing positive signals by a number of governments and businesses that are aligning stimulus packages with the objectives of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I am stressing that we simply cannot go back to pre-COVID-19 assumptions and practices, and I am calling on major emitters in particular, to invest far more in a better, more sustainable future.

The postponement of COP 26 must not mean the postponement of climate action. Countries must still, as a matter of urgency, raise ambition on mitigation, adaptation and finance.

That means setting a course to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. It means ending support for industries that have no place in our energy future, and which are no longer economically credible as



the cost of renewable energy continues to plummet. It means creating the millions of jobs that are needed in the new sectors of sustainable growth: resilient infrastructure, clean mobility, net zero buildings, renewable energy, and zero deforestation food systems.

It also means ensuring financing, beginning with the fulfilment of the mobilization of USD 100 billion per year for mitigation and adaptation in developing countries. We cannot allow the heavy and rising debt burden of the most vulnerable countries and other developing countries to be a barrier to their ambitions.

This UNFCCC annual report sets out achievements as well as challenges to enhanced climate action. I hope that it will be a spur to the collective action we need at this pivotal moment. As we mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, international cooperation and multilateralism remain the only way forward.

I trust that the UNFCCC membership and all stakeholders will work to recover better, together.

Message from Patricia Espinosa

UNFCCC Executive Secretary

The COVID-19 outbreak began as we were preparing this annual report. When attempting to reflect on the past year, I could only think of the present and the future. As the world faces the pandemic and its implications for economies and societies, a significant climate change agenda lies ahead and must be a component of all post-pandemic recovery plans.

As Secretary-General Guterres has said, we must take into consideration when designing and implementing such plans the need to turn recovery into an opportunity to promote a greener, safer and healthier future for all. The UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement provide, together with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a solid foundation for such recovery.

The transparency arrangements under the Convention and the Paris Agreement represent the gold standard for greenhouse gas emission reporting, and UNFCCC institutions and workstreams constitute the most comprehensive set of arrangements in the world for facilitating efforts by governments and non-governmental actors to address climate change.

At COP 24 in Katowice in 2018, governments adopted the rules for the Paris Agreement, the toolbox for its full implementation. Action happening around the world demonstrates that these tools are useful: 186 Parties have submitted their first nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement, more than 90 countries are preparing national adaptation plans, the clean development mechanism has facilitated more than 8,000 emission reduction projects, the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action is catalysing a new era of ambition among non-Party stakeholders, and more than 17,000 actors have shared their projects on the NAZCA global climate action portal.

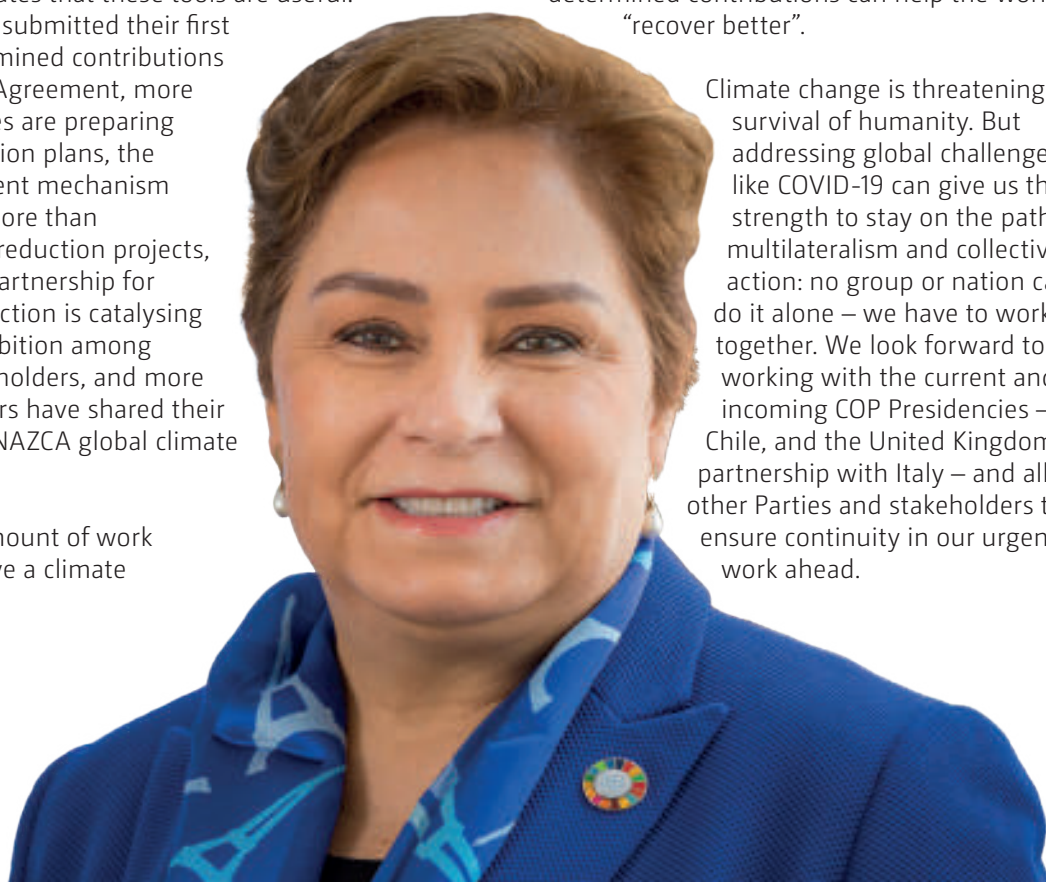
An incredible amount of work remains. We have a climate

emergency. Despite progress, never has the gap between climate reality and climate action been wider; never has the divide between the global climate negotiations and the demands of society, in particular youth, been deeper. This is not subjective; it's a fact – one consistently backed by scientific evidence and civil society voices. And this is understood by millions of people around the world, who are becoming increasingly frustrated with the pace of change and demanding that leaders do more to reduce emissions.

Unfortunately, owing to COVID-19, many UNFCCC meetings, including SB 52 and COP 26, cannot take place as planned in 2020. The secretariat has nonetheless adapted to the limitations and impacts imposed by the pandemic to ensure continuity in the crucial work on climate change. We are committed to continuing to innovate in supporting our Parties and stakeholders.

2020 must still be the year of ambition and implementation. Parties will be submitting new or revised nationally determined contributions, which must be highly ambitious if we are to succeed in holding global temperature increase below 1.5 °C. We must turn the global recovery from the COVID-19 outbreak into an opportunity, and nationally determined contributions can help the world to “recover better”.

Climate change is threatening the survival of humanity. But addressing global challenges like COVID-19 can give us the strength to stay on the path of multilateralism and collective action: no group or nation can do it alone – we have to work together. We look forward to working with the current and incoming COP Presidencies – Chile, and the United Kingdom in partnership with Italy – and all other Parties and stakeholders to ensure continuity in our urgent work ahead.



**CLIMATE CHANGE
A PLANETARY
EMERGENCY**

The world's climate is changing at an unprecedented pace. Since the industrial revolution, humans have been emitting greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, thus changing the planet's climatic balance. Today these gases continue to accumulate in the atmosphere and the ocean. According to the IPCC, a 1.5 °C increase in global average surface temperature is a limit beyond which climate change will have devastating consequences.

Climate change is inherently global. Greenhouse gases affect climate around the world, no matter where or by whom they are emitted. Many human activities are responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, including the production and consumption of energy and the clearing of forests to create fields.

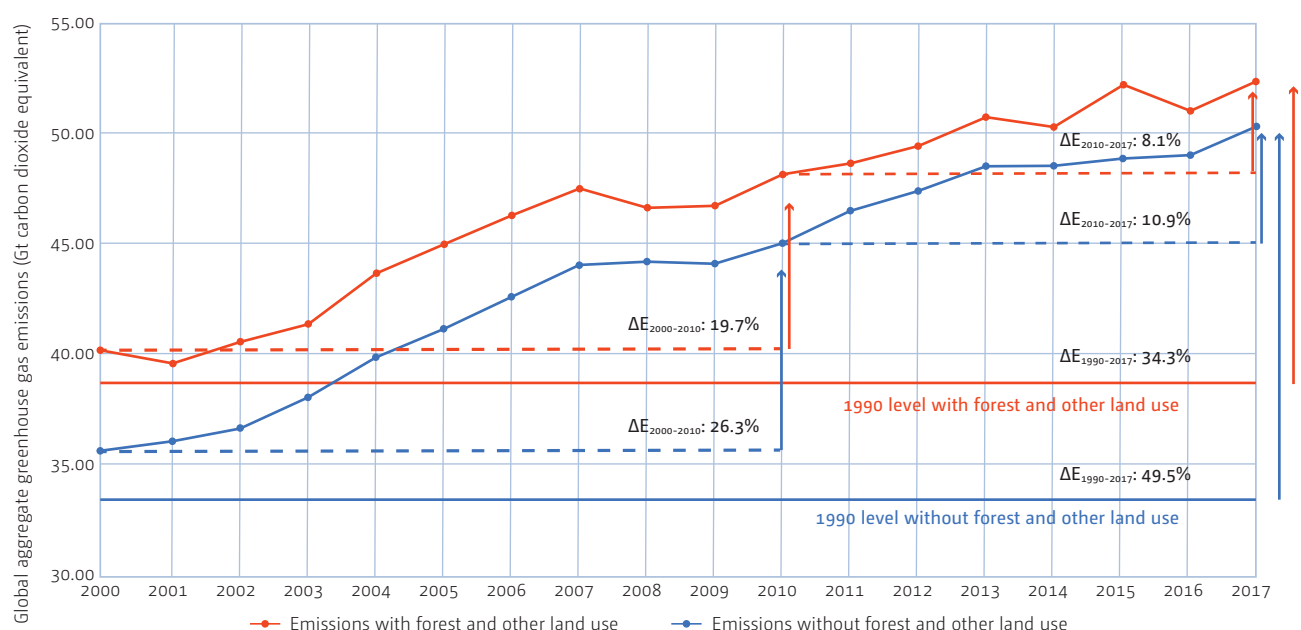
By disrupting economies, livelihoods and the ecosystems on which we all depend, climate change threatens current and future generations. Climate change affects everyone, but those who suffer the most – the poorest and most vulnerable people in every society – are the least likely to have the means to adapt to its impacts.

We are collectively responsible for addressing climate change. We must accelerate the pace and increase the scale of our response, and make this coming decade one of global action on climate change.

The world today is 1.1 °C warmer than in pre-industrial times. The consequences of this warming are enormous, as seen in the increase in intense floods and fires and extreme weather events of the past decade. Rising sea levels, retreating ice caps and dying coral are the most visible impacts of a warming planet. Just as humans suffer from extreme change, so do ecosystems. Temperatures have risen so quickly that myriad species, already weakened by habitat loss or pesticide overuse, cannot adapt to new conditions quickly enough. The United Nations estimates that 1 million species are on the brink of extinction owing to human activity. Climate change is contributing to the massive loss of animal, insect and plant species and the spread of diseases to higher latitudes.

We need to alter our course before it is too late. We need to make drastic changes to the way we produce, consume and source our energy. We need to protect ecosystems so that they stay healthy and resilient against climatic stresses. And we need to accept that while we might not yet understand the full extent of future changes to the climate, there is enough scientific certainty to warrant sweeping action, particularly when faced with the threat of large-scale and irreversible damage.

Fighting climate change is also crucial to sustainable development. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which include climate action (Goal 13), are shared by all 193 Member States of the United Nations and reflect humanity's highest aspirations for development.



The evolution of global aggregate greenhouse gas emissions from 2000 to 2017 against the 1990 emission level. Source: UN Climate Change



WHO WE ARE



The UNFCCC secretariat, also known as UN Climate Change, is the United Nations entity supporting the global response to climate change. Preventing dangerous human interference with the climate system is the ultimate objective of the Convention. The secretariat empowers governments, organizations, businesses and individuals to achieve this objective and build a climate-neutral, climate-resilient world. The well-being of humanity and sustainable development are at the heart of climate action.

The UNFCCC has near universal membership (197 Parties) and is the parent treaty of the 2015 Paris Agreement, whose aim is to keep the global average temperature rise this century below 2 °C, or preferably 1.5 °C, above pre-industrial levels. It is also the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and its Doha Amendment, adopted in 2012.

The secretariat is located in Bonn, Germany. Its 390 staff, who come from over 100 countries, represent diverse cultures and have varied professional backgrounds. Since 2016, the secretariat has been led by Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa.

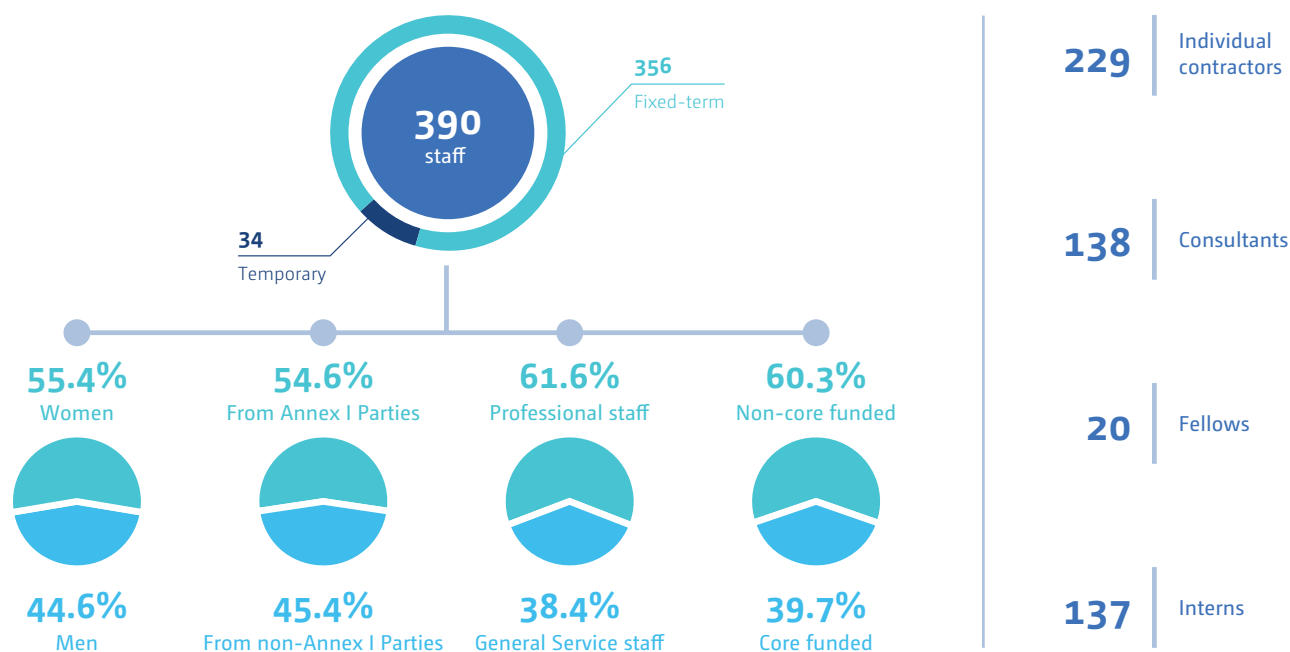
While the secretariat in its early years focused on facilitating intergovernmental climate negotiations, today it supports a complex architecture that serves to advance the implementation of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.

The secretariat plays a crucial role in putting into practice the transparency and accountability arrangements for climate change reporting. Transparency and accountability foster trust for implementation. The secretariat works with countries on building technical expertise and capacity, developing national climate change plans and strategies both on mitigation and adaptation, facilitating access to finance, sharing knowledge and technology, and operating the mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol. It also provides legal oversight for the implementation of the Convention and policymaking support. The secretariat convenes and mobilizes thousands of stakeholders and coalitions and provides a forum for designing science-based climate policies and programmes.

The secretariat generally organizes a minimum of two negotiating sessions each year. The main session, where the COP, the CMP and the CMA meet, is held in November or December each year.

In addition to these conference sessions, throughout the year the secretariat organizes many meetings and workshops for the constituted bodies and expert groups that it serves.

Staff composition



Note: Staff numbers as at 31 December 2019

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the UNFCCC

The secretariat was established in 1992, when countries adopted the Convention. Two years later, the Convention entered into force, and the first COP was held in March/April 1995.

Among the successes of the Convention has been the creation of a set of international rules, guidelines and institutions to help countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to climate change. Great strides have been made in building resilience to climate change, as well as in leveraging policy, technology, knowledge and funds to fight its devastating impacts.

Thanks to the efforts of Parties, technical experts, scientists and other stakeholders, the UNFCCC has built a robust framework for global climate action and mechanisms for reporting on national commitments. The potential for ramping up ambition is in place.

To celebrate this milestone in international climate policy, an event, “25 Years of the UNFCCC”, was held on the margins of the United Nations Climate Action Summit in September 2019. The celebratory event showcased the work done by Parties and stakeholders on climate change.

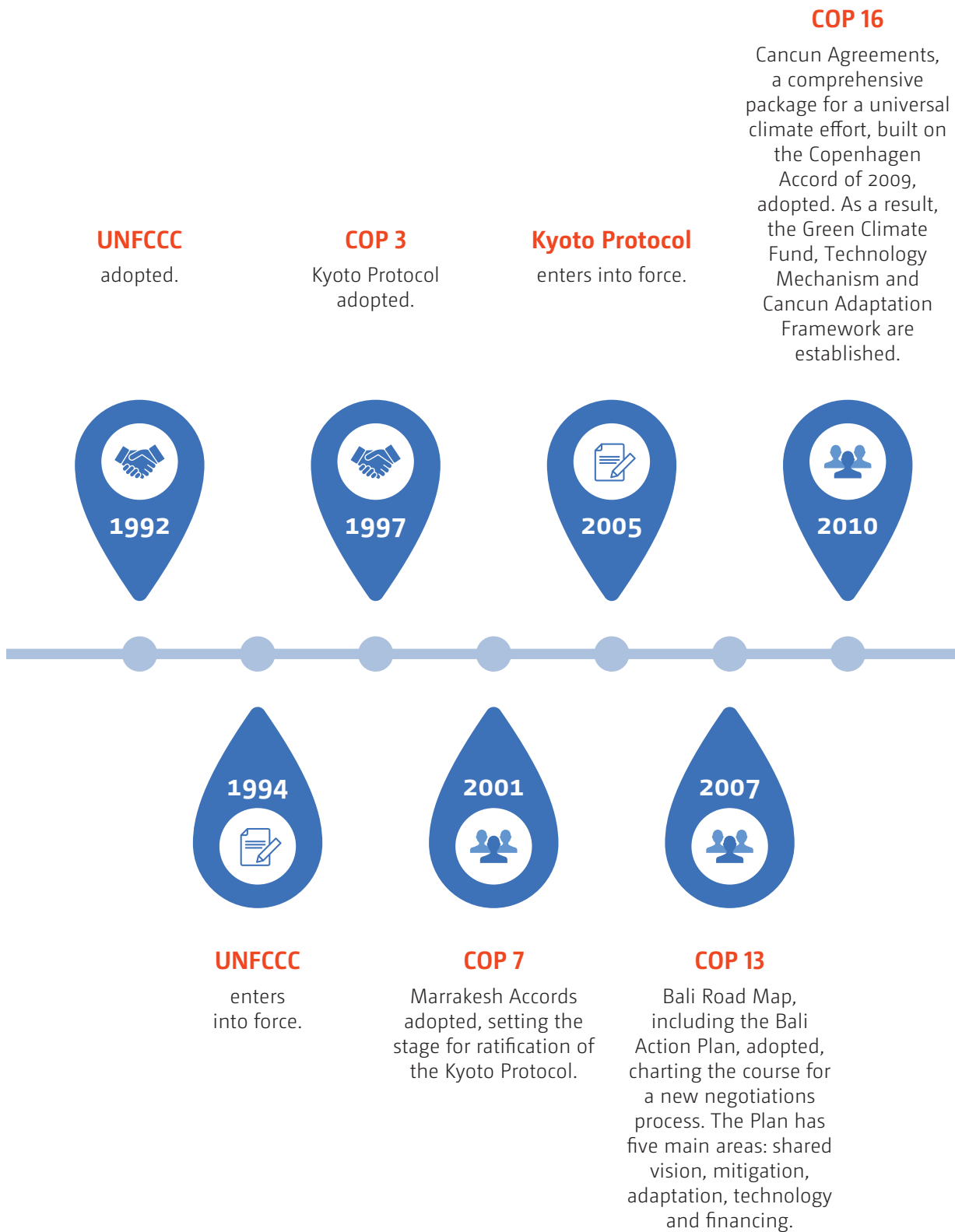
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The last 25 years have been a time of challenges and opportunities, with disappointments matched by some incredible successes.
”

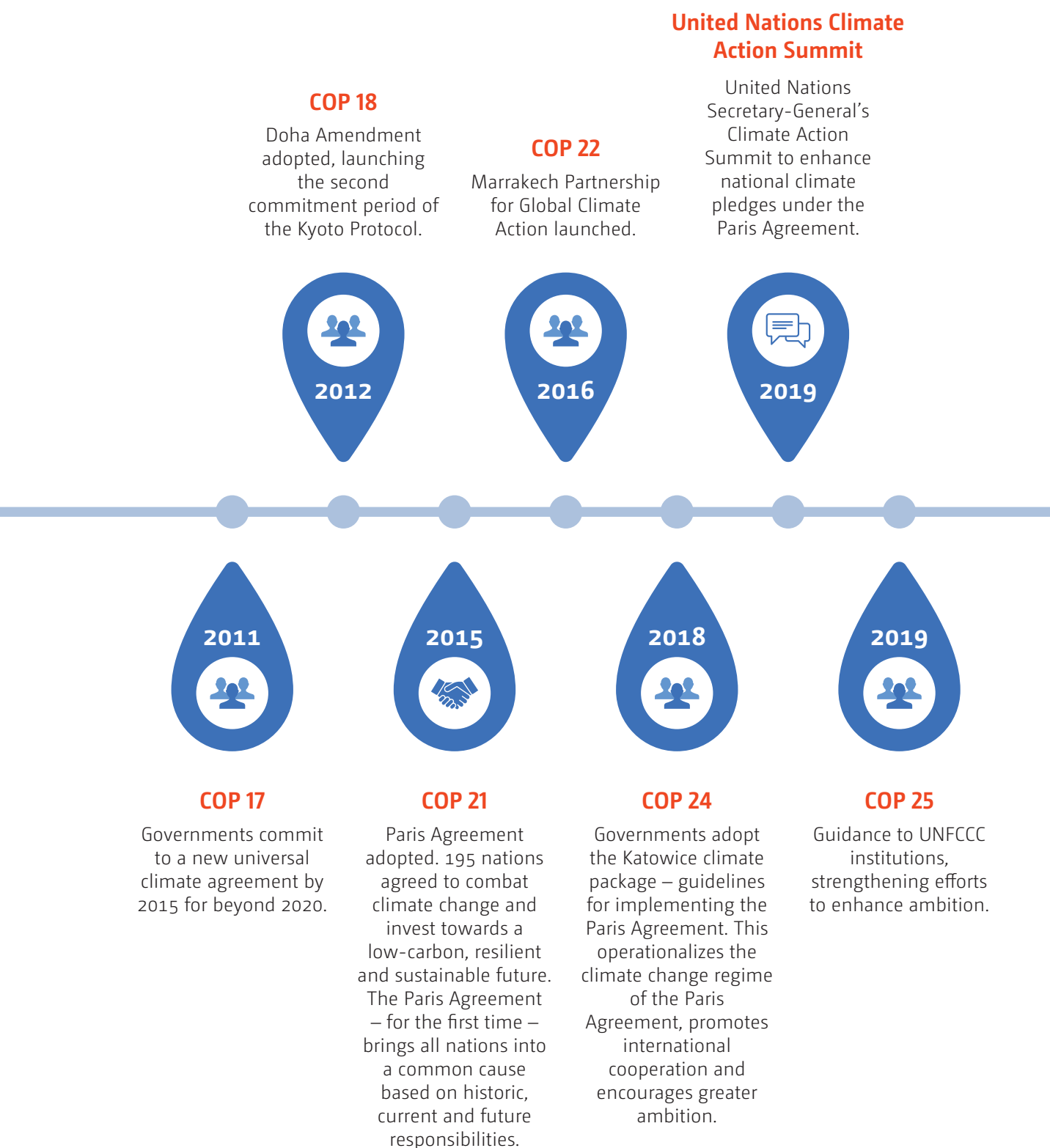
Patricia Espinosa,
UNFCCC Executive Secretary



Photo by UN Climate Change

25 years of global climate effort





Responding to climate change with global collaboration

Climate change affects all aspects of human life and life on the planet. Because nearly all human activities contribute to it, climate change is interconnected with many other global challenges and the responses to them. Cooperation between the secretariat, international organizations and other stakeholders ensures common direction, increases the efficiency of these responses and avoids solutions in one area becoming problems in another.

The UNFCCC collaborates with numerous United Nations organizations to pool resources and convening power. The United Nations and other international organizations collaborate to provide expertise and technical and financial support to Parties so that they may effectively implement the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, as well as other global agendas.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global agendas has increased the need for close cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system as their means of implementation are interlinked. The secretariat helps countries to enhance their climate efforts, and thus contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, thereby making a real difference in communities around the world.

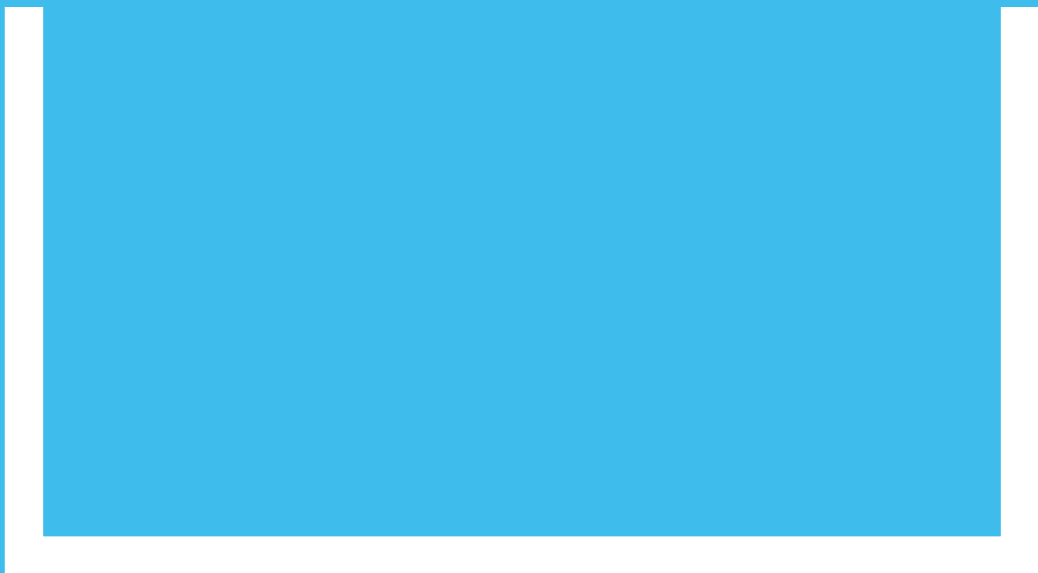
The secretariat strives to amplify the voices of indigenous peoples and women, who, for different reasons, are at the forefront of the fight against climate change but are often left out of decision-making processes. The secretariat also mobilizes non-State actors as well as individuals through, among other initiatives, the technical examination process, the Nairobi work programme, Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action and Climate Neutral Now.



The United Nations campus in Bonn hosts the UNFCCC secretariat.



THE YEAR IN REVIEW



Strengthening action and mobilizing support

In a typical year, the UNFCCC, through its constituted bodies, mechanisms and work programmes, strengthens mitigation and adaptation action and mobilizes support. In parallel, countries conduct negotiations to refine the international rules for climate action. The year's work culminates in the COP, where Parties adopt decisions and guide further work. The global climate effort also moves forward at major

conferences connected to work under the UNFCCC thanks to the scientific community and the community of global climate stakeholders. This section outlines how the secretariat's programmes of work advanced and intersected to move us towards our common goals, and describes the efforts by the secretariat in 2019 to streamline its operations and to better prepare for the challenges ahead.

Mitigation

Never have we needed to step up action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as much as today. Guided by the need for greater global collaboration and transparency in combating climate change, the secretariat supports all Parties in their efforts to measure and assess emission levels, reduce emissions and design ambitious targets for keeping the temperature rise below 1.5 °C.

Preparing nationally determined contributions

In 2019, the secretariat helped countries prepare new or updated nationally determined contributions to be submitted in 2020. It did this by organizing regional expert workshops for the Caribbean and the Pacific, attended by 60 experts, and three regional dialogues – in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean – in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme. The events served as a platform for countries to exchange experience and lessons learned in preparing nationally determined contributions and to identify needs for technical support for doing so. The secretariat also provided advice and direction to the NDC Partnership and to the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations agencies on enhancing and implementing nationally determined contributions.

making steady progress in conserving and protecting forests and are starting to reap numerous benefits – financial as well as environmental.

Since 2014, the secretariat has assessed the progress of 45 developing countries in tackling deforestation. On the basis of their success, four countries have been granted financing amounting to USD 229 million from the Green Climate Fund.

Seven countries assessed their forest levels with the support of the secretariat and published on the Lima REDD+ Information Hub their results in avoiding carbon dioxide emissions through reduced deforestation and forest degradation and through forest conservation. Over the past seven years, the emission of 6.5 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide has been avoided through forest conservation.

Conserving forests for the climate

Forests are a carbon sink, so forest conservation is a major contributor to reducing net carbon emissions. While deforestation continues to be a significant global challenge, countries engaged in REDD+ activities are

Preparing Parties for a new international framework for reporting

The enhanced transparency framework established under Article 13 of the Paris Agreement in 2015 and further developed in the Katowice climate package in

2018 is an important vehicle for tracking, through the submission and review of biennial transparency reports, the progress of Parties on their nationally determined contributions, as well as for tracking support. The framework informs the global stocktake – a periodic review of the implementation of the Paris Agreement aiming to assess collective progress in achieving the purpose and goals of the Agreement – and is a key mechanism for enabling higher ambition by all Parties.

The foundations on which Parties are preparing for the enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement are the Convention processes of international consultation and analysis and international assessment and review, for biennial update reports. In 2019, the secretariat launched efforts to help Parties prepare to implement the enhanced transparency framework. The Consultative Group of Experts, with the support of the secretariat, developed the *Technical handbook for developing country Parties on preparing for implementation of the enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement* for this purpose. In addition, the secretariat compiled frequently asked questions on the operationalization of the enhanced transparency framework.

Supporting countries in reporting

In 2019, the secretariat processed national communications from 20 developing countries (including the first national communications from two of the least developed countries), biennial update reports from 24 developing countries and national inventory reports from 10 developing countries. By December 2019, a total of 30 developing countries had submitted national inventory reports and 55 had submitted biennial update reports.

Assessing the impact of the implementation of response measures

In 2019, the Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures held its first two meetings, established its rules of procedure, and made recommendations on analysing the positive and negative impacts of the implementation of response measures. In 2019, the secretariat supported Parties in raising awareness about existing tools for assessing such impacts, and in maximizing positive and minimizing negative impacts. This enabled significant improvements in knowledge among the 150 participants in those two meetings.

UNFCCC technical support for reporting and transparency

In 2019, the secretariat provided technical support to Parties in the following areas:

- › Implementing the enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement
- › Designing institutional arrangements to support measurement, reporting and verification
- › Preparing national communications and biennial update reports

The secretariat also:

- › Provided guidance to facilitate the clarity and transparency of nationally determined contributions
- › Facilitated knowledge-sharing and the exchange of lessons learned by countries in preparing nationally determined contributions
- › Produced training materials, including a workbook on national greenhouse gas inventories aimed at small island developing States and the least developed countries

Expert training support by the secretariat focused on:

- › Publishing a greenhouse gas data report
- › Institutionalizing data management for national greenhouse gas inventories
- › Developing sustainable national greenhouse gas inventory management systems
- › Using the *2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories*
- › Implementing quality assurance of greenhouse gas inventories and building sustainable national systems
- › Reviewing and analysing greenhouse gas inventories, national communications, biennial reports and biennial update reports
- › Developing methodologies for constructing greenhouse gas baselines and monitoring emissions from transport
- › Conducting technical analyses of the biennial update reports of developing countries

Technical review and analysis in 2019

Technical reviews

for 24 of the greenhouse gas inventories from 44 developed country Parties



Review reports

on 23 greenhouse gas inventories



Nine in-country reviews

of the third biennial reports and seventh national communications



Publication

of 82 developed country review reports in the 2018–2019 review cycle



Technical analysis

of biennial update reports submitted by 22 developing country Parties



Multilateral assessment

for 29 developed countries



Facilitative sharing of views

for 14 developing countries



Adaptation

Greater efforts are required to adapt to the impacts of climate change and to protect people and the planet. The UNFCCC interacts with governments and partners in searching for ways to increase developing countries' capacity to adapt. This year in adaptation was marked by the secretariat's provision of support to countries for developing their national adaptation plans, the work of the Adaptation Committee on climate finance, the enhancement of partnerships under the Nairobi work programme and the work on comprehensive risk management under the Warsaw International Mechanism.

Supporting countries in developing national adaptation plans

In 2019, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group began assisting those least developed countries that face challenges in formulating national adaptation plans. It worked with 18 least developed countries through the Open NAP initiative, which helps countries produce their first plan by 2020 or soon after. The participation of the Green Climate Fund and various United Nations organizations has provided a strong foundation for this initiative.

The technical support provided by the Least Developed Countries Expert Group and partners to improve access by countries to the Green Climate Fund for preparing their national adaptation plans has yielded positive outcomes. Also jointly supported by the secretariat and the Expert Group, more than 130 developing countries and almost all of the least developed countries are taking steps to prepare national adaptation plans, and more than 70 countries are at various stages of accessing the Green Climate Fund's readiness support for this purpose. Five countries submitted completed national adaptation plans in 2019.

Financing for adaptation

The Adaptation Committee in 2019 stepped up its work on financing for adaptation. This work included conducting the technical examination process on adaptation, which focused on adaptation finance, including from the private sector, and seeking input from Parties to identify capacity-building needs in accessing funding. The secretariat supported this work on financing adaptation by preparing technical and strategic background papers and by assisting the

Committee in showcasing progress. To allow the Adaptation Committee to maintain its high impact in the face of decreasing financial resources, the secretariat facilitates the Committee's communications and outreach activities, building on existing partnerships, including those under the Nairobi work programme.

Adaptation events in 2019

- › NAP Expo 2019, held in Songdo, Republic of Korea, brought together over 400 participants and 30 organizations and programmes on the topic of raising adaptation ambition by advancing national adaptation plans. During the Expo, more than 100 Green Climate Fund secretariat staff assisted country teams with their national adaptation plans. A technical session was held under the Nairobi work programme on how to use metrics and indicators for measuring the adaptation progress of vulnerable communities, groups and ecosystems.
- › The 2019 Adaptation Forum, also held in Songdo, focused on engaging the private sector in adaptation planning processes, including national adaptation plans. The outcomes of the Forum were published in an online report and an outreach document.
- › The Adaptation Committee held an event to launch its flagship report *25 Years of Adaptation Under the UNFCCC*, which offered a comprehensive overview of the adaptation architecture and its evolution under the UNFCCC since 1994. The event also featured other constituted bodies reflecting on the progress on adaptation to date, and on ways to build on that progress.

Transforming knowledge into action

The Nairobi work programme is the UNFCCC knowledge-to-action hub for adaptation and resilience. Under the programme, nearly 400 partners with diverse knowledge and expertise work to close knowledge gaps and meet needs for adaptation. In 2019, new alliances were formed under the Nairobi work programme with regional academic institutions, organizations and networks to help address knowledge gaps in the Andean subregion, Gulf Cooperation Council countries, the Hindu Kush Himalayan subregion, Indian Ocean island countries and the North Africa subregion. A paper on existing knowledge and knowledge gaps in the area of oceans and adaptation was co-produced with a specialized group of experts under the work programme.

Partnering to reduce disaster risk

In 2019, the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism focused on developing comprehensive risk management approaches to

building the long-term resilience of countries, vulnerable populations and communities. The Executive Committee established a technical expert group with several aims related to comprehensive risk management: enhancing the coherence of efforts, mobilizing further support in 2020–2021 and identifying capacity-building needs. The Executive Committee also updated a compendium on comprehensive risk management for practitioners and policymakers.

The secretariat partnered with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to promote coherence between adaptation and disaster risk reduction. The partnership involved conducting regional workshops and providing support to countries that are co-producing plans for adaptation and disaster risk management. This work will continue in 2020, with plans to expand direct support to at least 20 countries. A partnership with the Group on Earth Observations was also established; one of its objectives is to explore the application of remote sensing to adaptation assessment and implementation.



Photo by Nicolas Montibert

To help reach the goals of the Paris Agreement, many companies are measuring, reducing and offsetting their emissions to reach 100 per cent carbon neutrality. Natura Cosmetics is a winner of the 2019 United Nations Global Climate Action Awards for its work to measure and reduce emissions across its value chain, from the extraction of raw materials to the production and distribution of its products.

Climate finance

Ensuring quick access to adequate finance that supports countries in tackling climate change is essential. Economists have warned that inaction will be far costlier than action in the long term.

The secretariat supported negotiations on a wide range of climate finance topics throughout 2019 and continued to assist developing countries in assessing the priority of their adaptation, mitigation, capacity-building and financial needs through the Needs-based Finance project.

The Standing Committee on Finance, with support from the secretariat, continued its work on preparing the technical report on the *Fourth Biennial Assessment and Overview of Climate Finance Flows*, and initiated

work on the first-ever report on determination of the needs of developing country Parties, agreeing on the outline of the report and strategic outreach activities related to it. The Committee also convened its 2019 Forum, the topic of which was climate finance and sustainable cities. Over 130 participants attended the Forum to share their insights; participants represented municipal and national governments, global city networks, financial institutions, bilateral agencies, international organizations, United Nations agencies, think tanks and civil society.



Photo by Jason Mulikita for REEEP

Accessibility of low-cost technology for renewable energy and energy efficiency is key to achieving transformation in developing countries and emerging markets. The Beyond the Grid Fund is a winner of the 2019 United Nations Global Climate Action Awards for its work on helping create a viable, risk-free market environment for investors and businesses in Zambia.

Technology

Innovation in technologies that can be applied to improving climate resilience and reducing greenhouse gas emissions is key to achieving the purpose and goals of the Paris Agreement. Access to these technologies, in terms of both transfer and finance, is also key.

In 2019, the secretariat continued to work with the Technology Executive Committee on identifying policy options, practices and technologies with high mitigation potential and on producing recommendations for ways to move forward with mitigation.

Technology needs assessments by developing countries are an important source of information on climate action. The technology support and implementation unit of the secretariat continued to support climate action in developing countries and to share success stories through its events and

brochures, as well as its climate technology projects database, which lists more than 50 projects supported by the Green Climate Fund, the Global Environment Facility or the Climate Technology Centre and Network.

The Climate Technology Centre and Network fulfilled 63 requests for technical assistance from developing countries. Other activities of the Centre included conducting knowledge-sharing workshops, providing support to local innovation projects, facilitating networking and assisting in technology needs assessments.



Photo by Electriciens sans frontières

Solar energy is among the fastest-growing renewable technologies today, as a source of electricity, cooling and heating. Electricians without Borders is a winner of the 2019 United Nations Global Climate Action Awards for its work in helping countries make vital health infrastructure more resilient to disasters, while mitigating climate change.

Capacity-building

The UNFCCC capacity-building efforts are at the heart of its work on adaptation, mitigation, technology and climate finance. In 2019, the secretariat focused on improving its capacity-building activities through better coordination, systemic planning and continuous evaluation.

In 2019, the Paris Committee on Capacity-building made great strides in improving the coordination of capacity-building activities among various stakeholders; providing technical guidance; building climate change related capacity; and boosting awareness-raising, outreach and knowledge-sharing. The Committee also compiled and summarized problems, constraints, lessons learned and needs related to reporting by developing country Parties.

The capacity-building activities conducted in 2019 were guided by the Strategic Plan for Stakeholder Engagement, Communications and Resource Mobilization and built on past experience on capacity-building to yield results across all UNFCCC work areas. The Paris Committee on Capacity-building Network forms a central part of the efforts under this strategic plan.

Examples of capacity-building activities organized by the secretariat include:

- › The 8th Durban Forum, which focused on strengthening the support of scientific institutions on the implementation of nationally determined contributions in developing countries and led to regional capacity-building events in Latin America and the Asia-Pacific

- › A technical workshop on gender capacity-building for the constituted bodies, which resulted in the development and endorsement of a gender mainstreaming standard for the Paris Committee on Capacity-building
- › Three workshops on agriculture and climate change held under the Koronivia joint work on agriculture
- › Various technical workshops and events that fostered cooperation and the exchange of information and best practices among international organizations and Parties on emerging law and policy issues and gaps under the Paris Agreement

Improving through continuous evaluation

Gathering feedback and using it to improve activities and services was an indispensable part of the secretariat's capacity-building efforts in 2019. Ex post assessment of meetings and online surveys were used to gather feedback. The findings suggested using partnerships to address financial and institutional barriers and implementing a systemic approach to avoid the duplication and reduce the fragmentation of capacity-building efforts.



Photo by UN Climate Change/Cory Wright

Participants attend the 2019 Asia-Pacific Climate Week.

Carbon markets

The clean development mechanism enables governments, organizations, businesses and individuals to buy carbon credits from projects that reduce carbon dioxide emissions, thus lowering their carbon footprint. Carbon markets enable both the financing of clean development and reductions in emissions while implementing new solutions and technologies continues to pave the way for a full transition to a net zero carbon world.

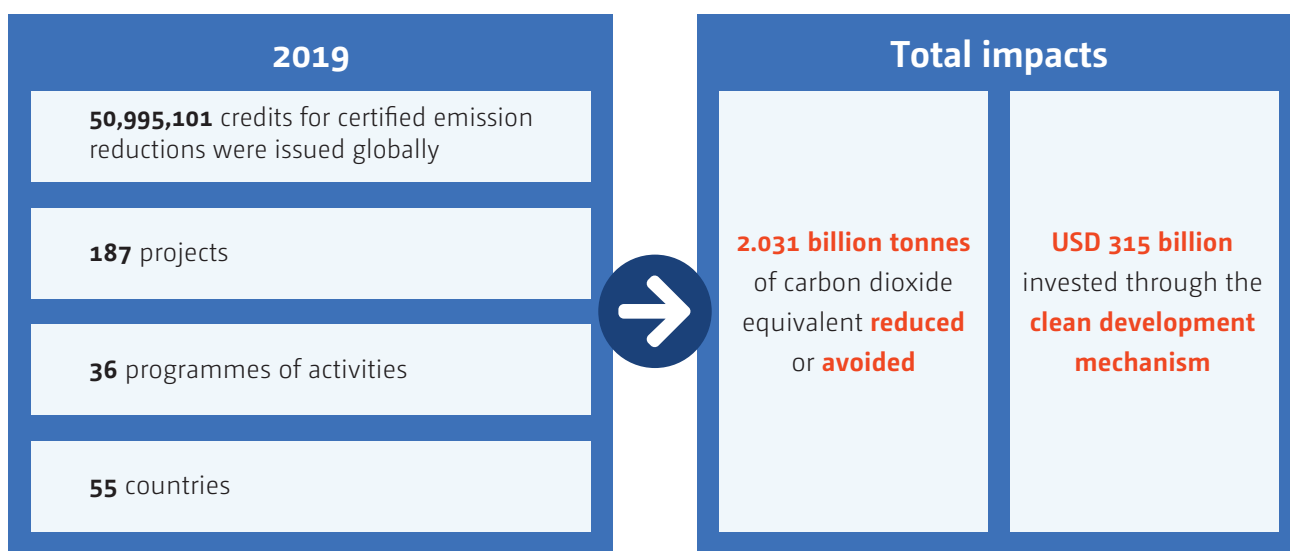
The clean development mechanism continued to deliver results throughout 2019. Its Executive Board held four meetings, while the Methodologies Panel and Accreditation Panel each organized three meetings. A number of Parties implemented policies that use the clean development mechanism to meet emission reduction targets. The public can also contribute to reducing its carbon footprint: individuals and corporations can access the voluntary cancellation platform, an e-commerce service of the clean development mechanism registry, to offset their own emissions or support clean development mechanism projects.

In 2019, a total of 95 participants attended the twentieth meeting of the Designated National Authorities Forum to learn about the clean development mechanism, climate finance and regional support available, and to exchange views on regional collaboration, Article 6 of the Paris Agreement and the roles of designated national authorities.

Since COP 22 in 2016, the secretariat has supported jurisdictions considering carbon pricing. The Collaborative Instruments for Ambitious Climate Action initiative applies participatory processes and conducts studies and workshops on carbon pricing to help institutions gain the knowledge and capacity they need to tackle climate change. In 2019, the initiative concluded its first phase, during which it supported 18 jurisdictions on four continents. As a result, in 2019, Panama finalized its guidelines for its registry of greenhouse gas emissions, the Dominican Republic validated its first study on the potential for domestic carbon pricing and Pakistan launched its new national committee on carbon markets at COP 25.

To support climate action in international aviation, the secretariat engaged with the International Civil Aviation Organization secretariat to exchange information on mechanisms established under the Kyoto Protocol and work under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement and other developments under the UNFCCC, so as to assist in development and implementation of the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation.

Clean development mechanism in numbers





From left to right: Minister for the Ecological Transition of Spain, Teresa Ribera; Minister of the Environment of Chile, Carolina Schmidt; and UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa

Photo by UN Climate Change/James Dowson

COP 25

COP 25 was held in Madrid under the Presidency of Chile.

Moving the COP from Santiago to Madrid

Moving COP 25 from Santiago to Madrid in less than one month was immensely challenging. Nevertheless, thanks to the tireless collaboration of the Governments of Spain and Chile, the secretariat and the operator of the IFEMA – Feria de Madrid venue, as well as to the solidarity, support and resources of Parties, the conference started on schedule.

In order to make the COP happen, the secretariat carried out a practically endless list of tasks under extreme pressure, including:

- › Coordinate the work of numerous vendors for the fit-out of the new venue
- › Set up plenary halls, pavilions and meeting rooms
- › Make security arrangements
- › Install audiovisual equipment
- › Redo protocol arrangements
- › Reroute shipments from Santiago to Madrid
- › Rebook travel and hotels for staff
- › Reconfirm attendance, side events and exhibits
- › Rearrange catering and banking services
- › Rerun the accreditation process for local non-governmental organizations
- › Recruit and train new local staff and volunteers
- › Facilitate local transport

Key outcomes of COP 25

COP 25 ended with key achievements in adaptation, mitigation and climate finance, including decisions that support research, innovation and collaboration in the areas of agriculture, capacity-building, coastal areas, ecosystems, oceans and technology.

At the COP, the Technology Executive Committee approved its four-year workplan – which has a special focus on gender mainstreaming – for implementing the technology framework adopted at COP 24 in Katowice. Parties agreed to the six-year workplan (2020–2025) of the forum on the impact of the

implementation of response measures and the Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures.

COP 25 brought gender equality and the empowerment of women to the fore by adopting the enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its five-year gender action plan (2020–2024), and gave indigenous peoples a stronger voice through the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform, finalizing its two-year workplan (2020–2021).

In response to the continued need of countries for capacity-building, Parties at COP 25 extended the work of the Paris Committee on Capacity-building until 2024.

In a key decision, Parties agreed on a second periodic review in 2020–2022. The review will enhance Parties' understanding of the long-term goal and scenarios, and assess the aggregate effect of steps by Parties towards the goal. The COP also concluded its work on the pre-2020 stocktake and agreed to hold a round table to inform the second periodic review.

The COP 25 Presidency, supported by the secretariat's communication efforts with governments and international agencies, pushed for greater ambition on climate action, encouraging nations to review and enhance their nationally determined contributions. As a result, 121 Parties, 14 regions, 398 cities, 786 businesses and 16 investors joined the Climate Ambition Alliance, committing to working towards net zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050, and 114 nations pledged to enhance their climate action plans in 2020.

Continuing work on carbon market and non-market approaches

Despite Parties falling short of agreeing on issues related to Article 6 of the Paris Agreement and on the launch of cooperative instruments – essential tools for enhancing the efficiency of mitigation efforts and increasing finance for adaptation – most technical issues relating to the market-based and non-market approaches under Article 6 were resolved in 2019. COP 26 will be tasked with sealing the deal on Article 6.

COP 25 in numbers

>26,000

registered users
of the UNFCCC
mobile app

28,000
participants

700
local staff

2,000
volunteers

>2,500 meetings | 260 side events | 160 two-day exhibits

32

Heads of State and Government
at the Leaders' Summit organized
by the Government of Spain

~70

Interviews conducted
at the Climate Action Studio

190

National statements made
at the high-level segment

138

Official documents

High-level and ministerial events

The secretariat supported and organized over 20 high-level special events and events convened by the Presidency at COP 25, on topics related to increasing ambition, science-based ocean solutions, dialogue on adaptation, children and youth, and energy and transportation.

Key events at COP 25

The secretariat supported the Presidencies of COP 24 and COP 25 with the preparatory and intergovernmental meetings held in the lead-up to and during the conference, allowing hundreds of representatives of governments, civil society, academia and business to take part in a wide range of events, including:

- › The highly successful Capacity-building Hub, co-organized by the Paris Committee on Capacity-building and 65 partners
- › A high-level leadership dialogue on turning the tide on deforestation, at which seven heads of United Nations organizations discussed the importance of forests for mitigating climate change and ways of collaborating to slow deforestation
- › A high-level meeting of the Nairobi Work Programme on the topic of oceans, coastal areas and ecosystems
- › A forum on climate finance strategies for the implementation of nationally determined contributions, which was attended by ministers and senior officials involved in the Needs-based Finance project
- › A ministerial high-level event on Action for Climate Empowerment, organized by the secretariat in partnership with the Governments of Chile and Spain, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and

Cultural Organization, and the members of the United Nations Alliance on Climate Change Education, Training and Public Awareness

- › An event convened by the Adaptation Committee and partners celebrating indigenous and local adaptation to a changing climate
- › An event convened by the Warsaw International Mechanism task force on displacement, which showcased the second phase of the task force's work on integrated approaches to averting, minimizing and addressing displacement related to the adverse effects of climate change

A space for youth

Powerful youth movements galvanized action in 2019 like never before. Connected, informed and with their future at stake, young people are at the forefront of climate action.

COP 25 gave youth a space for creative expression through the screening of the winners of the fifth Global Youth Video Competition. Over 400 videos were received from 114 countries, showcasing young people's inspiring climate actions. The three winners in 2019 were Callie Broadus, United States of America, for her film "Reserva: The Youth Land Trust"; Raquel Gaião Silva, Portugal, for her film "Ocean Alive"; and Rafael Forsetto and Kiane Assis, Brazil, for their film, "What Is Agroecology?"



Photo by UN Climate Change/Khawla Alazabi

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa speaks with a young COP 25 volunteer ahead of the conference.



Photo by UN Climate Change/Khawla Alazabi

Conference participants sampled plant-based and nature-friendly food and drinks provided by Impossible Foods and Thai–German culinary start-up Whapow. Innovation consultancy Innosensi offered participants a multisensory dining experience – “From root to flower” – to demonstrate first-hand the concept of sustainable and waste-free dining.

COP 25 sustainable food initiative

Sustainable practices in the food industry and climate-friendly dietary habits are essential to achieving the purpose and goals of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2019, the secretariat convened several key events to focus the world’s attention on food system transformation. At the Bonn Climate Change Conference in June, the secretariat hosted an expert panel followed by tasting experiences to foster discussion on climate change and sustainable diets and to showcase innovative climate-friendly food products. At COP 25, an event on innovation in food systems convened world experts to present the latest efforts to integrate food into climate solutions.

The demand for sustainable and healthy food options at UNFCCC conferences was confirmed by a survey organized by the secretariat after COP 25. In 2019, moving the COP from Chile to Madrid in a very short time imposed logistical limitations. Nevertheless, efforts were made to offer balanced and climate-friendly catering options, to ensure sustainable transport of food, and to reduce food waste. The secretariat remains committed to responding to such demand in future conferences, and will engage with all countries and stakeholders to facilitate global efforts towards more sustainable food systems.

Pursuing ambition

Supporting the COP 25 Presidency

In the context of the vision of the COP 25 Presidency to raise ambition while balancing mitigation and adaptation, the secretariat supported a wealth of initiatives, including five high-level ministerial events to raise ambition and engage sectors such as agriculture, energy, finance and science. Additionally, the secretariat provided support to the ministerial dialogue on adaptation ambition organized by the Presidency and two other events pertaining to pre-2020 implementation and ambition as well as global climate action.

United Nations Climate Action Summit

The secretariat provided significant support to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the COP 25 Presidency for the United Nations Climate Action Summit. The Summit culminated in the widely joined Climate Ambition Alliance, which gained further members at COP 25. Across the nine tracks of the summit, 40 initiatives were launched to build and sustain momentum and showcase how the real economy is moving towards net zero by 2050. The initiatives were led by 22 institutions from the United Nations family and brought together 80 supporting institutions from a wide range of stakeholders – public and private institutions, government and civil society.

After the Summit, the initiatives were documented on the UNFCCC NAZCA Platform and in the Report of the Secretary-General on the 2019 Climate Action Summit.

Ahead of the Summit, the secretariat issued the publication *Climate action and support trends* – a summary and analysis of climate action based on national reports submitted under the UNFCCC process – and co-authored with the United Nations Development Programme the publication *The Heat Is On: Taking Stock of Global Climate Ambition* – a detailed review of nationally determined contributions.

Regional climate weeks

Regional climate weeks offer a unique opportunity to keep capacity-building at the heart of the climate dialogue. In 2019, the UNFCCC held three regional climate weeks: Africa Climate Week in Accra, Ghana; Latin America and Caribbean Climate Week in Salvador, Brazil; and Asia-Pacific Climate Week in Bangkok, Thailand. They brought together more than 10,000 participants from national governments, cities, municipalities, academia and civil society and chief executive officers of corporations, to address the climate emergency.

Almost 100 regional and international organizations conducted workshops, thematic sessions and side events at the regional climate weeks. The events represented more than 600 hours of discussion on best practices for national climate plans, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and global climate action. Each climate week delivered key messages to the United Nations Climate Action Summit on solutions for regional challenges.

Membership status of the Climate Ambition Alliance at COP 25

Climate Ambition Alliance	120+ countries
	15 States and regions
	398 cities
	786 businesses
	18% of global emissions
	33% of global gross domestic product

Strengthening the science-policy interface

Believing in the power of science-based decision-making, the secretariat works to ensure that Parties are kept abreast of the latest scientific research.

The science and review team of the secretariat engaged with the scientific community, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the World Meteorological Organization, in supporting the

national adaptation plan process, providing evidence to feed into high-level dialogues and informing the work of the UNFCCC constituted bodies.

Scientific publications in 2019

The IPCC produced two special reports in 2019: *Special Report on Climate Change and Land* and *Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate*. It also refined the *2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* to help countries improve their inventories. The World Meteorological Organization's key findings of the 2018 Statement on the State of the Global Climate were presented at COP 25. The Statement provides an overview of the global climate and highlights significant weather and climate trends as well as global and regional weather events.

If all existing international and local initiatives deliver on their goals, we would be able to limit global warming to 2 °C by 2030. A significant gap would still remain to achieve the 1.5 °C goal. More action is needed, now.

Earth observation: a powerful tool for climate science

The 2019 Earth Information Day, held at COP 25, provided Parties and other stakeholders with an up-to-date picture of the state of the global climate, updates on the implementation of Earth observation and an outlook on how systematic Earth observation can inform policy, support risk assessment and guide decision-making on adaptation and mitigation.

Placing science at the forefront of the global climate effort

Joining forces with the IPCC, the UNFCCC co-organized events for policymakers aimed at providing them with a better understanding of the latest climate change science, including the IPCC's two special reports published in 2019.

Mobilizing stakeholders and extending partnerships and outreach

Climate change is a global threat that requires a global response from all sectors of society. No nation can tackle climate change on its own, and no government can realize the full potential of its national climate change commitments without the contribution of businesses, not-for-profit organizations, multilateral organizations and citizens. In 2019, the secretariat stepped up its work on mobilizing and partnering with a wide variety of individuals and organizations with the aim of raising global – and local – climate ambition.

Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action

The Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action was launched at COP 22 in 2016. The Partnership aims to encourage collaborations among State and non-State actors – international coalitions, initiatives, businesses and organizations – in mobilizing resources to lower emissions and increase resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The key outcomes of the Partnership in 2019 were:

- › The publication of the *Yearbook on Global Climate Action*, an assessment of actions taken by regions, cities, businesses and civil society showing how individual action is instrumental in moving the world forward in closing the emissions gap
- › The development of a set of Climate Action Pathways that suggest a vision for 2050 as well as transformational actions and milestones for 2020, 2030 and 2050 on the path to full implementation of the Paris Agreement in key thematic areas such as energy, industry, transport, human settlements, water, land use and resilience to the effects of climate change. The pathways present a forward-looking approach to Parties and non-Party stakeholders working together in each thematic area
- › An increase in the number of non-State actor announcements of action in the global climate action portal (NAZCA) to over 20,000
- › The organization of dedicated climate action tracks at the regional climate weeks to both highlight opportunities and identify recommendations for the United Nations Climate Action Summit

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Our partners are good examples of cooperation to drive change towards and collectively strive for a climate-neutral world.

Ovais Sarmad, UNFCCC
Deputy Executive Secretary

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Climate Neutral Now

Climate Neutral Now is an initiative aimed at engaging organizations, companies and individuals in becoming carbon-neutral. In 2019, Climate Neutral Now attracted 239 new signatories, bringing the total to 355. New partners, such as the Development and Climate Alliance from Germany, Real Betis Balompié football club from Spain and Doconomy, a Swedish fintech company, are leading the fight for a carbon-neutral future and are encouraging others to follow. A number of government-led projects in Australia, Europe and Latin America fall under Climate Neutral Now, and private companies and several sectoral organizations, including in the events, travel and tourism sector, are also involved in the initiative.

An external evaluation of the initiative revealed it to be a strong tool for promoting climate action, including through the use of certified emission reductions under the clean development mechanism. Climate Neutral Now is seen as an established brand recognized by many stakeholders. The initiative has been instrumental in developing the Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action and the Sports for Climate Action Framework.

Advocating for high-level action

The COP 25 high-level champions for climate action – Tomasz Chruszczow from Poland and Gonzalo Muñoz Abogabir from Chile – engaged with Parties and non-Party stakeholders to encourage them to maximize their contribution to the UNFCCC process. By the end of 2019, the champions had taken part in approximately 200 meetings and speaking engagements, guided the activities of the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action, including development of the *Yearbook on Global Climate Action* and the Climate Action Pathways, and helped shape the inputs of non-Party stakeholders to the United Nations Climate Action Summit.

Generating momentum for change

The secretariat's Momentum for Change initiative – which recognizes solutions to climate change that also address wider economic, social and environmental challenges – shines a light on global climate action by citizens, organizations, businesses, schools and governments. In 2019, under the initiative 670 entries for the United Nations Global Climate Action Awards were received and the 15 most innovative and impactful actions worldwide were selected in four focus areas.

2019 United Nations Global Climate Action Awards Winners

Planetary health

Alipay Ant Forest: Using Digital Technologies to Scale up Climate Action | China

Electriciens sans frontières: Providing “Emergency Pockets” of Solar Energy | Dominica

Ghent en Garde: Creating Structural Change Through Local Food Policy | Belgium

Impossible Foods: Creating Plant-Based Alternatives to Meat | United States of America

Climate Neutral Now

Apple's Emissions Reduction Mission | Global

Infosys' Journey to Carbon Neutrality | India

MAX Burgers: Creating the World's First “Climate Positive” Menu | Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Poland

Natura's Carbon Neutral Programme | Global

Women for results

Campaign for Female Education; Young Women's Grassroots Climate Action in Africa | Sub-Saharan Africa

Eco Wave Power: Generating Clean Energy from the Ocean | Israel and Gibraltar

Mothers Out Front: Mobilizing for a Liveable Climate | United States

Women's Action Towards Climate Resilience for Urban Poor in South Asia | Bangladesh, India and Nepal

Financing for climate-friendly investment

Beyond the Grid Fund | Zambia

Quebec's International Climate Cooperation Program | Canada

Women's Livelihood Bond Series | Global

Mobilizing financiers

During 2019, the secretariat provided coordination services to the International Finance Corporation's Technical Working Group, which brings together over 25 multilateral development banks and other international financial institutions to work on standardizing greenhouse gas accounting methodologies and approaches across a wide range of economic sectors. The secretariat provided the group with background materials on its prioritized topics, facilitated discussion among members of the group and presented state-of-the-art work on this area.

Art for climate

A growing number of international artists are drawing inspiration from climate change. Their climate art – including sculpture, theatre and music – has connected a global audience to climate change on a deeply emotional level. Several artists produced climate-inspired art installations for display at COP 25 as part of an initiative that will continue throughout 2020.

Technical expert meetings in 2019

Technical expert meetings aim at enhancing action prior to 2020. They are organized by the UNFCCC, its subsidiary and constituted bodies, and guided by the High Level Climate Champions. In 2019, meetings were held on the following topics:

- › Adaptation finance, including the private sector
- › Circular economy solutions and innovation in water and energy management for the agri-food chain
- › Decentralized solutions for smart energy and water use in the agri-food chain
- › Off-grid and decentralized energy solutions for smart energy and water use in the agri-food chain.



Photo by UN Climate Change/Khawla Alazabi

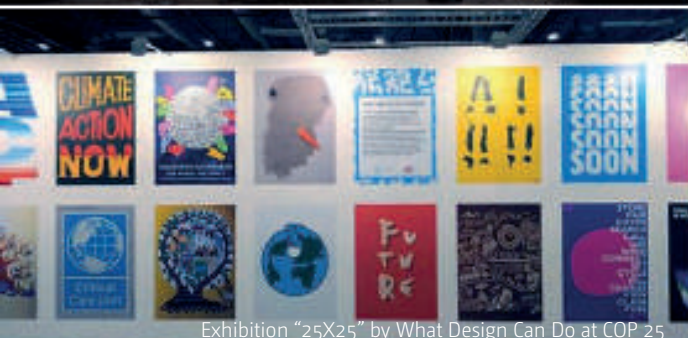
The Global Climate Action high-level events at COP 25 brought together leaders from across sectors and borders for a lively series of events. The Minister of Science and Innovation of Spain, Pedro Duque, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres and the moderator Musonda Mumba engaged in a conversation with Italian astronaut, Luca Parmitano – live from the International Space Station.



"Pollution Pods" by Michael Pinsky at COP 25,
Photo by UN Climate Change/Khawla Alazabi



"Pollution Pods" by Michael Pinsky at COP 25,
hoto by UN Climate Change/Khawla Alazabi



Exhibition "25X25" by What Design Can Do at COP 25



Exhibition "Awakening" at SB 50,
Photo by UN Climate Change/Khawla Alazabi



"Support" by Lorenzo Quinn at COP 25,
Photo by UN Climate Change/Khawla Alazabi



Sewing a sustainable future

The fashion industry is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions, which come both from textile manufacturing, processing and transport and from the use and disposal of finished products. Some challenges in the sector include a lack of transparency in the supply chain, a lack of capacity of supply chain actors to take climate action and a lack of financial instruments or incentives that would enable manufacturers to invest in clean, energy-efficient production.

The secretariat convened the Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action, an industry-led initiative created in 2018 to drive the fashion industry to net zero emissions by 2050. By the end of 2019, 120 brands, retailers, suppliers and supporting organizations had joined the Charter and thereby committed to transforming the industry across its supply chain. In

recognition of its important role in driving the world of fashion towards climate action and sustainability, the Charter won the British Fashion Council's inaugural Award for Positive Change in 2019.

Racing to the finish line

The Sports for Climate Action Framework is a secretariat-led initiative launched in 2018 that invites sports organizations to unite behind the Sports for Climate Action Principles and work with communities in moving towards net zero emissions by 2050. Participating sports organizations also work on climate-neutrality plans, raise public awareness of climate action and reduce the environmental impact of sporting events. There are 115 signatories to the Framework, including the International Olympic Committee, international and national sports federations, and many small organizations.

Addressing cross-cutting issues

Climate change disproportionately affects the most vulnerable people in every society – those who are socially or economically disadvantaged, and those who are marginalized. Guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development principle of leaving no one behind, the UNFCCC has committed to fully integrating the voices of indigenous peoples and women into its processes.

Amplifying indigenous voices

Our vision is a climate-resilient world for all, which brings together diverse people, their knowledge systems and their values.

Engaging indigenous peoples and local communities in climate action is an immense opportunity to enrich work under the UNFCCC. Indigenous peoples have a holistic view of the environment and human well-being, and respect intergenerational dialogue. This approach has helped transform interactions with nature from being exploitative to being restorative, and will enhance climate action and ambition and bring about value-based climate policies.

In 2019, the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform and its Facilitative Working Group became fully operationalized. The objective of the Platform is to integrate traditional practices into the UNFCCC process and make a space within it for airing the concerns of indigenous peoples. The Facilitative Working Group of the Platform has 14 members – half of them are representatives of Parties and half are representatives of indigenous peoples organizations. This membership composition helps the Working Group in its work on averting, reducing and addressing climate change in a holistic way. At the Bonn Climate Change Conference in June, the secretariat convened a partnership-building dialogue on the Platform's work.



Photo by UN Climate Change

Indigenous peoples strengthened their voice and presence at COP 25 through the work of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform.

Including women in the response to climate change

Climate change impacts on women and men often differ owing to existing gender inequalities arising from power imbalances, discriminatory laws and customs, and biased control of and access to resources. Yet the gender and climate change nexus is still poorly understood.

Parties and organizations are increasingly engaging in gender mainstreaming. Some countries have started conducting gender analyses when preparing their plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change and enhancing community resilience.

Gender is also increasingly being mainstreamed across the UNFCCC process and in the work of the secretariat. In 2019, six constituted bodies – the Advisory Board of the Climate Technology Centre and Network, the Executive Board of the clean development mechanism, the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism, the Facilitative Working Group of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform, the Standing Committee on Finance and the Technology Executive Committee – agreed to ensure that they would consider gender in all their work. In its 2019 report on gender and climate change, the secretariat reported on progress in integrating a gender perspective in constituted body processes.

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For decades and decades, progress has been conceived ignoring women, no less than half of humanity.

Pedro Sánchez,
Prime Minister of Spain

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Gender mainstreaming activities of the secretariat in 2019 included:

- › Establishing a virtual collaboration space where national gender and climate change focal points can exchange information and experience
- › Establishing a network of senior women delegates to encourage peer-to-peer support of female negotiators
- › Bringing additional female negotiators from developing countries to COP 25.
- › Launching a toolkit for designing gender-responsive national adaptation plans
- › Conducting a gender and climate change workshop at the fiftieth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation that highlighted the broad range of actions taken by Parties, organizations and the secretariat in implementing the Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan

These activities demonstrate how the Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan, together with the secretariat's efforts to raise awareness of gender and climate change, stimulated a positive shift towards gender-responsive climate policy and action. The work on gender culminated in the adoption of the enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan at COP 25.

Considering climate-related risks to human security and social stability

An event on climate-related risks to social stability in the context of law and governance presented the latest research on the effects of climate change on emerging risks to human security and social stability. It also gave information on the support the United Nations system can provide in policymaking and developing effective responses to social instability due to climate change.



Building resilience to climate change through adaptation has a number of co-benefits, including women's empowerment, improved nutrition and better health for poor communities. Campaign for Female Education Young Women's Grassroots Climate Action in Africa is a winner of the 2019 United Nations Global Climate Action Awards.

A secretariat fit for the future

In 2019, the secretariat embarked on organizational reform, extended its global networks and strengthened its partnerships, invested in forward-looking information technology infrastructure and data management, and implemented a wide-reaching online communication strategy that will enable it to better serve Parties and non-Party stakeholders.

Beginning in 2018, the secretariat undertook a thorough review of its organizational structure, operations and use of resources in order to determine how it can best support the needs of Parties and non-Party stakeholders in the global transformation needed to achieve the purpose and goals of the Paris Agreement.

The review concluded in early 2019 with recommendations for both structural and non-structural change. As a result, the secretariat commenced an organizational change exercise that ran throughout 2019 and will continue in 2020 to ensure a fit-for-purpose secretariat with a collaborative and results-driven culture. This exercise encompasses implementing both a new organizational structure and non-structural initiatives that will enhance the secretariat's leadership, performance management and organizational culture.

Achievements of the secretariat's work on organizational change in 2019 included:

- › Implementing a new organizational structure that enables coherence around mandated activities, collaboration across multiple areas of expertise, adaptation to changing political realities and the forging of effective relationships with diverse stakeholders
- › Conducting a leadership development programme, including workshops on supervisory skills and change management, which has been completed by 96 per cent of supervisors
- › Establishing the Network4Change, a broad network of colleagues focused on enhancing the secretariat's culture of collaboration and knowledge-sharing

Building a global support structure

The secretariat continued to support activities around the world through its six regional collaboration centres: Asia and the Pacific; Caribbean; Eastern and Southern Africa; Latin America; Middle East, North Africa and South Asia; and Western and Francophone Africa.



The proposed structure, planned for 2020/2021, will enable the secretariat to become more flexible and responsive to Parties' needs, and foster a culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing. Source: UN Climate Change

In 2019, the regional collaboration centres co-organized 17 events on capacity-building and on the clean development mechanism, which were attended by 600 stakeholders. Government representatives were briefed on the status of climate negotiations, new tools for enabling climate action and for measurement, reporting and verification, and the latest developments under the clean development mechanism. Project experts received tailored technical support for implementing their projects and guidance on monitoring and using certified emission reductions. The regional collaboration centres also provided support to 275 clean development mechanism projects and programmes of activities, responded to 243 technical queries and promoted certified emission reductions for voluntary carbon offsetting.

Implementing the Paris Agreement and supporting COP 25 through partnerships

The secretariat worked with several key partners from the private sector and civil society throughout 2019 to advance the implementation of the Paris Agreement and to support COP 25. COP 25 partners led a variety of initiatives, including eco-friendly credit cards that track and offset emissions, affordable solutions for generating and transmitting renewable energy, strategies for companies to transform themselves into 'climate-positive' enterprises by reducing their emissions, a digital campaign to raise awareness of climate change, and the promotion of electric vehicles and cycling.

The secretariat values the support of its partners as a critical contribution to its work. The secretariat's 2019 partners included fintech company Doconomy, Facebook, GEIDCO (Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organization), Iberdrola, IKEA, Lorenzo Quinn and Halcyon Art International, Qlik, Visa, What Design Can Do and the World Travel and Tourism Council.

Relevant, up-to-date and accessible data are instrumental to inform dialogue as well as to identify areas for improvement and approaches to overcome potential gaps.

Making connectivity faster, better and more secure

To better serve Parties and improve the capacity, security and speed of its information technology infrastructure, the secretariat in 2019 invested in consolidating its climate data centre, putting in place processes for inter-organizational data sharing – such as sharing programme, project and financial data with the Green Climate Fund and contributing climate data to the data repositories of other United Nations entities – and rolling out cutting-edge collaboration tools and a virtual meetings platform.

In 2019, the secretariat continued to ensure that the systems and tools for the reporting and review of climate change data and information are up to date and that relevant information is shared in a way that is most helpful to Parties and other stakeholders as well as the public. The secretariat upgraded all the modules of the greenhouse gas data interface so that data reported by Parties align with the latest UNFCCC reporting guidelines and are updated three times a year.

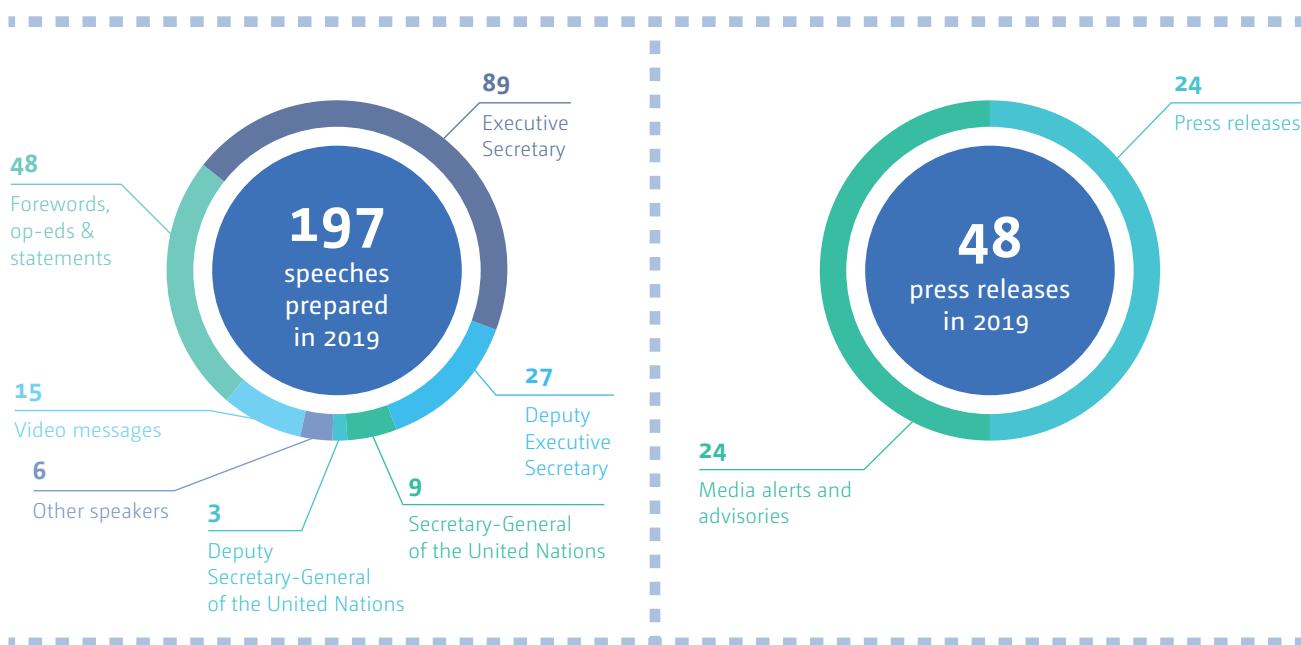
Evolution of the secretariat's information technology infrastructure is the means of positioning the secretariat as the trusted source of all climate data, facilitating collaboration and data analysis with remote teams, and enabling greater participation in meetings while reducing the travel – and carbon footprint – of Parties and other stakeholders.

Reaching out through social and other media

Social media practices such as live-streaming events on Twitter and Facebook, modernizing UNFCCC branding

and deploying influencers to cover key events helped drive growth in outreach. Social media followers of UNFCCC accounts increased by almost 33 per cent in 2019, from 1.3 million to 1.8 million followers.

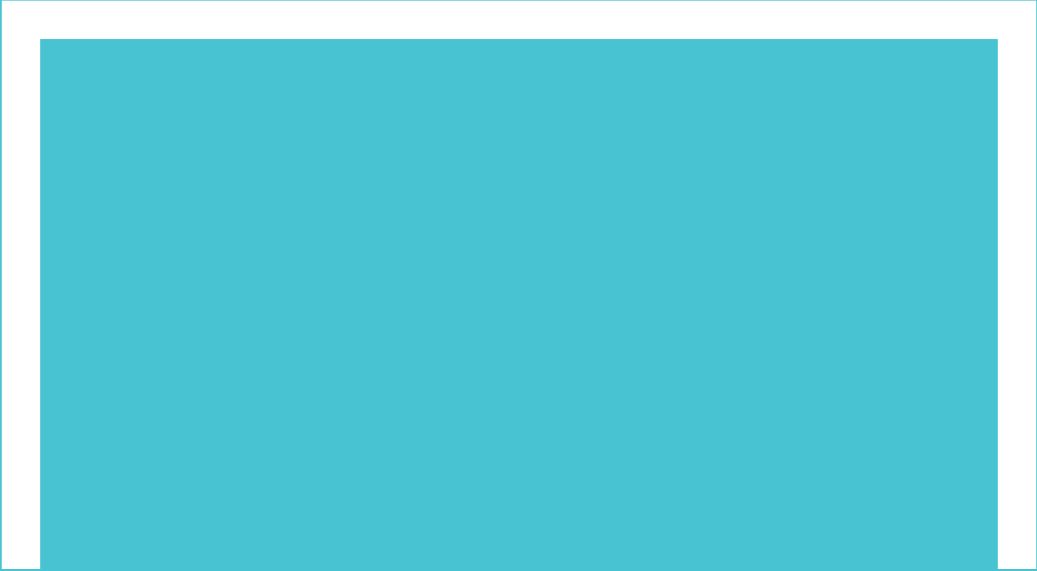
Outreach for climate



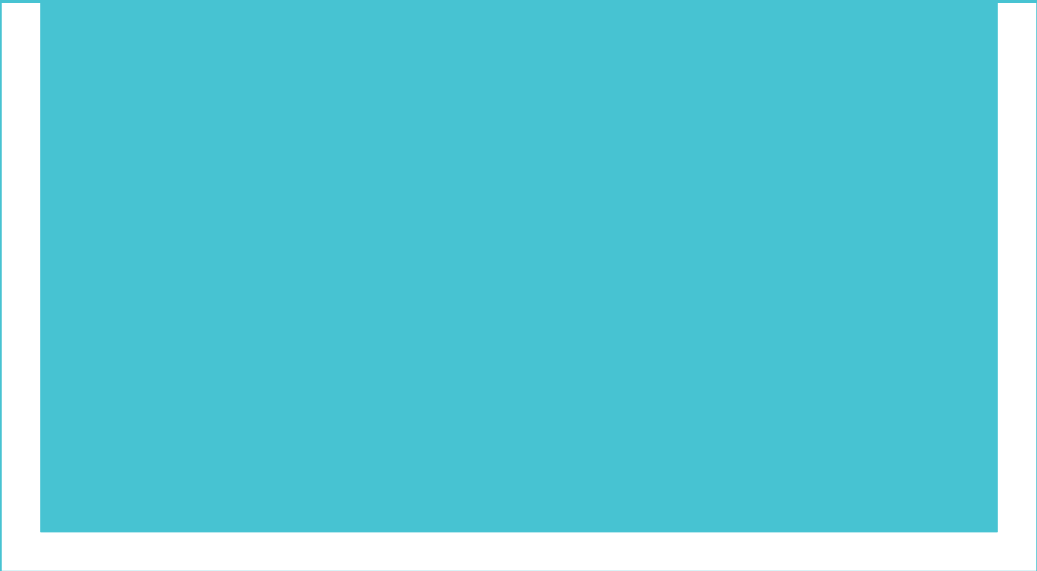
Total visits to the UNFCCC website in 2019



* Live broadcast of events on Twitter and Facebook, modernization of branding, deployment of influencers.



MOVING FORWARD



In 2019, the world witnessed a string of devastating climate events, carbon dioxide levels continued to rise and ice caps to melt, and we reached the highest sea level ever recorded. Failure to address climate change will only exacerbate future impacts, yet most countries are neither responding to the call for ambitious action nor preparing at the pace science indicates is required. Efforts are being constrained by lack of resources, by different expectations and understanding of ambition, by complexity and by the wide variety of interests involved.

It seems 2020 will be far from what had been envisaged. As this report goes to print, the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic continues, endangering countless lives and jeopardizing the progress of many countries over the past three decades in poverty reduction, women's rights and child health. The pandemic risks diverting attention and funds from the climate crisis at a time when they are sorely needed, including for the secretariat. The looming global economic crisis and the changing priorities of countries might profoundly affect the global climate effort. Various economic sectors face an existential risk from COVID-19, limiting the opportunities for climate action.

At the same time, the widespread lockdown and other public health measures have required the secretariat to work and organize meetings in a largely virtual environment while postponing climate conferences. It is against this backdrop that the UNFCCC is working towards achieving its objectives for 2020.

The positive global momentum must continue

While fighting the pandemic is the world's priority, we must do all we can to keep the climate momentum going.

While we certainly need to do more to curb the global rise in emissions, five years of global summits and engagement have helped drive a rapid increase in the number of initiatives and commitments, reaping positive results. As outlined in this annual report, many countries have announced their targets for carbon neutrality and are working on stronger nationally determined contributions. The Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund have received additional capital for climate finance.

A surge in initiatives and commitments from all over the world occurred in 2019. Commitments made by individuals and businesses have massive potential to help countries achieve their goals, and these commitments hint at the possibilities of

transformational action – working together across sectors, borders and other divides. This potential was reflected in the global climate action portal (NAZCA), which at the end of 2019 listed over 20,000 climate actions from nearly 15,000 actors.

There is growing awareness by civil society, especially youth, of the need to act on climate change. Channelled properly, this massive push for action can encourage Parties to increase ambition.

Countries will need to make bolder science-based commitments at COP 26, through their nationally determined contributions, to collectively meet the goal of keeping the global average temperature rise below 1.5 °C. We cannot postpone these commitments any further. These commitments must be accompanied by a full mobilization of all levels of governance and non-State actors in all sectors.

Parties should also meet their Cancun pledges for emissions reductions in 2020. Predictability and clarity in the provision, mobilization and delivery of the climate finance goal of USD 100 billion by 2025 will be key to providing assurance that developed countries are continuing to take the lead in mobilizing funds for the climate crisis, and that the new global goal takes into account the needs and priorities of developing countries.

COP 26 is tasked with finalizing both the technical work on transparency and the design of the market-based and non-market mechanisms under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. After 2020, the transparency arrangements and market mechanisms of the Paris Agreement will become fully operational, and the first five-year cycle of the Paris Agreement, encompassing nationally determined contributions, reporting and the global stocktake, will be completed. In the long term, the success of the global fight against climate change will depend on ensuring that this becomes a positive cycle of increasing both action and ambition.

The secretariat is ready to play its part

The secretariat is gearing up its efforts to support the global call to action. Its restructuring efforts will continue in 2020 to enable the organization to better respond to governments' requests for support and proactively address emerging needs. In fulfilling its promise of leaving no country behind, the secretariat will increase its provision of capacity-building and technical support to developing country Parties and consolidate institutional arrangements so that knowledge and skills are retained in countries over time.

The secretariat will also increase its outreach to Parties, international organizations and the public to push for greater climate ambition and enhance the transparency of reporting on climate action. It will work with governments and agencies to raise awareness of the importance of ambition and fully support governments' efforts to increase ambition. The secretariat will also work with coalitions, organizations and initiatives on key sectors to raise climate ambition and enhance sustainable development.

Using technology and online tools, the secretariat will continue to expand its capacity to securely collect, store and disseminate climate data. Its information technology infrastructure will also be used to reduce the organization's carbon footprint and to adapt to the social distancing measures required during the COVID-19 crisis, allowing for more virtual meetings, online participation and social media engagement.

An increasingly young audience is following the UNFCCC, particularly on social media, such as Instagram. In an effort to reach more people and communicate climate science to non-technical, multilingual audiences, the secretariat will strive to better use its website to make key messages more accessible and in different languages, while also providing easy access to technical documents. In an ever-changing media landscape, the secretariat will focus on showcasing the climate action of non-Party stakeholders so as to inspire others to do their part in building a net zero carbon future.

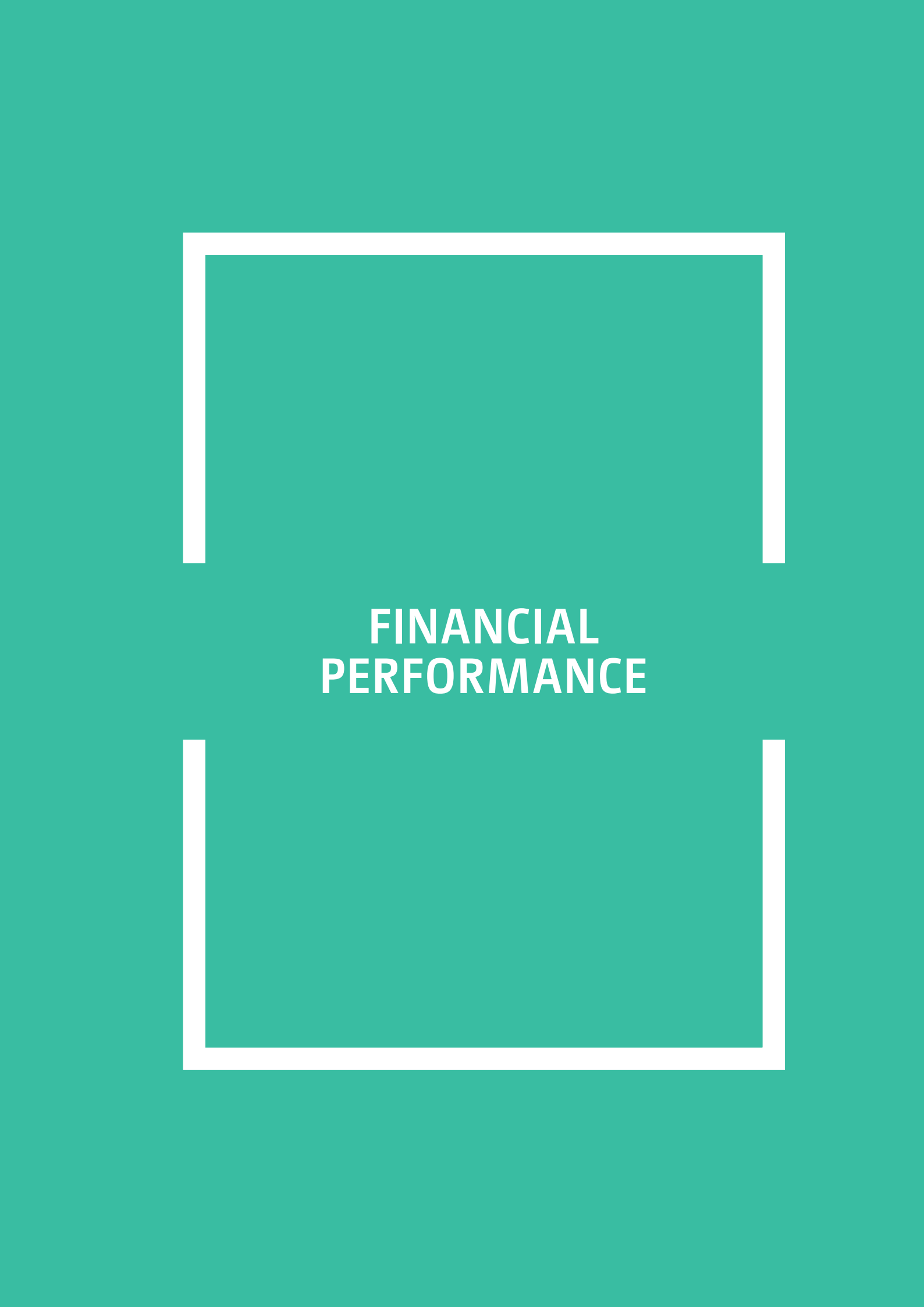
As the scope of work under the climate change regime continues to expand, more resources will be necessary to allow the secretariat to support Parties in achieving their climate change commitments.



Photo by Mr. Chencho Norbu/ Bhutan



Photo by Casey Horner @ Unsplash

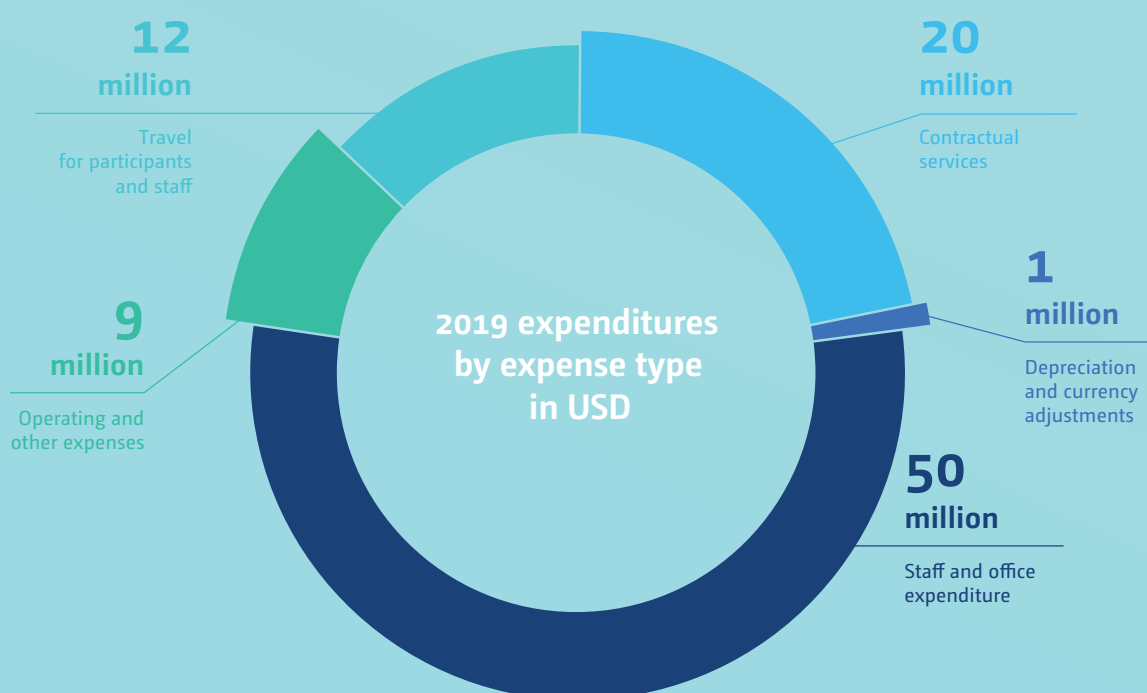
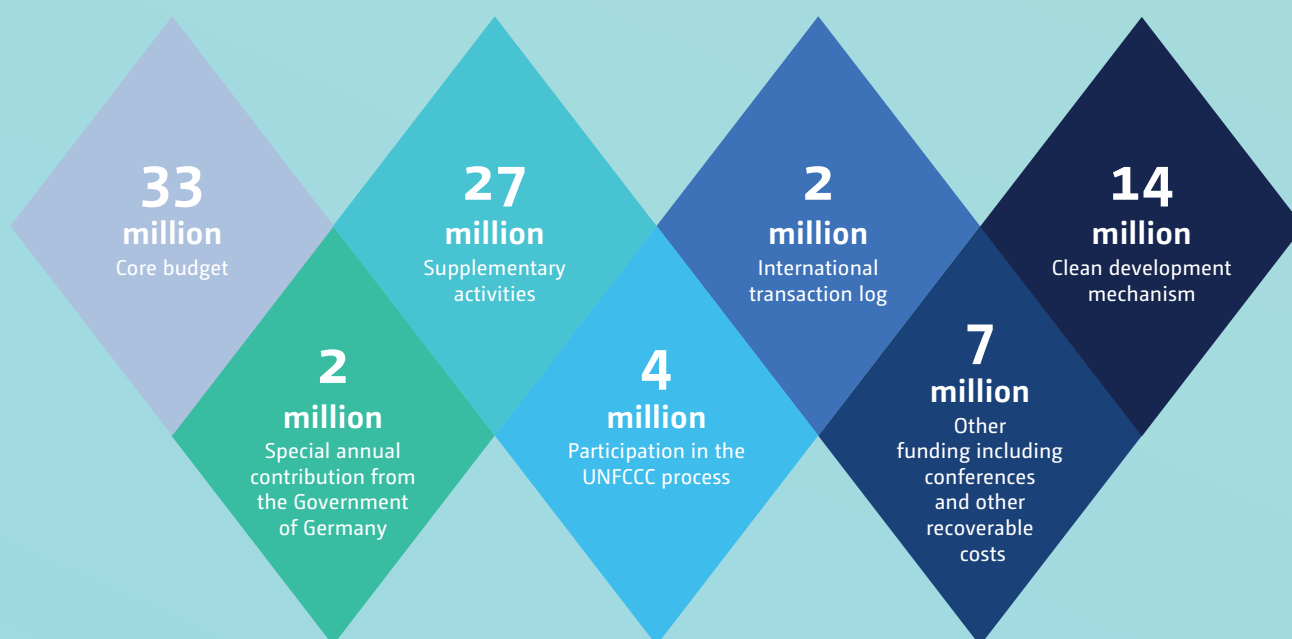


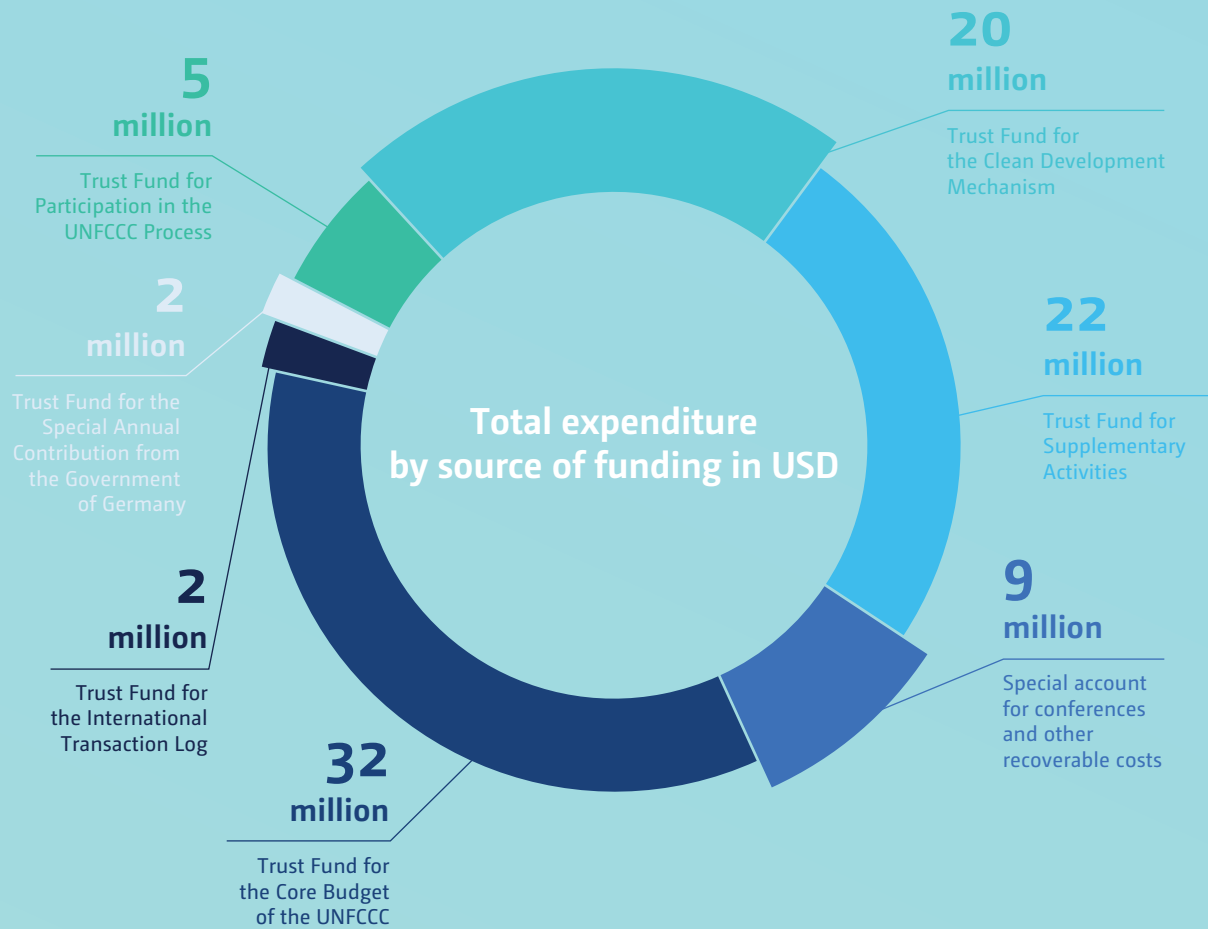
FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The UNFCCC is financed by payments from Parties to the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement; fees received for services provided by the organization; and voluntary contributions from Parties and other donors.

2019 financial performance

Total revenue by trust fund for 2019 in USD





Note: The amounts reflected in this report are drawn from 31 December 2019 audited financial statements, and reflect only income and expenditure for the year.

Party contributors to the Trust Fund for Supplementary Activities

(in alphabetical order)



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**WE MEAN
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Abbreviations and acronyms

Annex I Party	Party included Annex I to the Convention
CMA	Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement
CMP	Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol
COP	Conference of the Parties
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
Nairobi work programme	Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change
Non-Annex I Party	Party not included Annex I to the Convention
SB	sessions of the subsidiary bodies
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Warsaw International Mechanism	Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts

A photograph of a protest sign. The sign is rectangular and dark-colored, with the words "Fight", "FOR", and "Climate" written in white, and "CHANGE" and "NOW!" written in green. The sign is positioned next to a large tree with a thick, textured trunk and some autumn-colored leaves. The background is a clear blue sky. The sign is mounted on a wooden post. The text on the sign is "Fight FOR Climate CHANGE NOW!".

Fight
FOR
Climate
CHANGE
NOW!

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