

Concepts and Definitions

Adaptation Fund - Finances concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The Fund is to be financed with a share of proceeds from projects developed under the Clean Development Mechanisms, CDM and receive funds from other sources.

Additionality – A term used by Kyoto’s project-based mechanisms (i.e. CDM and Joint Implementation JI projects) to describe the fact that a carbon dioxide reduction project would not have occurred had it not been for concern for the mitigation of climate change. Basically, a project that has proven additionality is a beyond business as usual project.

Article 4.1 - An article of the Convention stipulating general commitments assumed by all Parties, developing or developed.

Article 4.2 - An article of the Convention stating the specific commitments of developed-country (Annex I) Parties only - notably that they would take measures aimed to return greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000.

Article 6 Supervisory Committee – Provides international oversight of “track-two” Joint Implementation projects.

Cap and Trade – An environmental policy tool that delivers results with a mandatory cap on emissions, while providing sources flexibility in how they comply. Successful cap and trade programs reward innovation, efficiency, and early action and provide strict environmental accountability without inhibiting economic growth.

Capacity-building - In the context of climate change, it is the process of developing and strengthening the technical skills and institutional capability in developing countries and economies in transition to enable them to address effectively the causes and results of climate change.

Carbon market - A trading system through which countries may buy or sell units of greenhouse -gas emissions in an effort to meet their national limits on emissions, either under the Kyoto Protocol or under other agreements, such as that among member states of the EU. The term comes from the fact that carbon dioxide is the predominant greenhouse gas and other gases are measured in units called "carbon-dioxide equivalents."

Committee of the Whole - Often created by a Conference of the Parties COP to assist in negotiating and drafting the final text of an agreement. It consists of the same membership as the COP. When the Committee has finished its work, it turns the text over to the COP, which finalizes and then adopts the text during a plenary session.

Copenhagen Accord – A document that delegates at the COP15 in Copenhagen ‘agreed to take note of’ at the final plenary in December 2009. The Accord, drafted by, on the one hand, the US and on the other, in a united position as the BASIC countries (China, India, South Africa, and Brazil), is not legally binding and does not commit countries to agree to a binding successor to the Kyoto Protocol, whose present round ends in 2012.

Decision - A formal agreement that (unlike a resolution) leads to binding actions. It becomes part of the agreed body of decisions that direct the work of the COP.

Declaration - A non-binding political statement made by ministers attending a major meeting (e.g. the Geneva Ministerial Declaration of COP2).

Entry into force - The point at which an intergovernmental agreement becomes legally binding - occurring at a pre-stated interval after a pre-stated and required number of ratifications by countries has been achieved. The Climate Change Convention required 50 ratifications to enter into force. It now enters into force for each new Party 90 days after that Party ratifies the Convention.

Friends of the Chair - Delegates called upon by the Chair (who takes into account the need for political balance among various interests) to assist in carrying out specific tasks.

Hot air – Refers to the concern that some governments will be able to meet their targets for greenhouse gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol with minimal effort and could then flood the market with emissions credits, reducing the incentive for other countries to cut their own domestic emissions.

Informal contact group - A group of delegates instructed by the President or a Chair to meet in private to discuss a specific matter in an effort to consolidate different views, reach a compromise, and produce an agreed proposal, often in the form of a written text.

Kyoto Protocol - An international agreement standing on its own, and requiring separate ratification by governments, but linked to the UNFCCC. The Kyoto Protocol, among other things, sets binding targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by industrialised countries.

Kyoto mechanisms - Three market-based procedures established under the Kyoto Protocol to increase the flexibility and reduce the costs of making greenhouse gas emissions cuts; they are the Clean Development Mechanism CDM, Emissions Trading ET and Joint Implementation JI.

Leakage - That portion of cuts in greenhouse gas emissions by developed countries -- countries trying to meet mandatory limits under the Kyoto Protocol - that may reappear in other countries not bound by such limits. For example, multinational corporations may shift factories from developed countries to developing countries to escape restrictions on emissions.

Major Groups – sectors of society recognised in Agenda 21 as having a substantive contribution to make to the achievement of a sustainable future. Groups identified in Agenda 21 include – Business and industry; Children and Youth; Farmers; Indigenous People; Local Authorities; Non-

governmental Organisations NGOs; Scientific and Technological Community; Women; and Workers and Trade Unions. nrg4SD sits within the Local Authorities Major Group.

Marrakesh Accords - Agreements reached at COP7 which set various rules for 'operating' the more complex provisions of the Kyoto Protocol. Among other things, the accords include details for establishing a greenhouse gas emissions trading system; implementing and monitoring the Protocol's CDM; and setting up and operating three funds to support efforts to adapt to climate change.

No-regrets options - Technology for reducing greenhouse gas emissions whose other benefits (in terms of efficiency or reduced energy costs) are so extensive that the investment is worth it for those reasons alone. For example, combined-cycle gas turbines, where the heat from the burning fuel drives steam turbines while the thermal expansion of the exhaust gases drives gas turbines, may boost the efficiency of electricity generating plants by 70 per cent.

Observers - Agencies, Non-Governmental Organisations, and Governments not Parties to the Convention which are permitted to attend, but not vote, at meetings of the COP and its subsidiary bodies. nrg4SD is an accredited observer to the UNFCCC.

Protocol - An international agreement linked to an existing convention, but as a separate and additional agreement which must be signed and ratified by the Parties to the convention concerned. Protocols typically strengthen a convention by adding new, more detailed commitments.

Ratification - Formal approval, often by a Parliament or other national legislature, of a convention, protocol, or treaty enabling a country to become a Party. It is a separate process occurring after a country has signed an agreement. The instrument of ratification must be deposited with a 'depository.' For UNFCCC, the UN Secretary-General is the depository and a signatory becomes a Party in 90 days from the signature.

Sink - Any process, activity or mechanism which removes a greenhouse gas, an aerosol or a precursor of a greenhouse gas from the atmosphere. Forests and other vegetation are considered sinks because they remove carbon dioxide through photosynthesis.

Spill-over effects - Reverberations in developing countries caused by actions taken by developed countries to cut greenhouse gas emissions. For example, emissions reductions in developed countries could lower demand for oil and thus international oil prices, leading to more use of oil and greater emissions in developing nations, partially off-setting the original cuts. Current estimates are that full-scale implementation of the Kyoto Protocol may cause 5 to 20% of emissions reductions in industrialised countries to 'leak' into developing countries.

Umbrella group - A loose coalition of non-EU developed countries formed following the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol. Although there is no formal membership list, the group usually includes Australia, Canada, Iceland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Russian Federation, Ukraine, and the USA.

Voluntary commitments - A draft article considered during the negotiation of the Kyoto Protocol that would have permitted developing countries to voluntarily adhere to legally binding emissions targets. The proposed language was dropped in the final phase of the negotiations. The issue remains important for some delegations and may be discussed at upcoming sessions of the Conference of the Parties.

Vulnerability - The degree to which a system is susceptible to, or unable to cope with, adverse effects of climate change, including climate variability and extremes. Vulnerability is a function of the character, magnitude, and rate of climate variation to which a system is exposed, its sensitivity, and its adaptive capacity.

Acronyms	Description
AG13 Ad hoc Group on Article 13	A subsidiary body (committee) created by the 1 st Conference of the Parties COP1 to explore how to help governments overcome difficulties experienced in meeting their commitments under the Climate Change Convention (1995-1998).
AWG-KP Ad hoc Working Group on further commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol	Established by Parties to the Protocol in Montreal (2005) to consider further commitments of industrialised countries under the Kyoto Protocol for the period beyond 2012.
AWG-LCA Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention	Established in Bali in 2007 to conduct negotiations on a strengthened international deal on climate change, set to be concluded in Copenhagen in 2009. Now extended until end 2011.
AOSIS Alliance of Small Island States	A coalition of small island and low-lying coastal countries that share similar development challenges and concerns about the environment, especially their vulnerability to the adverse effects of global climate change.
BINGO Business and Industry NGOs	One of the nine constituencies recognised by the nine Major Groups which were established by Agenda 21.
CACAM Central Asia, Caucasus and Moldova countries	A group of countries that share similar challenges concerning climate change.

CER Certified Emission Reduction	A type of emissions unit or carbon credits issued by the Clean Development Mechanism.
CDM Clean Development Mechanism	A market-based mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol through which developed countries may finance greenhouse-gas emission reduction or removal projects in developing countries, and receive credits for doing so which they may apply towards meeting mandatory limits on their own emissions.
COP Conference of the Parties	The Convention's supreme body. It currently meets once a year to review the Convention's progress. The word 'conference' is not used here in the sense of 'meeting' but rather of 'association,' which explains the seemingly redundant expression 'fourth session of the Conference of the Parties.'
COW Committee of the Whole	Often created by a COP to aid in negotiating text. It consists of the same membership as the COP. When the Committee has finished its work, it turns the text over to the COP, which finalises and then adopts the text during a plenary session.
CMP Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties	The Convention's supreme body is the COP, which serves as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The sessions of the COP and the CMP are held during the same period to reduce costs and improve coordination between the Convention and the Protocol.
DNA Designated National Authority	The body granted responsibility by a Party to authorise and approve participation in CDM projects.
ENGO Environmental NGO	One of the nine constituencies recognised by the nine Major Groups which were established by Agenda 21.
EU ETS European Union Emissions Trading System	A cornerstone of the EU's policy to combat climate change and its key tool for reducing industrial greenhouse gas emissions cost-effectively. Being the first and biggest international scheme for the trading of greenhouse gas emission allowances, it covers some 11,000 power stations and industrial plants in 30 countries.
EUA European Union Allowance	These are carbon credits used in the EU ETS, which are issued by EU Member States into Member State Registry accounts. By April 30 of each year, operators of installations covered by the EU ETS must surrender an EU Allowance for each ton of CO ₂ emitted in the previous year.
ITL International Transaction Log	The ITL verifies transactions proposed by registries to ensure they are consistent with rules agreed under the Kyoto Protocol.
JI Joint implementation	A mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol where a developed country can receive "emissions reduction units" when it

	helps to finance projects that reduce net greenhouse-gas emissions in another developed country. An Annex I Party must meet specific eligibility requirements to participate in joint implementation.
JLG Joint Liaison Group	Group of representatives of UNFCCC, CBD, and UNCCD Secretariats set up to explore common activities to confront problems related to climate change, biodiversity and desertification.
GWP Global warming potential	An index representing the combined effect of the differing times greenhouse gases remain in the atmosphere and their relative effectiveness in absorbing outgoing infrared radiation.
GOOS Global Ocean Observing System	A permanent global system for observations, modeling and analysis of marine and ocean variables to support operational ocean services worldwide. It provides accurate descriptions of the present state of the oceans, including living resources; continuous forecasts of the future conditions of the sea for as far ahead as possible, and the basis for forecasts of climate change.
GHGs Greenhouse gases	The atmospheric gases responsible for causing global warming and climate change. The major GHGs are carbon dioxide (CO ₂), methane (CH ₄) and nitrous oxide (N ₂ O).
G8 Group of 8 (and the EU)	A forum created by France in 1975 for the governments of the 8 major economies – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russian Federation, UK and USA. The EU is represented within the G8, but cannot host or chair.
G20 Group of 20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors	A group of finance ministers and central bank governors from 20 major economies: 19 countries plus the EU. The G20 was proposed for cooperation and consultation on matters affecting the international financial system. It studies, reviews, and promotes discussion (among key industrial and emerging market countries) of policy issues relating to the promotion of international financial stability, and seeks to address issues that go beyond the responsibilities of any one organisation.
G77 Group of 77 and China	A large negotiating alliance of developing countries that focuses on numerous international topics, including climate change. Founded in 1967 under the auspices of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). It seeks to harmonise the negotiating positions of its 131 member states.
GRULAC Group of Latin American and Caribbean States	One of several unofficial Regional Groups in the UN that act as voting blocs and negotiation forums.
GEF Global Environment Facility	An independent financial organisation that provides grants to developing countries for projects that benefit the global environment and promote sustainable livelihoods in local communities. The Parties to the Convention assigned operation of the financial mechanism to the Global Environment Facility on an on-going basis, subject to review every four years.

INC Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee	A committee created to draft the Convention, which met in 5 sessions between February 1991 and May 1992. After the text of the Convention was adopted in 1992, the INC met 6 further times to prepare for COP1. It completed its work in February 1995.
IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change	Established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organisation and the UN Environment Programme, UNEP, it surveys world-wide scientific and technical literature and publishes assessment reports that are widely recognised as the most credible existing sources of information on climate change.
IPO Indigenous peoples organisations	One of the nine constituencies recognised by the nine Major Groups which were established by Agenda 21.
LDCs Least Developed Countries	The criteria currently used by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for designation as an LDC include low income, human resource weakness and economic vulnerability.
LEG Least Developed Countries Expert Group	A panel of 12 experts who provides advice to LDCs on the preparation and implementation of national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs).
LDCF Least Developed Country Fund	Established to support a work programme to assist LDCs to carry out the preparation and implementation of NAPAs. The GEF, as the entity that operates the financial mechanism of the Convention, has been entrusted to operate this fund.
LGMA Local government and municipal authorities	One of the nine constituencies recognised by the nine Major Groups which were established by Agenda 21. nrg4SD sits within this constituency.
LULUCF Land use, land-use change, and forestry	A greenhouse gas inventory sector that covers emissions and removals of greenhouse gases resulting from direct human-induced land use, land-use change and forestry activities.
NAMAs Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action	A set of policies and actions countries undertake as part of a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The term recognises that different countries may take different nationally appropriate action on the basis of equity and in accordance with common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. It also emphasises financial assistance from developed countries to developing countries to reduce emissions.
NAPAs National Adaptation Programmes of Action	NAPAs provide a process for LDCs to identify priority activities that respond to their urgent and immediate needs to adapt to climate change – those for which delay would increase vulnerability and/or costs later.
NGO Non-Governmental	A legally constituted organisation created by natural or legal persons that operates independently from any

Organisation	government. The term is usually used by governments to refer to entities that have no government status.
PP Project Participation	A party or public or private entity authorised by a Party of the Kyoto Protocol to participate in the development of the project mechanisms.
QELROs Quantified Emissions Limitation and Reduction Commitments	Legally binding targets and timetables under the Kyoto Protocol for the limitation or reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions by developed countries.
REDD Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation	An effort to create a financial value for the carbon stored in forests, offering incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from forested lands and invest in low-carbon paths to sustainable development. 'REDD+' goes beyond deforestation and forest degradation, and includes the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.
RINGO Research and independent NGOs	One of the nine constituencies recognised by the nine Major Groups which were established by Agenda 21.
SCCF Special Climate Change Fund	Established to finance projects relating to adaptation; technology transfer and capacity building; energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry and waste management; and economic diversification. This fund should complement other funding mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention.
TUNGO Trade union NGO	One of the nine constituencies recognised by the nine Major Groups which were established by Agenda 21.
UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	The Convention on Climate Change sets an overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle the challenge posed by climate change. It recognises that the climate system is a shared resource whose stability can be affected by industrial and other emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.
WEOG Western European and Others Group	One of several unofficial Regional Groups in the UN that act as voting blocs and negotiation forums.
YOUNGO Youth NGO	One of the nine constituencies recognised by the nine Major Groups which were established by Agenda 21.

Click [here](#) for the full list of UNFCCC climate change acronyms and definitions. [nrg4SD Rough Guide to UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol here](#)

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