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# 2015 PARIS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE (COP21)

## COALITION EAU ANALYSIS

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### 1. The Outcome of COP21: Focus on Water

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#### 1.1. The Paris Agreement

The [Paris Agreement](#) was adopted on Saturday 12th December 2015 by the 195 party nations to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) following 2 weeks of intense negotiations (30 November – 11 December). Described as the "the best possible balance" by Laurent Fabius, President of COP21, this text provides a universal cooperative framework for tackling climate change in which a number of significant breakthroughs have been made, but which also has some recognised limitations. The main points of the agreement include:

- **A long-term objective** to hold "the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels". However, according to Coordination SUD, the proposed mechanisms for achieving this are insufficient, while the total of all countries' nationally determined contributions places us on track for global warming of +3°C.
- **An objective to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions "as soon as possible"** followed by a reduction in these emissions in order to achieve **carbon neutrality** in the second half of the century. This means net-zero greenhouse gas emissions (emissions are offset by absorption). Although this will lead to a reduction in the use of fossil fuels, a number of civil society organisations had been calling for zero emissions in absolute terms in order to completely cease the use of fossil fuels and ensure transition to 100% renewable energy sources.
- **A focus on intended nationally determined contributions** (*see point 1.2*), which are to be updated every 5 years, but only from 2025 onwards, i.e. 5 years after coming into force. Nevertheless, party nations are encouraged to communicate their updated contributions by 2020.
- **The recognition that climate change adaptation is as important as mitigation**, as previous climate change negotiations all focused on mitigation.
- **The recognition of loss and damage** associated with the adverse effects of climate change, a major sticking point between countries that has been included in the Agreement, but with no set financial compensation for the most vulnerable countries.
- **Financial mobilisation** to help developing countries with climate change mitigation and adaptation based on a current objective of 100 billion US dollars up to 2025 and the definition of "a new collective quantified goal from a floor of USD 100 billion per year" thereafter. However, this principle only appears in the Agreement's draft decision; the Agreement itself does not include quantified financial targets, despite poor countries urgently requiring funding to tackle the impacts of climate change.
- **Reference to human rights and food security**, two fundamental aspects, in the preamble to the Agreement; however, reference to these was removed from the Agreement's operational text.

- **Technology transfer, capacity-building and the establishment of a transparency framework for action and support.**

In order to enter into force in 2020, between April 2016 and April 2017, the Paris Agreement must be ratified, accepted, approved or signed by at least 55 countries that produce at least 55% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. It will be legally binding but there will be no accompanying sanction or enforcement mechanism.

#### **Focus on Water:**

Coalition Eau is disappointed to note that there is no explicit reference to water contained within the Paris Agreement, despite water being a key element in the fight against climate change. Water activists nevertheless worked up to very last minute to influence decision-makers, under the umbrella of the #ClimateIsWater campaign.

However, there are a number of aspects within the Agreement that relate to water:

- Reference to the post-2015 Development Agenda, in which water has its own specific Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 6);
- Reference to human rights within the preamble to the Agreement, as the right to safe water and sanitation was recognised as a fundamental human right in 2010;
- The priority given to climate change adaptation, in which water plays a central role, and to its funding;
- The focus placed on intended nationally determined contributions, where water is listed as the key priority for climate change adaptation.

*For further analyses, please see:*

["Négociations climat : Un accord qui ne prend pas réellement en compte les intérêts des plus vulnérables"](#), Coordination SUD, press release published on 12/12/2015

["A la COP21, un compromis guidé par la justice climatique"](#), Le Monde, article published on 14/12/2015

["Bilan de la COP21 vu par le Partenariat Français pour l'Eau"](#), French Water Partnership, 12/12/2015

## **1.2. Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)**

The intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) communicated by each Party to the UNFCCC are detailed national action plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting climate change adaptation from 2020 onwards.

As of 12th December 2015, 186 of the expected 195 INDCs had been submitted from countries producing 95% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. These contributions, which have been made public, are to be updated every 5 years from 2025 onwards. However, as they currently stand, when added together, these contributions result in global warming of around +3°C, far higher than the 2°C targeted by the Paris Agreement and the 1.5°C required.

*Each country's contribution can be viewed [here](#).*

#### **Focus on Water:**

The French Water Partnership and Coalition Eau published a [note analysing the extent to which water had been included in the INDCs](#) submitted as of 8th November 2015.

Of the 129 INDCs communicated (out of 195 parties), 82% included an adaptation component, whereas 92% of the INDCs contained a climate change adaptation component in which water was mentioned. Water is thus included as the key priority for adaptation, followed by agriculture and health. Focus has been placed on four main water-related themes: water for agriculture, risk management (flooding and drought), Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), and drinking water.

## **1.3. Lima-Paris Action Agenda**

The aim of the Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) has been to collate non-state actor initiatives that support those of states in order to accelerate climate action. A specific session on water was held as part of 'Resilience Day' on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015, during which a number of various actors presented their commitments, including:

- River basin organisations, with the [Paris Pact on Water and Climate Change Adaptation in river basins, lakes and aquifers](#)
- Companies, with the ["Business Alliance for Water and Climate"](#)

- Cities, through the "[Megacities Alliance for Water and Climate](#)"
- Young people, through the "Youth Commitment for Water and Climate Change Adaptation".

Coalition Eau and other NGO/CSO networks (Butterfly Effect, the French Disaster Risk Reduction Network and People, Planet and Water) have decided not to take part in this Action Agenda due to its inherent weaknesses and uncertainties, namely: its weak overall governance framework and lack of inclusivity, its lack of clear action selection criteria and its lack of a rigorous monitoring framework... However, it will be useful to keep track of any developments, as NGOs/CSOs would be prepared to contribute to this Action Agenda if real improvements were to be made.

## 2. COP21, and then?

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### 2.1. Preparing for COP22 in Marrakech

Now that COP 21 has set out the overall framework for addressing the challenge of climate change, the main goal for future COPs will be to review its implementation. It is therefore necessary to continue pushing for the water component to be more widely included in the process and ensure that water's key role in mitigating and, particularly, adapting to climate change is recognised.

The COP22 preparatory event on water and the climate, which was announced by the Moroccan Minister Delegate in Charge of Water during the #ClimatelsWater press conference, will serve as an intermediary event. This will be held in the spring of 2016 in Morocco with the support of a number of organisations, including the French Water Partnership.

### 2.2. Implementing countries' commitments

In order to assess the impact of COP21, it will be necessary to monitor its effects in individual countries, particularly the way in which it influences public policy. The INDCs, a large number of which contain provisions for climate change adaptations relating to water, will thus have a key role to play. It will therefore be vital to monitor the implementation of these INDCs and undertake advocacy efforts to ensure the allocation of adequate resources.

**Coalition Eau is a network of French NGOs working to promote universal and sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation while preserving water resources.**

Coalition Eau members include: ACAD, Action contre la Faim, ADEDE, AVSF, BlueEnergy, CCFD, Coopération Atlantique Guinée 44, CORAIL, CRID, 4D, East, Eau Sans Frontières International, Eau Vive, GRDR, Green Cross International, GRET, Hydraulique Sans Frontières, IDO, Ingénieurs Sans Frontières, Initiative Développement, Kynarou, Morija, Réseau Foi et Justice Afrique Europe, Secours Catholique – Caritas France, Secours Islamique France, Sherpa, Solidarité Eau Europe, Toilettes du Monde, Triangle Génération Humanitaire, WECF.

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