



# Knowledge Conclave

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# Climate Change as a Political Issue

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- The term climate change is used when referring to changes in the earth's ecosystem since the 1980s caused by human reckless activities including fossil fuel consumption, deforestation, etc
- Ozone hole, melting of glaciers discovered in 1980s
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change established in 1988, conclusive report in 1990



# UNFCCC- The Global Climate Regime

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-The International Response to Climate Change is in the form of a legal regime- the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), a result of the Earth Summit in 1992

- Its principles

- Rights to the global common
- Historical responsibility
- Right to development
- finance and technology access



# UNFCCC- The Global Climate Regime

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- Negotiations started thereafter to produce a legal protocol to clearly define the targets for the developed countries and voluntary actions for the developing countries
- In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was signed

# US Drop Out from the Kyoto Regime

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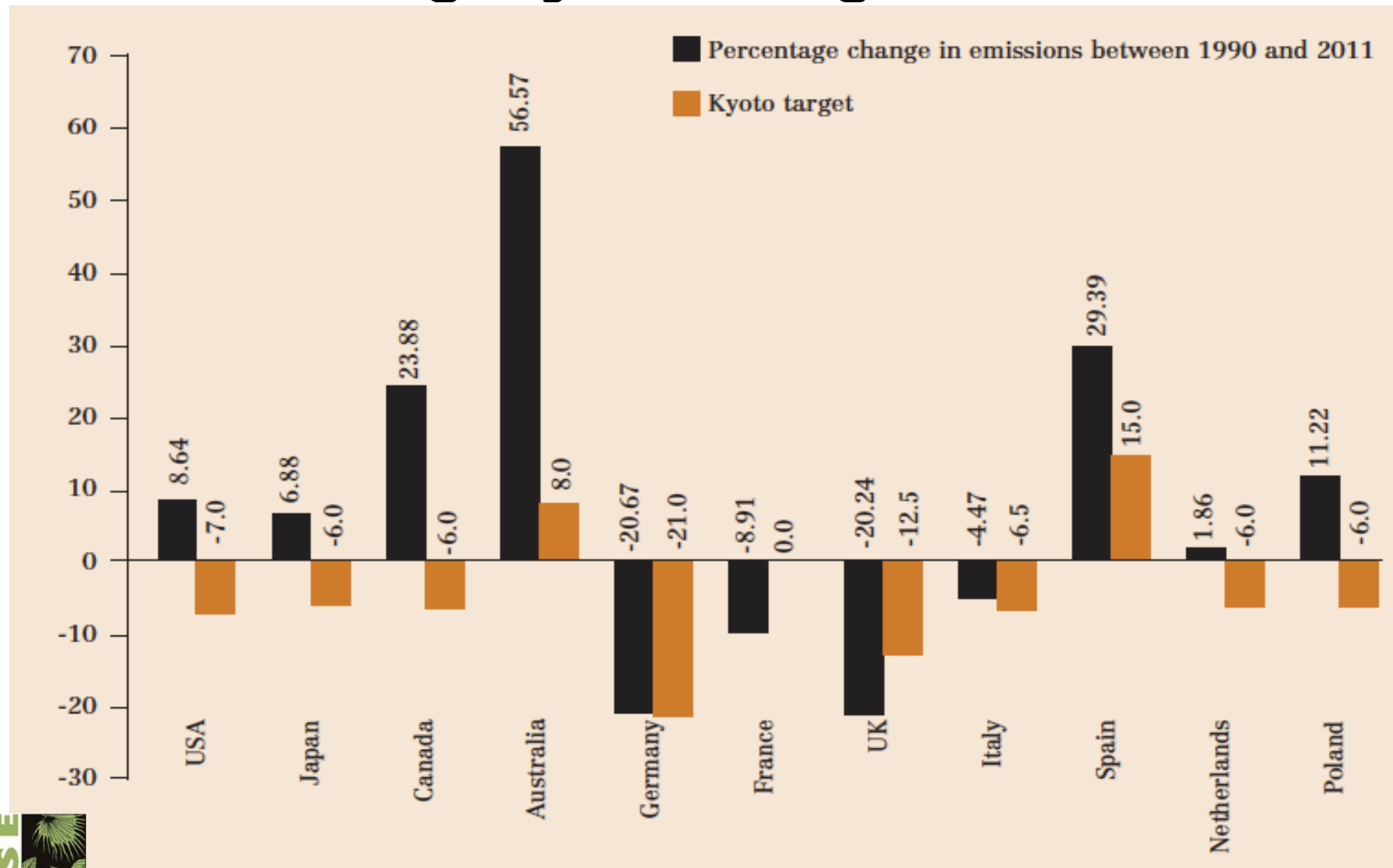
- The biggest blow to Kyoto Regime with the US exit, called it 'fatally flawed'
- It wanted all countries to take action
- It wanted the firewall – between those who have contributed to the creation of the problem and the rest removed
- It wanted equity to be redefined so that it meant what countries will do



- A weak and unambitious Kyoto Protocol finally ratified in 2005
- Annex 1 (developed countries) mitigation target: just 5.2% below 1990 levels between 2008-2012, mechanism for carbon trading created, no specific commitments on finance and technology
- Australia, Japan, Russia, Canada out of Kyoto regime in 2011



# Rich countries: not meeting Kyoto target



The rich did not reduce their emissions which have only increased over the years



## Bali Action Plan 2007

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- IPCC Fourth Assessment Report released in 2007, demanding urgent climate action. Kyoto Protocol would expire in 2012
- Bali Action Summit held in same year. Negotiating tracks emerged: AWG-LCA ( long term cooperative action), short term goal.
- US came back to be part of the future climate regime (AWG-LCA)



- The west led by the EU pressed for legally binding new climate agreement, actions by all countries
- The actions would be subjected to an international review and monitoring, a stance vehemently opposed by the developing countries
- No financial commitments

★ 20+ ★  
years  
**CLIMATE  
TALKIES**  
SINCE 1992

**2007 BALI ACTION PLAN COP13**

**THE END IS NEAR...**

*Apocalypse Now*

## **Cop(Flop)enhagen Summit**

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- The extremely hyped Copenhagen Summit held in 2009 to agree to a new climate agreement post 2012
- Summit was disaster. No new agreement, only a political Accord
- The Copenhagen Accord held the potential to wipe equity off the table—it proposed voluntary action to reduce emissions, by all countries





★ 20+ ★  
years  
**CLIMATE  
TALKIES**  
SINCE 1992

**2009 COPENHAGEN ACCORD COP15**

# THE FULL MONTY



**No Plan  
No Money**

## Cancun Summit

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- Legalised the voluntary “pledge and review” mentioned in the Copenhagen Accord, talked of temperature goal of 2 degree C
- Countries were allowed to set their own domestic targets in the form of pledges which would be measured, reported and verified (MRV)
- No penalties if the targets are not met, Green Climate Fund created, still struggling for funds



## Warsaw Summit 2013

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- An important outcome of the Warsaw summit (2013) were the **Intended Nationally Determined Contributions**, INDCs
- These were national contributions to be made by countries which would be assessed, reviewed and, if required, be raised in consonance with the 2°C degree target
- Voluntary contributions regime strengthened



# Lima Summit 2014

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- Lima Call to Climate Action* further wiped out equity by using , Common but differentiated Responsibility, in light of evolving national circumstances
- For the first time, **principle of the Convention re-written**
- Collective Review in the form of Synthesis Report





- Ahead of the Paris Summit, countries responsible for 80 percent of emissions submitted their INDCs
- US target of 26-28 percent by 2025 against 2005 levels is highly un-ambitious and insufficient; Developing countries efforts more than the developed countries
- The targets however do not add up to the 2 degree C. It is more than 3 degree C.



## Paris Summit- Key Outcomes

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- Adopted after 2 weeks of intense negotiations; developing countries made lot of compromises
- The new agreement is under the Convention, talks of principles of Equity and CBDR, notes climate justice and sustainable lifestyles
- A temperature goal of 2 degree C is recognized and parties are urged to make efforts to pursue 1.5 degree C



- No quantified commitments for emission targets or finance
- No legally binding emission reduction targets or financial commitments
- There is no difference now between Parties that are required to undertake and communicate ambitious action; the efforts of all Parties will represent a progression over time

- No differentiation in the measuring, reporting and verification (MRV) provision; universal in the form of a technical expert review on reporting and progress
- Only says that for all it will be facilitative, non-punitive and respectful of national sovereignty
- Market mechanism is established with which, developed countries will be allowed to buy cheap emission reduction options



- The text does talk about support for loss and damage, but clearly specifies that this will not be considered as liability or compensation,
- Further weakens the obligations of developed countries and erases responsibilities of dealing with the consequences of their past emissions

- The stocktake is universal – for only aggregate actions and not individual actions – and will happen in 2023 and every five years henceforth
- There is no ratcheting up mechanism to increase ambition

- References to carbon budgets is gone and so developed countries can continue to disproportionately appropriate carbon space in the future as they have done in the past
- A fair distribution of the remaining carbon space based on historical responsibilities could have avoided this inequity

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- On the whole, the Paris agreement is weak and unambitious, no meaningful targets or commitments for developed countries
- Does not operationalise equity and the term carbon budget didn't even find mention in the text, **equity gone in ambition, mitigation, review**
- Commitment confined to procedures