

South Korea, Monaco, the Netherlands, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay and Venezuela subsequently acceded to the Treaty. The Treaty reserves the Antarctic area south of 60° S. lat. for peaceful purposes, provides for international co-operation in scientific investigation and research, and preserves, for the duration of the Treaty, the status quo with regard to territorial sovereignty, rights and claims. The Treaty entered into force on 23 June 1961. The 47 nations party to the Treaty (28 full voting signatories and 19 adherents) meet biennially.

An agreement reached in Madrid in April 1991 and signed by all 39 parties in Oct. imposes a ban on mineral exploitation in Antarctica for 50 years, at the end of which any one of the 28 voting parties may request a review conference. After this the ban may be lifted by agreement of three quarters of the nations then voting, which must include the present 28.

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Further Reading

Elliott, L. M., *International Environmental Politics: Protecting the Antarctic*. 1994
 Jørgensen-Dahl, A. and Østrem, W., *The Antarctic Treaty System in World Politics*. 1991

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

The convention was produced at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development with the stated aim of reducing

global greenhouse gas emissions to 'a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human induced) interference with the climate system'. Signatories agreed to take account of climate change in their domestic policy and to develop national programmes that would slow its progress. However, no mandatory targets were established for the reduction of emissions so the treaty remained legally non-binding. Instead it operates as a 'framework' document, with provisions for regular updates and amendments.

The first of these additions was the Kyoto Protocol in 1997. Under the protocol, 36 developed countries are committed to reducing their collective emissions of six greenhouse gases to at least 5% below 1990 levels. These targets are scheduled to be met in the period 2008–12. By Feb. 2010, 189 countries plus the European Union had signed and ratified the treaty. The USA has not ratified the protocol. China and India, also amongst the world's top five producers of emissions, are exempt from the protocol's constraints by virtue of their status as developing countries.

The members of the UNFCCC meet on an annual basis. The conference in Indonesia in Dec. 2007 led to the creation of the 'Bali Roadmap', which timetables negotiations for a protocol to succeed Kyoto. This process was continued at the 2008 conference in Poland with the aim of agreeing an international response to climate change at the next UNFCCC conference, which took place in Copenhagen, Denmark in Dec. 2009. The resulting Copenhagen Accord was not legally binding and failed to set out concrete measures for tackling climate change. The 16th conference is scheduled to be held in Nov.–Dec. 2010 in Cancún, Mexico.

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