



To: European Union negotiators at United Nations World Climate Summit
Subject: Briefing on Negotiating Goals

Goals

The nations of the EU seek to negotiate a global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that achieves the best outcome for our economies and national interests, as well as for the world. At the 2015 UN climate negotiations in Paris, nations agreed to a goal of limiting global warming to “well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.” You must now decide on the following:

1. Actions to reduce carbon emissions, if any. EU emissions since 1990 have declined modestly and without continued action, they are expected to stay flat. You can decide whether EU emissions will maintain this peak (if so, name the current year as your Peak Year), when they will decline, and at what annual rate emissions decline, if at all. *See the gray boxes on the next page for additional guidance.*
2. Whether to make commitments to reduce deforestation or plant new forest area.
3. How much the EU will contribute, if at all, to a global climate fund, which is intended to provide at least \$100 billion per year for developing countries to reduce their emissions and adapt to climate change.

Context

The scientific consensus on climate is clear: over 97% of climate scientists agree that climate change is happening, that it is caused primarily by use of fossil fuels, and that the impacts could be devastating. EU research has shown that climate change is already affecting our nations and that without dramatic reductions in global emissions, the damage will become far more severe.

Public Opinion

The vast majority of the public in our countries believes climate change is real and that human activity contributes significantly to it. Most support international agreements to address climate change. For most EU citizens, climate change is a top priority, ranking higher than concerns about terrorism or education but below concerns about economic recovery from COVID-19 and public health. Most importantly, the public is strongly opposed to any agreement that does not include meaningful commitments to reduce emissions by the US and rapidly developing economies, particularly China.

Opportunities

Reducing emissions has multiple benefits, beyond climate stability. For example, renewable energy development is creating jobs, reducing dependence on foreign oil and gas, and reducing air pollution.

National Action

The EU has been a leader in the fight against climate change. The EU has pledged to reduce net emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. Our pledge is among the most ambitious of the major emitters, but it requires major new regulations that have yet to be implemented and must be realized during a time when we are facing significant economic and security challenges. Despite these potential limitations, the EU has pioneered economic policy that puts a price on greenhouse gas emissions, and we are leaders in deploying renewable energy sources such as wind and solar. We will continue to lead but we cannot and will not move alone.

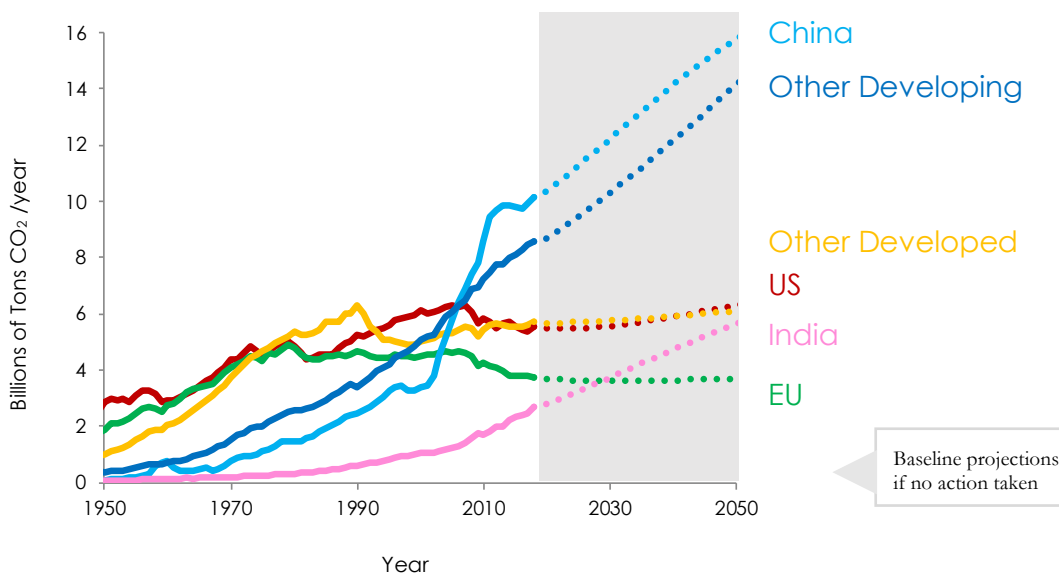
Forests and Land Use

Though we can pledge reductions in emissions from deforestation and land degradation within our countries, doing so would address only a small portion of EU emissions.

Global Landscape

- Emissions in China, India and other developing nations are growing rapidly. China alone is now responsible for over one-quarter of global CO₂ emissions. Total emissions from the developing countries will soon overwhelm emissions from all developed nations.
- The US has more than double the per capita emissions of the EU and had pledged to reduce their emissions by only 26-28% by 2025 from 2005 levels. This pledge faces strong political opposition from members of the US Congress and business interests with a stake in continued fossil fuel consumption. In spite of these challenges, US research shows that the costs of delay are high while most states and regions in the US will benefit from policies that reduce emissions.
- The less developed nations continue to emphasize that reductions in their emissions would require extensive financial assistance from developed countries, but corruption pervades many of these countries and financial assistance often fails to reach its intended use. They may also emphasize forestry policy over cutting fossil fuel emissions, which, while important, is insufficient for meeting the climate challenge.

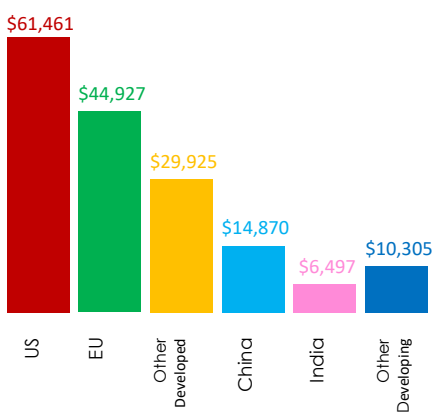
CO₂ Emissions from Energy Use



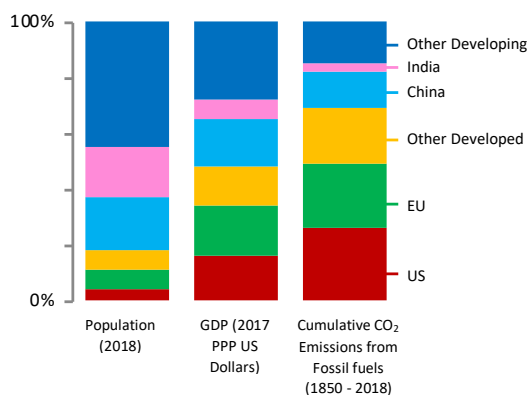
China is the world's largest emitter of CO₂. Without action, developing countries' emissions from fossil fuels are projected to triple by 2100.

Sweden sustained annual CO₂ emissions reductions of 4.5% to reduce their dependence on oil (1976-1986). France and Belgium saw similar reductions around this time. Otherwise, most significant historical emission reductions have come from financial or political crises. More recently, the UK reduced emissions by an average 3.5% annually between 2007-2017.

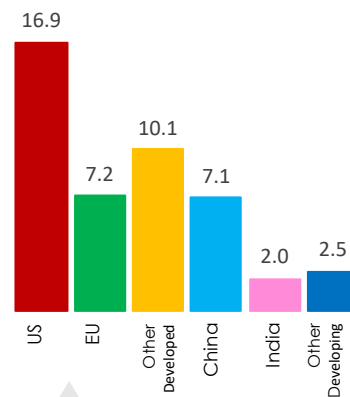
GDP per person (2017 PPP US Dollars)



Population Wealth and Cumulative Emissions



Emissions per person 2018 (tons CO₂ per year)



While cumulative emissions so far have been higher in the developed countries (i.e., the **US**, **EU**, and **other developed countries**), the growth of population, GDP per person, and emissions in the developing nations far outpaces growth in the developed countries. If no action is taken, cumulative emissions of all developed countries (**US**, **EU**, and **other developed**) are expected to fall to 36% of total by 2100.

Since 1980, emissions per person have risen dramatically in **China** and **India** (by 394% and 349%, respectively) but have fallen in the **US** and **Europe** (by 21% and 30% respectively).