Paris Agreement on Climate Change

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2016 Dialog on Sustainability, KSU,
Manhattan, KS, July 23, 2016
The 2015 Paris Climate Conference (COP21)

- Nov 30 - Dec 12, 2015

- The aim was to achieve a legally binding and universal agreement on not to allow global temperature to increase by more than 2°C above pre-industrial levels
When Will the Paris Agreement Take Effect?

At least 55 Parties to the UNFCCC representing at least 55% of total global GHGs must join.
Paris Agreement

Keeping Temperature Rises below 1.5°C

• It calls for holding 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
Long-term Global Goal for Net Zero Emissions

• The countries have promised to bring global emissions down from peak levels as soon as possible.

• Also to achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of GHG in the 2nd half of this century.
Take Stock Every Five Years

• The Agreement obliges nations to submit on a regular basis the “Intended Nationally Determined Contribution” (INDC) that are compatible with achieving the goals set out in the Agreement and to implement the INDCs.
Loss and Damage

• The agreement recognizes “loss and damage” associated with climate-related disasters while explicitly ruling out financial compensation mechanisms.
Support/Money

• The agreement calls on governments to continue providing finance through the *Green Climate Fund* to undertake adaptation activities.
Strengths

• It puts forward the right goals of carbon neutrality – all countries pledged to set emission targets

• It limits the temperature rise to $2^0\text{C}$

• The days of fossil fuels and GHG-intensive activities are numbered
Weaknesses

- Paris Agreement is a non-binding agreement for raising individual obligations of emissions reductions every five years.

- It is essentially a statement of good intentions, setting forth goals to limit global temp. rise to 2°C.
• The Agreement does not set any precise date by which the “peaking” of GHG emissions has to be achieved.

• The intension of the countries to lower emissions – vaguely described as “nationally determined contributions” – are also non-binding.
• There is no specific date for carbon “neutrality”

• The Agreement will not create any legally binding requirements on participating countries with regard to either mitigation or adaptation – everything will depend on the “intentions” of respective countries
Conclusions

• For developing countries, the Paris Agreement is better than no deal and an important step in the right direction.
• Paris should not be the last word; subsequent meetings will have to consider whether countries are keeping their commitments and raise ambitions further

“Even if Paris is not perfect, it should be good enough for now”

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Thanks!

Any Questions?

PARIS AGREEMENT
MAKING THE BORING NOT BORING