

INTRODUCTION TO COP: 101. UNFCCC, COP AND COP25



YOUTH4NATURE COP25
DELEGATION TRAINING #1



Instructions for Training

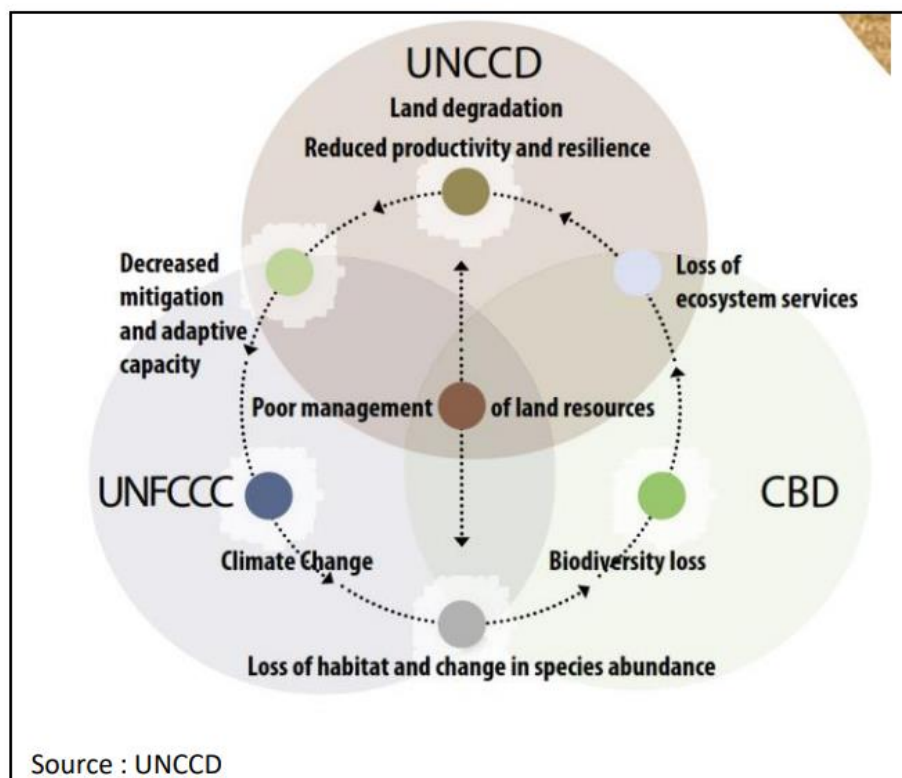
- There will be time for **short, direct and specific questions** in-between sections.
 - If you have a short and direct question, **write it in the chat** and I will cover it during the section breaks.
 - If you need a **quick clarification** (i.e. didn't quite get what I just said), please write so in the chat as I speak, and I will try to repeat myself / re-explain.
- **Longer and less specific questions** are better left for the ending.
 - Write them down in your notes as I go through the slides, **don't write them in the chat** until the Q&A slide.
 - The training **will be recorded and the slides uploaded** to our Google Drive, together with additional resources.



Training Content



1. What is COP?



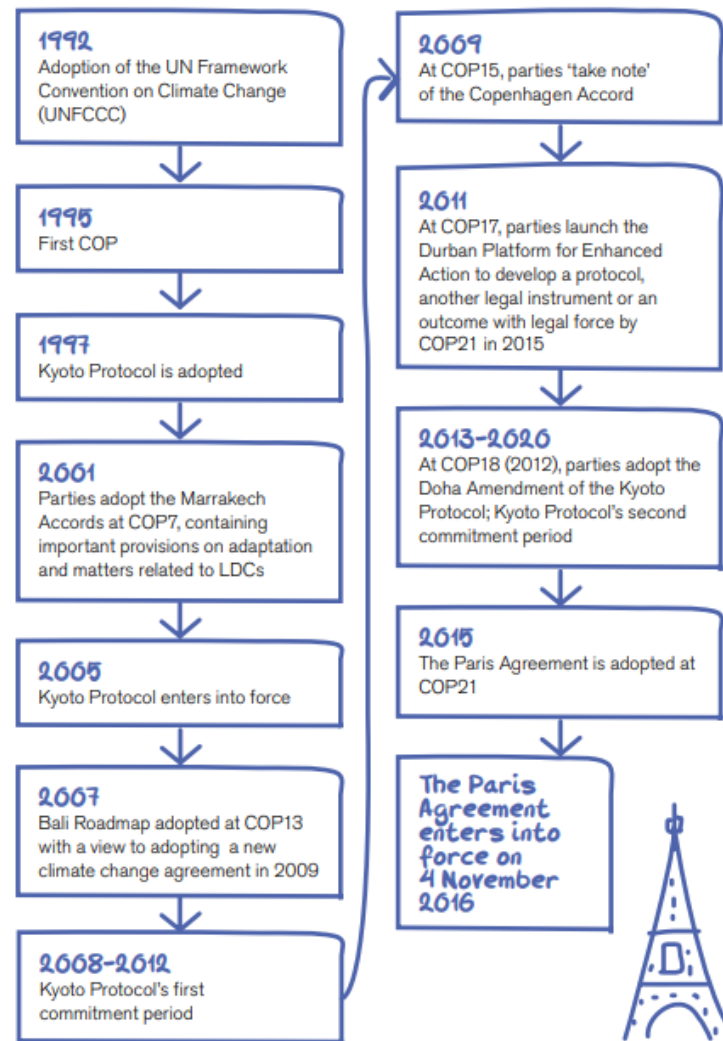
Graphic Source: [Scoping Study on Environmental-Economic Accounting towards the Production of an Integrated Information System and Indicators for the Three Rio Conventions](#)

- COP stands for “Conference of Parties”.
- It is the **main decision-making body** of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), working on the **effective implementation** of the Convention.
 - UNFCCC is one of the three Conventions adopted at the **UN Conference on Environment and Development** in 1992, notoriously known as **the Rio Earth Summit**.
 - Sibling conventions: the **UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** and the **UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**.
 - *The three conventions are key for nature-based solutions!*
 - The UNFCCC is ratified by **197 countries**, who are Parties to the Convention.
 - Goal of the UNFCCC: to **stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations** "at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human induced) interference with the climate system."
 - Sees **international cooperation** as essential to combat climate change.

1. Key Agreements

Kyoto Protocol

- **Legally binding** treaty adopted in 1997 by specific **developed/industrialised countries** (known as Annex I).
- Motivated by the idea of “historical responsibility”, principle of “**common but differentiated responsibilities**”.
- Sets national reduction targets for signatory countries and offers three **market-based [emission trading and reduction] mechanisms** for action:
 - International Emissions Trading
 - Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)
 - Joint Implementation (JI)



Graphic Source: [‘Becoming a UNFCCC Delegate’ iied handbook](#)

Paris Agreement

- **Universal and legally binding** treaty adopted in 2015 by 195 countries.
 - Implementation guidance (‘the Paris Rulebook’) majorly adopted in COP24.
- Aim: to limit global temperature rise well **below 2 degrees Celsius** above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.
 - Topics included: mitigation, GHG sinks & REDD+, market & non-market approaches, adaptation, loss & damage, finance, technology, capacity-building, and education.
- Requires parties to set and communicate their **nationally-determined contributions (NDCs)** to reduce GHGs and to adapt to climate change.
 - NDCs submitted every 5 years to the UNFCCC Secretariat. Next round **due in 2020** (hence why it is such an important year!).

1. Key Bodies: CMP, CMA, SBI & SBSTA

CMP

- ✓ Conference of the Parties Serving as **the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol.**
- ✓ Main decision-making body of the Kyoto Protocol.
- ✓ Occurs alongside COP since 2005.

CMA

- ✓ Conference of the Parties Serving as the **Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement.**
- ✓ Main decision-making body of the Paris Agreement.
- ✓ First took place in COP22 (2016).

SBI

- ✓ Stands for 'Subsidiary Body for Implementation'.
- ✓ Meets two times a year: COP and SB 'intersessionals' in Bonn.
- ✓ Permanent subsidiary body to the UNFCCC.
- ✓ Facilitates and ensures progress in the **implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.**
- ✓ Focus on 'transparency, mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology and capacity-building'.

SBSTA

- ✓ Stands for 'Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice'.
- ✓ Meets two times a year: COP and SB 'intersessionals' in Bonn.
 - ✓ Permanent subsidiary body to the UNFCCC.
- ✓ Provides **information and advice on scientific and technological matters** (works closely with IPCC).
- ✓ Focus on 'the impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, promoting the development and transfer of environmentally-sound technologies. and conducting technical work'.

**ANY QUICK
QUESTIONS ON
'WHAT IS COP'?**

2. How Do COP Negotiations Work?

- The **UNFCCC Secretariat supports and facilitates** the COP process, together with the COP (COP/CMP/CMA) President, the SBI Chair and the SBSTA Chair.
 - Patricia Espinosa is the current head of the Secretariat.
- **Negotiations are held between Parties** (i.e. countries).
 - Observers (i.e. civil society and NGOs) don't negotiate directly in sessions, they engage through lobbying Parties to influence their positions.
- Negotiations are **consensus-based** i.e. absence of formal objection by Parties. No formal voting is required.
- **COP/CMA/CMP agree on decisions** around the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement; the **SBI and SBSTA reach conclusions** on their respective agenda items, which are **passed to COP/CMA/CMP** through draft text recommendations.
- Parties negotiate **as individual nations and/or as interest/regional blocks**.
 - Examples of blocks include: G77+China, EU, CARICOM, Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDCs), Small Island Developing State (SIDS), BASIC [Brazil, South Africa, China and India]...
 - Negotiating in blocks is particularly useful for Parties with smaller delegations.



Plenaries: formal meetings in a **large hall** which are **open to all**; sometimes they are ticketed and have restricted access for observers and media.

+COP has an opening plenary (which adopts the conference's agenda) and a closing plenary (when formal decisions are reached).

Contact Groups: **formal but smaller meetings** than plenaries for **specific agenda items**. Open to all Parties, but sometimes not to observers. Parties work on a text-based recommendation which can then be forwarded to the relevant plenary so it is formally adopted or approved.

Informal Consultations ('Informals'): often focused on SBI and SBSTA agendas, these are '**unscheduled**' and **small meetings** for Parties to discuss specific agenda items. Informals can be announced during plenaries and/or via email, with their outcomes forwarded to the relevant plenary. They are open to all Parties, but sometimes not to observers.

+Informals often occur when there are difficulties in reaching decisions during contact groups and further discussion/text-drafting is required.

'Informal Informals' and Huddles: when Parties **continue to struggle to reach a decision**/unified recommendation, 'informal informals' or huddles might take place. Informal informals tend to not have designated facilitators, **involve less formalities** and report back to contact groups. Huddles are even more informal, normally **unofficial and spontaneous**, with small groups of Party delegates meeting in circles in corridors or other unassigned areas. Both of these meetings are **closed/not accessible to observers**.

2. Types of Negotiation Meetings

What happens during meetings?

Delegates make **statements** (often prepared beforehand) and **interventions** (responses to statements) on the topics, agenda items and/or texts being discussed.

Delegates can speak as representatives of **Parties**, **negotiating blocks** or **observer constituencies**.

2. Other Meetings and Sessions

Workshops are **facilitative dialogue sessions, knowledge-sharing and brainstorming sessions**, conducted to get advice from technical experts and/or for discussions on **knowledge and the technicalities of a specific topic**. Observers can normally participate and do interventions.

+ Workshops are a type of mandated event.

+ Workshops, set through COP/CMA/CMP decisions, often focus on **non-permanent committees, mechanisms and work programmes**, such as the Adaptation Committee and the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture (KJWA).

Coordination meetings are group **meetings for negotiation blocks** to update members on proceedings and **to develop common positions**.



Mandated events are **knowledge-sharing, brainstorming and/or facilitative dialogue sessions**, conducted to get advice from technical experts and/or for discussions on **knowledge and the technicalities of a specific topic**. Observers might not always be able participate.

+ Mandated events, set through COP/CMA/CMP decisions, often focus on **non-permanent committees, mechanisms and work programmes**, such as the Adaptation Committee and the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture (KJWA).

Bilaterals are **delegate meetings** between Parties and/or blocks, or between Parties / blocks and observer groups. These are **closed meetings** and can happen in **informal settings**.

2. Meetings and Sessions in Progress



Youth Session with UNSG Secretary



Informal Consultations



Opening Plenary for SBI and SBSTA



Koronivia Join Work on Agriculture Workshop

**ANY QUICK
QUESTIONS ON
'HOW DO COP
NEGOTIATIONS
WORK'?**

3. What Else Goes On at COP?



SIDE EVENTS AND
EXHIBITIONS



CAMPAIGN
ACTIONS



PRESS
CONFERENCES



PAVILLIONS AND
COUNTRY OFFICES



Pavilion



Exhibition

3. What Else Goes On at COP? (cted)

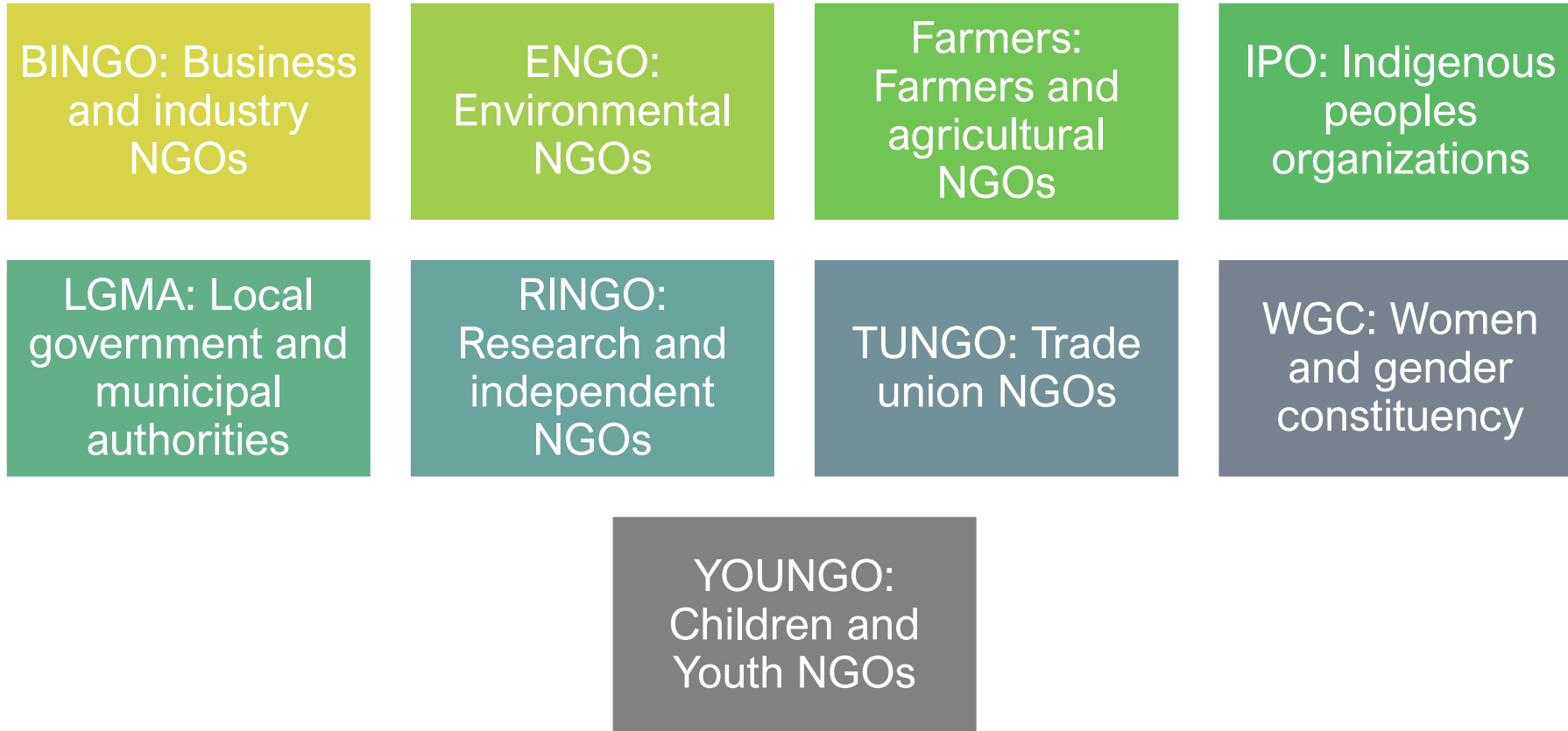


Side Event



Action

3. Observer Constituencies



Constituencies are groups of NGOs with similar interests and areas of work. Each of them has one or more designated focal points. They are active both during and outside COP. You can find more details on them [on the UNFCCC site](#) and on their respective websites.

**ANY QUICK
QUESTIONS ON
'WHAT ELSE
GOES ON AT
COP'?**

4. What to Expect from COP25? Vision and Themes

- COP25 will take place in Madrid under **the Chile Presidency**.
- The COP25 President is Carolina Schmidt, Minister of the Environment in Chile.
- Under the *“Time for Action!”* slogan, the Presidency vision for COP25 is focused around a need for **sustainable development** through **higher ambitions**, with a **balance between mitigation and adaptation**.
 - Big drive to involve Latin American citizens, particularly youth.
 - Key themes and initiatives by the COP25 presidency include: renewable energy, circular economy, electric mobility, **mitigation, adaptation, oceans, cities, ecosystems, Antarctica, water and biodiversity**.
 - *Nature-based solutions directly feed into many of these themes!*

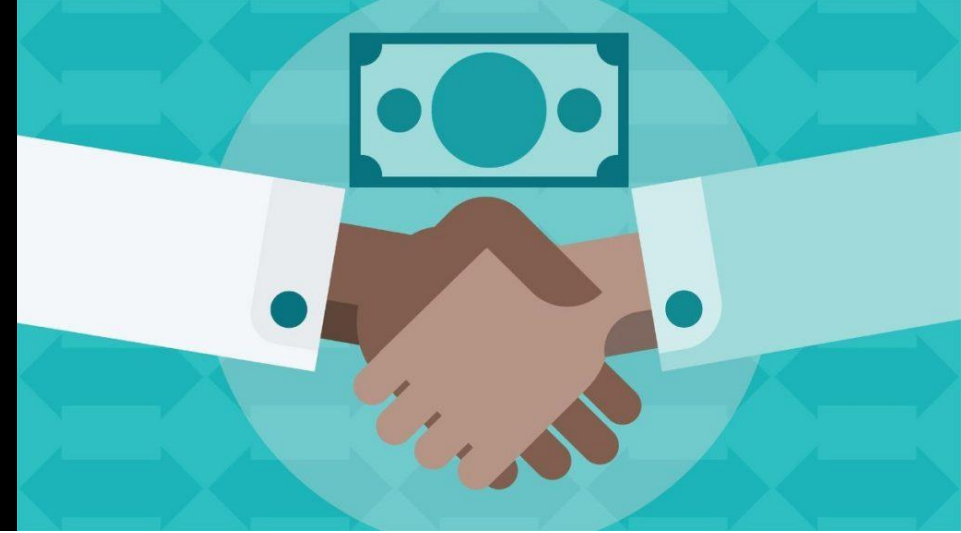


Photo by IISD/ENB | Kiara Worth

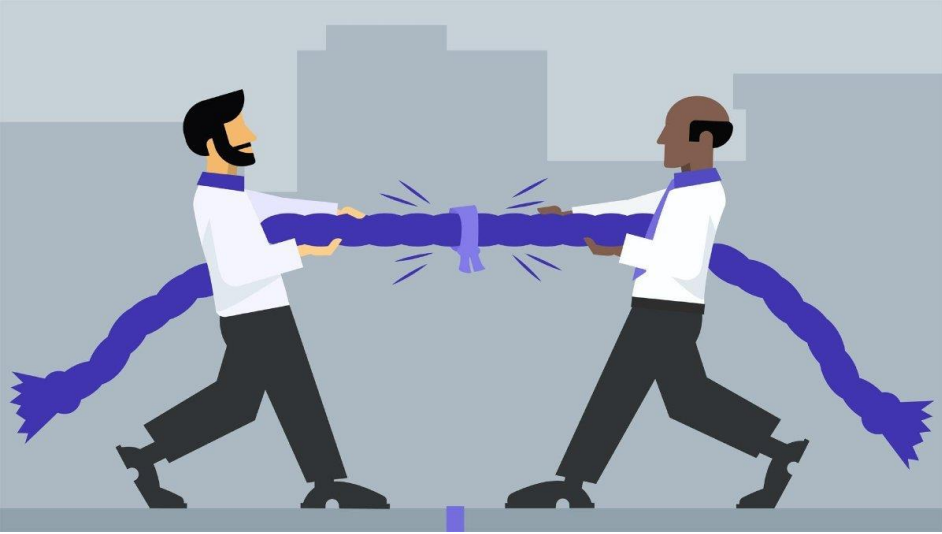
4. The Post-COP24 Context

- COP24 in Katowice culminated with **the adoption of the Paris Rulebook**.
 - Set of **guidelines for implementation of the Paris Agreement**.
 - The Rulebook is **not finished**, some areas of work were left for the SB50 ‘intersessionals’ in Bonn this year, which didn’t bring about much progress either.
- Another important outcome of COP24 was the **Silesia Declaration on Solidarity and Just Transition**, focused on an “effective and inclusive transition to low GHGs emissions and climate resilient development”.
 - Tension around **carbon neutrality vs decarbonisation**.
- **Finalisation of the Talanoa Dialogue**, which began in January 2018.
 - ‘Talanoa’ refers to Fijian tradition of collective problem-solving through storytelling.
 - High-level discussions centred around how to raise ambitions to meet the Paris Agreement goal.
- **Rows around the IPCC Report** on 1.5 degrees:
 - The US, Saudi Arabia, Russia and Kuwait objected to ‘welcoming’ the report in the final COP decision text. On the contrary, developing/the most climate-vulnerable countries emphasized the need for this, and the majority of countries were in favour of welcoming it.
 - Issue emerged again in SB50 ‘intersessionals’: countries led by Saudi Arabia questioned the science behind the report, talking about ‘scientific knowledge gaps’ in draft texts. In the end, report mentioned as “best available science”, but unclear if it will be included in future negotiations.

4. Key Issues for COP25



- COP25 includes the following sessions: **COP25, CMP15, CMA2, SBI51 and SBSTA51.**
- In the **Pre-COP** meeting hosted in Costa Rica, the key areas of work identified were: a need for **higher ambition, market mechanisms, gender, and loss and damage.**
 - A formal **review of the *Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage*** is set to take place in COP25.
 - Loss and damage has always been a very controversial issue, with a **division between developing and developed countries.** Developed countries are **reluctant to commit to climate finance** specific for loss and damage, just want to focus on adaptation and mitigation based on past events. Meanwhile, developing countries **want specific funding commitment** to loss and damage, in particular for **future events like natural disasters** and land degradation that go beyond adaptation needs.
- Drive to **enhance NDCs**, following the release of the IPCC reports on lands and oceans, as well as the UN Climate Action Summit in NYC.
 - Parties have to update their NDCs **by the end of 2020.** Next reviewing period would be in 5 years, which could be too late for more radical and effective action in the eyes of activists and scientists.



4. Key Issues for COP25 (cted)

- **Article 6** will be again on the table, following unsuccessful talks in COP24 and SB50 ‘intersessionals’.
 - Article 6 focuses on market and non-market mechanisms for action, though the **area of contention is market mechanisms** i.e. ‘rules for voluntary international trading of “mitigation outcomes” such as emissions reductions’. In particular, there is a search for a post-2020 **replacement of the Clean Development Mechanism**.
 - Concerns have always existed that the CDM is not effective enough/‘worthless’.
 - Article 6 is **critical for the Paris Agreement** to work: **bad and misleading accounting** of carbon credits could lead to an increase of GHGs.
 - Issues: double counting, transparency and the environmental integrity of markets.
 - **Double counting** refers to when ‘a nation that has successfully sold credits off the back of emissions cutting projects must not be allowed to also count those emissions cuts towards its own nationally determined contribution (NDC)’.
 - In COP24, Brazil **objected to attempts to prevent double counting**. In Bonn, Arab Group and India joined calls for **existing CDM credits to be carried into new mechanism**, a move **not favoured by small island states and the African Group** as it would bring ‘a huge surplus of weak credits into the market’.

Conclusion & Additional Resources

- All about the UNFCCC and COP: <https://unfccc.int/>
- Building Consensus in the UNFCCC: <https://cdkn.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Background-Paper-Tony-La-Vina-Consensus-building-in-the-UNFCCC.pdf>
- COP24 Outcomes: <https://www.carbonbrief.org/cop24-key-outcomes-agreed-at-the-un-climate-talks-in-katowice>
- SB50/Intersessional 2019 Outcomes: <https://www.carbonbrief.org/bonn-climate-talks-key-outcomes-from-june-2019-un-climate-conference>
- ‘Becoming a UNFCCC delegate’ handbook: <https://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/17385IIED.pdf>
- ‘RINGO Pre-COP: Navigating the UNFCCC and COP’ 2018 webinar:
 - Slides: <https://secondnature.org/wp-content/uploads/RINGO-Pre-COP-Webinar-Compiled-to-share-converted-1.pdf>
 - Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94tADHAVLwl&t=2782s>

Next Training

- ❑ Focused on **practical tips** on how to navigate COP on-the-ground: badges, daily programmes, following negotiations/agenda items, tracking session documents, setting-up bilaterals etc.
- ❑ More in-depth knowledge about **YOUNGO and ENGO** (including COY!)
- ❑ More about green (external and open) zone vs blue (internal and badged) zone at COP and opportunities outside blue zone.
- ❑ Personal accounts on experiences at COP.
- ❑ Any other suggestions? Send me an email or Whatsapp message!

**QUESTION
TIME!**

A vertical black line is positioned to the right of the text, extending from the top of the word 'QUESTION' down to the bottom of the word 'TIME!'.