

# Dealing with details in Marrakesh

Over the next few weeks, two major events will take place—the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change will enter into force on 4 November, and 3 days later, nearly 200 countries will convene in Marrakesh, Morocco, at the 22nd United Nations (UN) Conference of the Parties (COP22) to decide on how to rapidly implement the agreement. Indeed, the agreement's governing body will hold its first meeting during COP22. This swift action to commit and come up with climate action plans is a welcome departure for the international community, and it sends a clear message that success in tackling climate challenges requires more than just a historic political agreement.

The Paris Agreement was adopted in December 2015 at the COP21 meeting. For the first time, nations agreed on a single primary goal—to limit global warming to well below a 2°C rise (and as close to 1.5°C as possible), thereby preventing dangerous tipping points in the climate system. This means that global carbon emissions must be driven down drastically and balanced against carbon removal during the second half of this century.

Paris was a milestone, yet the Marrakesh Summit is equally important given that governments must now deal with the details. This includes negotiating the rule book to the Paris Agreement, which is, in effect, a global blueprint for reporting and accounting for climate action under the agreement. Another detail is the need for a roadmap on how to mobilize \$100 billion in pledged annual support, through 2020. This is critical for financing climate adaptation, strengthening capacity building, and assisting developing countries in taking greater climate action. Marrakesh will offer opportunities to fortify partnerships that accelerate transitions toward a low-carbon emissions future and promote the sustainable development goals that governments already have committed to meet.

Importantly, Marrakesh will see initiatives for implementing Nationally Determined Contributions—national climate plans—and integrating them into each country's development agenda alongside the UN Sustainable De-

velopment Goals (also adopted in 2015). The brilliance of the Paris Agreement is its decentralized approach. Success rests on national climate plans that will be updated every 5 years, and updates must demonstrate progress beyond previous plans. Thus, each plan's execution requires continued political leadership and momentum, as well as reinforced public understanding of the enormous social, health, and economic benefits that will accrue to citizens everywhere from strong, continually escalating climate action. The national plans therefore need to trigger more climate-friendly, coordinated laws, policies, and incentives. Favoring old growth and development models based on fossil fuels and high-carbon lifestyles must be abandoned as quickly as possible.

UN estimates show that achieving sustainable development worldwide will require \$5 trillion to \$7 trillion a year, a large slice of which must fund the essential transition to a low-carbon, resilient global economy. Governments and public- and private-sector institutions need to be will-

ing to allocate tens of billions of dollars toward climate and sustainable investments. The shift is already under way in many nations, and money is also being allocated by multilateral development banks and by dedicated sources such as the UN Green Climate Fund. However, only the private sector has sufficient money, resources, and reach to support governments in the full implementation of national climate plans. The great breakthrough before and since COP21 is that businesses are increasingly convinced that their own profitable future is inextricably linked to low-carbon, sustainable development. Therefore, increasing the private sector's appetite to fund the transformation is essential.

Achieving the aims of the Paris Agreement is not a given. This is a multidecadal effort to turn around two centuries of world development that has been based on fossil fuels. COP22 is a crucial step onto a sustainable course for everyone, everywhere. We are embarking on the right path—let's accelerate action now.

—Patricia Espinosa



**“Achieving the aims of the Paris Agreement is not a given.”**



*Patricia Espinosa is the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*

# Science

## Dealing with details in Marrakesh

Patricia Espinosa

*Science* **354** (6311), 393.  
DOI: 10.1126/science.aal2558

### ARTICLE TOOLS

<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/354/6311/393>

### PERMISSIONS

<http://www.sciencemag.org/help/reprints-and-permissions>

Use of this article is subject to the [Terms of Service](#)

---

*Science* (print ISSN 0036-8075; online ISSN 1095-9203) is published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1200 New York Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20005. The title *Science* is a registered trademark of AAAS.

Copyright © 2016, American Association for the Advancement of Science