

Congressional briefing held on outcomes of Marrakech climate summit

December 12, 2016

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) held a briefing on outcomes from the 22nd Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 22) in Marrakech, Morocco, which took place November 7-18, 2016. Christo Artusio, Director of the Office of Global Change at the U.S. Department of State, was the sole speaker at the briefing.

Artusio opened the briefing with an overview of the agreement reached at the COP 21 meeting in Paris in 2015. Artusio noted that the Paris climate agreement reached the minimum requirement to enter into force in October this year, two years earlier than expected, following ratification by at least 55 countries representing a minimum of 55 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. He explained that COP 22 also represented the first meeting of the governing body that will implement the Paris climate agreement, the “CMA 1”, which is made up of countries who have ratified the agreement. CMA 1 will work over the next two years to suggest guidelines for carrying out the Paris climate agreement. The United States will be co-chairing the transparency development process. Artusio emphasized that transparency will be a major driver for action in the future, allowing governments to monitor their own and other countries’ progress, see where action is needed, and apply peer pressure where necessary.

Artusio reported that many countries have put in place or are working on policies to fulfill commitments from the Paris climate agreement much more quickly than the original target year of 2030. In particular, Artusio highlighted the efforts of several countries to attract financing for low-cost, reliable renewable energy supplies, including Brazil, India, Mexico, South Africa, and United Arab Emirates, among others.

Many future challenges remain to fulfill the goals set by the Paris climate agreement, including reducing the rate of greenhouse gas emissions in order to meet the +2°C goal, uncertainty about future climate policy in the United States and elsewhere, and remaining hesitation by some countries to take necessary actions to reduce their emissions.

More information about the decisions adopted by COP 22 and CMA 1 can be found on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change website. An audio recording of the briefing and more details can be found on EESI’s website.

Sources: Environmental and Energy Study Institute, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
