

Lima climate negotiations create road map for 2015 Paris negotiations

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United Nations (UN) climate negotiations in Lima closed on December 15 with an agreement that could lead to a global climate accord in Paris next year. The main disagreement during the two weeks of talks occurred between developing countries and wealthier nations on how to allocate responsibility for dealing with climate change.

In negotiations since the Kyoto Protocol, wealthy countries have taken on the majority of emissions cuts and other measures. The rationale is that nations that industrialized by using cheap coal energy are responsible for much of the anthropogenic carbon currently in the atmosphere, and it would be unfair to stunt growth in newly developing countries by introducing large emissions restrictions. Based on objections to this principle, the U.S. has repeatedly refused to sign on to the Kyoto accord.

However, under the new framework developed in Lima, all countries will be expected to cut carbon emissions after 2020, although poorer nations will receive financial and technological assistance from wealthier ones.

Many delegates were relieved to reach an agreement after the heated negotiations and were hopeful that this compromise will enable a binding global treaty in Paris. However, environmental groups were critical of the result. They expressed frustration that the emissions cuts were not aggressive enough and that the language of the document is not binding.

Sources: The BBC, E&E News, the United Nations
