

ACT Alliance Paris Expectation Paper

The post-2020 agreement and pre-2020 action



Introduction

ACT Alliance is a global coalition of over 140 churches and church based development and humanitarian organisations. As a faith based alliance, we build our positions on a moral and ethical base. **As an alliance mandated to protect the world's poorest people and in view of the rights of future generations, we ask for the Paris climate agreement to pave the way for equitable transformational change of economies and societies towards sustainability, low carbon development and climate resilience for all.**

Addressing climate change and reducing its impacts on communities **is a pre-condition to reducing poverty.** At the same time, we consider ambitious climate action as an important **trigger of sustainable development**, leading to a better world, where all people benefit from fulfilment of their human rights.

ACT Alliance believes that concerted political action needs to be taken during the course of 2015 and beyond to tackle climate change. We need a climate deal in Paris that brings justice for all.

Six reasons indicate that a success in Paris 2015 is possible:

1. Today many more **negative climate impacts** are experienced practically in all countries. While this is a disaster for the people affected, it is also putting climate change higher on the political agenda.
2. The **science base** (the latest 5th IPCC Assessment Report) is very clear and climate denialism is decreasing.
3. The success of **renewable energies** is massive - as an example solar power today is 80% cheaper and 40% more efficient than in 2009, accelerating the global drive to a fossil-free world.
4. **Climate related investments** are increasing, with global investments in renewable energies in 2014 being \$ 300bn.
5. The **mindset** with regard to decarbonization is changing, considering it as opportunity for low-carbon development while averting climate risks.
6. As an increasing number of world leaders make strong statements supporting climate action the world enjoys increased **political will** of the majority of states to deliver an ambitious agreement in Paris.

These arguments provide hope, which the ACT Alliance wishes to translate into a new dynamic and a breakthrough in **climate negotiations**.

The Paris agreement - narrative, core elements and legal form

We share the conviction that the threats of climate change cannot be curbed effectively by a single state alone, but only by **enhanced co-operation of the community of states, expressed in an ambitious climate agreement based on mutual trust fairness and equity, and the Rio Principles.**

The Paris agreement has to become a turning point for a transformational shift towards a low carbon and climate-resilient development path. This will lead to the phasing out of fossil energies, scaling up renewables, boosting energy efficiency, overcoming climate vulnerability, limiting climate risks, addressing loss and damage – and finally, keeping global average temperature increase well below 2 degrees Celsius.

Paris cannot be expected to deliver *the single and immediate* solution – but it can and must be expected to demonstrate clearly that decarbonization will accelerate and climate resilience will improve, making climate risks more manageable. The level of climate ambition included in the collective Intended National Contributions (INDCs) will not at all be sufficient but represents a clear commitment by each country to put its name down to join the low-carbon and resilient future. The transformative potential of the Paris agreement lies in the ability to facilitate transparency, accountability, early emission peak and the **ratcheting up** of National Contributions (NDCs) every five years.

ACT Alliance calls for a post-2020 Paris agreement, applicable to all parties, ambitious, based on rules, building on science, and addressing both decarbonisation and resilience by containing the following elements:

- **Long-term goals on decarbonization** - to operationalize the 1.5/2 degree Celsius target – and **on climate resilience** - to ensure international support to people vulnerable to climate change by addressing both adaptation and loss and damage.
 - **Robust rules** ensuring transparency and accountability of action, facilitating measurement, reporting, and verification, and demonstrating fairness of climate actions.
 - **Review and ratcheting up mechanisms covering mitigation, resilience and means of implementation**, prohibiting back-sliding and providing a durable agreement, leading to increased climate ambition and helping countries to manage climate impacts over time.
 - A **climate finance** architecture, respecting human rights, gender equality, social cohesion and environment, with enhanced capacity building and technology transfer
- ⇒ Points 1-4 should be part of an **internationally legally binding core agreement**.

In addition, ACT Alliance calls for **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** in terms of mitigation, resilience and means of implementation (finance, technology cooperation and capacity building), to be delivered every five years by all countries, but with a flexible approach to differentiation, with lower expectations to LDCs and SIDS.

ACT Alliance expects the Paris agreement to provide a clear accounting system, robust and transparent monitoring, reporting and verification requirements for all parties - generally agreed in the core agreement and further detailed in a technical annex - to be further elaborated and regularly updated.

Universal participation is critical to success. The Paris agreement should emphasize the need for all countries to contribute to the global effort to tackle climate change with a flexible approach to differentiation. It should make it possible for all countries to submit emission reduction pledges. All countries, besides poor and vulnerable developing countries, should also present their plans to increase climate resilience and manage remaining climate risks. Where needed, in particular in the case of poor and vulnerable developing countries, financial and other support should be provided by developed countries and others capable to do so, supporting a low carbon climate resilient development path.

**COP21 should also deliver further COP decisions about pre-2020 action, including:**

- A road map towards delivering the \$100bn a year climate finance pledge by 2020
- Enhanced pre-2020 actions and continuation with annual UNFCCC high-level meetings addressing the pre-2020 emission gap, the climate finance and the climate risk gap
- Prolongation and strengthening of the Warsaw International Mechanism

Finally, COP 21 could deliver political announcement, unilateral or multilateral initiatives to promote additional climate action, going beyond the UN-agreements, e.g. initiatives to promote investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency, making finance pledges and to end fossil fuel subsidies.

The key tasks of ACT Alliance

ACT Alliance calls for a **Paris agreement** addressing the core elements of the climate debate, including:

- A global goal for zero carbon development – to keep temperature increase to 1.5 / well below 2 degrees Celsius by agreeing on a cap of emissions in line with the carbon budget, as set out by IPCC, by phasing out fossil fuels and phasing in 100% renewable energy for all by mid of the century and an increased focus on energy efficiency.
- A global resilience goal – to ensure climate resilience of all people by committing to develop, implement and support effective national and international policy frameworks to reduce and manage climate risks , loss and damage, including national climate risk and impact assessments, national climate adaptation plans and risk management strategies.
- To deliver and scale up climate finance – to support access to sustainable energy and climate resilience for all, in particular the most vulnerable, provided by developed countries and other countries capable to do so.

ACT Alliance calls for a **Paris agreement** that is **based on rules, ensuring transparency and accountability of climate action**:

- **Similar reporting, monitoring and reporting rules** for all countries, including national reports every 2 years, with exemptions, transition rules and support provided to LDCs and SIDS.
- Strong periodic (5 year) **review of cumulative emissions and climate finance**, and **ratcheting up of national commitments**, to close the gap gradually and to remain on track to achieve the long-term goals.

ACT Alliance calls for a **Paris agreement** that is **equitable and just, leaves no one behind and overcomes climate vulnerability, while promoting humans rights, gender equality and sustainable development**:

- Universal participation, where all countries are encouraged to take action.
- A fair and differentiated effort sharing, enabling sustainable development and fulfillment of the forthcoming SDGs, providing flexibility for poor and vulnerable countries.