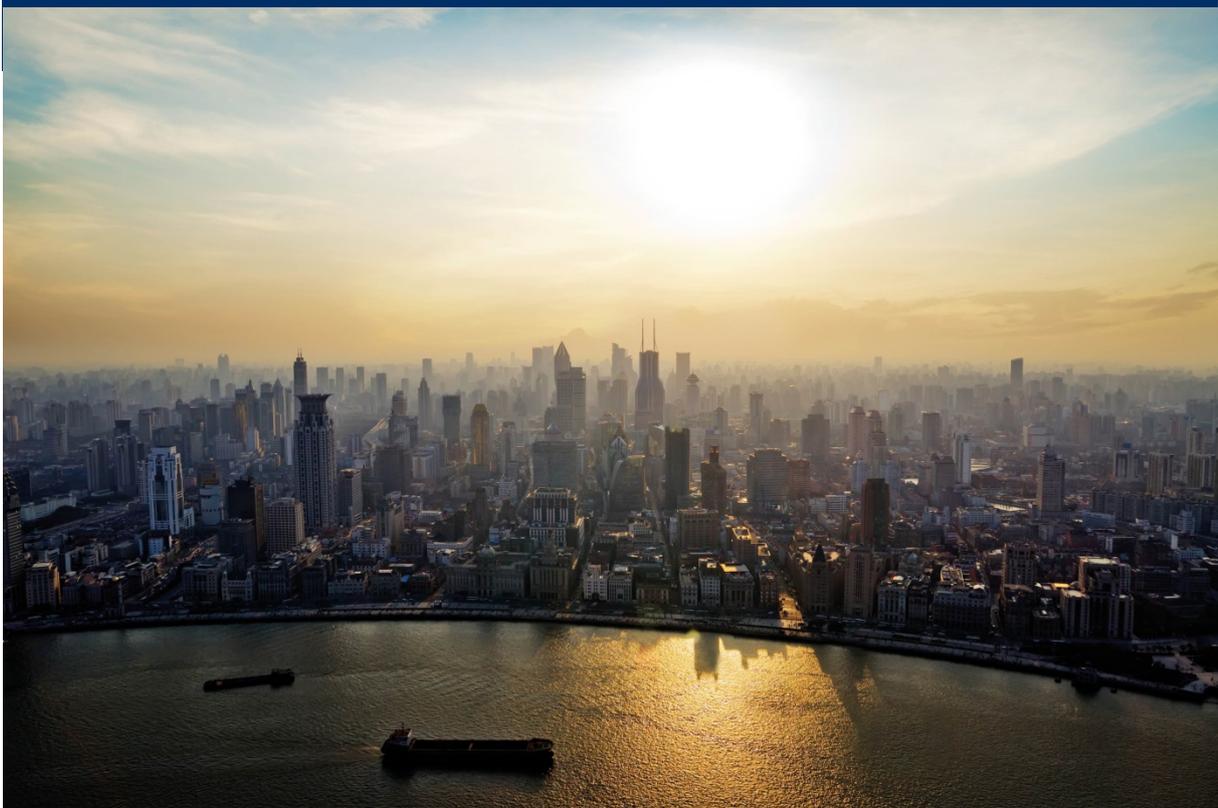


**SGI** Sustainable  
Governance  
Indicators

# 2015 Global Environmental Protection Report

Global Environmental Policy



Indicator

## Global Environmental Policy

Question

To what extent does the government actively contribute to the design and advancement of global environmental protection regimes?

41 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = The government actively contributes to international efforts to design and advance global environmental protection regimes. In most cases, it demonstrates commitment to existing regimes, fosters their advancement and initiates appropriate reforms.
- 8-6 = The government contributes to international efforts to strengthen global environmental protection regimes. It demonstrates commitment to existing regimes and occasionally fosters their advancement or initiates appropriate reforms.
- 5-3 = The government demonstrates commitment to existing regimes, but neither fosters their advancement nor initiates appropriate reforms.
- 2-1 = The government does not contribute to international efforts to strengthen global environmental protection regimes.

### Sweden

Score 10

Sweden continues to present a very strong international record in terms of supporting international environmental protection regimes. Indeed, the country has a record of going beyond the requirements of international accords, such as the Kyoto Protocol, as a means of setting an example to other countries. Climate change and global warming can only be addressed through multilateral efforts and Sweden has played an important role toward such arrangements.

Citation:

Zannakis, M. (2010), *Climate Policy as a Window of Opportunity: Sweden and Global Climate Change* (Gothenburg: Department of Political Science, university of Gothenburg).

### Denmark

Score 9

When it comes to international efforts, Denmark is actively promoting environmental protection through the European Union, relevant UN bodies and global conferences, including in particular the Conference of the Parties (COP) under the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The European Union has become an important international actor in this area. After focusing on air pollution, sewage, waste, nature conservation and threats to human health, the focus has shifted to global warming, including the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and achievement of a higher energy efficiency. The EU commissioner for climate action (2009 – 2014) was a Dane, who had previously been minister for climate and energy in Denmark. Her appointment as commissioner could be seen as

a recognition of Denmark's efforts in that area. The current government keeps working for an ambitious climate strategy within the EU.

Recently the Danish government has also been actively involved in international negotiations on biodiversity.

There is broad understanding in Denmark of global environment protection as an international issue and it is an area where civil society is very actively putting pressure on politicians.

Citation:

Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2012, EU Environmental Policy, <http://eu2012.dk/en/EU-and-the-Presidency/About-EU/Politikomraader/ENV I/Miljoepolitik> (accessed 27 April 2013).

"Klimainsatsen i Danmark," <http://www.kebmin.dk/klima-energi-bygningspolitik/dansk-klima-energi-bygningspolitik/klimainsatsen-danmark> (accessed 19 October 2014).

Web site of Ministry of the Environment: <http://mim.dk/> (Accessed 19 October 2014).

## Norway

Score 9

The Norwegian government promotes itself as a lead actor in international environmental efforts, and in international climate negotiations. Norway is also involved in the United Nations Collaborative Program on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD). However, the country has also been criticized for buying itself out of burdensome domestic environmental obligations, by purchasing international CO<sub>2</sub> quotas instead of reducing emissions. Norway has been a leading actor in the development of carbon-capture technologies in the use of fossil fuels in energy production and she is also involved in diffusion of technology related to renewable energy.

## Switzerland

Score 9

Global environmental policy is high among Switzerland's foreign-policy priorities, and the country has played a significant role in designing and advancing global environmental-protection regimes. However, as a small country, Switzerland has limited independent influence. The European Union has taken a leading role in this area, and the United States too is aiming at a more active part in international discussions. Thus, Switzerland's impact depends in large part upon efficient collaboration with the European Union.

## Finland

**Score 8** International regimes are often sector-specific. The core of each international regime is formed by international regulatory and administrative systems, which are created and implemented through formal agreements. While Finland is certainly committed to observing many multilateral and bilateral environmental agreements concerning, for instance, climate change or air pollution, it is still not among the forerunners as far as the advancement of international regimes is concerned. However, the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy, a multilateral agreement among Arctic states adopted in 1991, was a Finnish initiative. Furthermore, Finland has received ratings of good to satisfying in several international comparisons of environmental protection standards, such as the Global Economic Forum's Environmental Sustainability Index.

Citation:

Katrina Running, "Examining Environmental Concern in Developed, Transitioning and Developing Countries", *World Values Research* 5 (1): 1-25, 2012.

## Germany

**Score 8** Germany is a driving force in international climate policy, in the development of renewable energies, and in efforts to improve energy and resource efficiency. The German government actively promotes strategies fostering environment- and climate-friendly development. Since 1990, Germany has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by almost 24% and is committed to a reduction of 40% by 2020. The country has achieved high economic performance levels with relatively modest energy consumption by international standards. The World Climate Summit in December 2011 in Durban, South Africa, showed Germany to be one of the prime advocates and architects of a new, post-Kyoto climate order, despite ongoing difficulties in reaching compromise on the specific design of an international climate regime.

## Estonia

**Score 7** Estonia is engaged in a broad spectrum of activities to advance global environmental policy, but Estonia rarely, if ever, takes a proactive position in this area. Still, it has joined most important global and European agreements and displayed its commitment to these international agreements and targets. The Ministry of Environment focuses on two aspects of international cooperation: using international experience to improve the state of the environment in Estonia, and using Estonia's experience to provide support to other countries.

## Iceland

**Score 7** The Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources is responsible for the country's involvement in international environmental affairs. Iceland participates in the UNEP, and is active under the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 in areas of sustainable development. Iceland is also one of the eight member states in the Arctic Council, a cooperation forum directed primarily toward environmental affairs and sustainable development, which includes five working groups. Two of these working groups – the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna and Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment – are located in Akureyri, Iceland.

Whaling remains a controversial active economic activity in Iceland. On 15 September 2014, all 28 member states of the EU as well as the USA, Australia, Brazil, Israel, Mexico and New Zealand formally protested the continued practice of whaling in Iceland. However, the government of Iceland has not reacted to this protest.

Iceland is currently embroiled in a dispute with the EU over mackerel fishing. Mackerel migrate in huge numbers from international to Icelandic waters and Iceland is accused of over fishing the mackerel stocks. At the time of writing, an agreement has been reached between the EU, Norway and the Faroe Island, excluding Iceland.

## Ireland

**Score 7** Ireland's environmental policies are largely framed within an EU context. The Irish taoiseach (prime minister) attended the UN Climate Summit in New York in September 2014, and said during his speech that "Ireland will play its role as part of the EU contribution to the global effort." The EU is committed to bringing forward its contribution to a global agreement early in 2015. However, at the October 2014 European Union summit, when this climate agreement was being drafted, Ireland entered pleas for special consideration regarding the carbon emissions from its agricultural sector.

## Lithuania

**Score 7** Lithuanian policymakers do contribute to international efforts to strengthen global environmental-protection regimes, but this policy area is not perceived as a government priority. Lithuania has demonstrated commitment to existing regimes (especially those promulgated by the European Union or promoted by its institutions) by incorporating international or European environmental provisions into national legislation or strategic documents, and implementing them. For example, in 2012,

the Lithuanian parliament approved a national policy strategy on climate-change management as a further step in implementing Lithuania's commitments in the area of climate change and energy. Although Lithuanian policymakers are not usually active in advancing global environmental strategies, Lithuania contributed to the Warsaw Climate Change Conference in 2013 as part of its EU Council presidency. In addition, Lithuania successfully initiated the 2013 U.N. resolution on cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. The country's institutions are most active at the regional level, for instance addressing issues related to the Baltic Sea.

## Luxembourg

Score 7

Luxembourg was one of the first countries to complete an ecological footprint report, published in 2010 by the High Council for Sustainable Development (Conseil Supérieur pour un Développement Durable). Measuring sustainability, the ecological footprint report indicated that Luxembourg requires twice the amount of agricultural land and water to compensate for the resources consumed through the country's high economic growth, high volume of road traffic and fuel sales to non-residents.

Fuel price alignment is however not considered to be a solution, and will only transfer carbon emissions to neighboring countries. Instead, the government has to provide adequate public transportation for cross-border commuters who currently drive to work. After considerable discussions, the government decided to create a quite expensive tramway project in the capital to provide a more sustainable and eco-friendly public transport system. For many years, there have also been discussions about sustainable and convenient international public-transportation systems that might serve to reduce transborder emissions.

Luxembourg needs to expand its renewable energy production. Biofuel production does not provide a long-term solution, as this simply relocates an environmental problem to another country, especially emerging ones.

Citation:

[http://www.environnement.public.lu/developpement\\_durable/dossiers/pndd\\_2010/PNDD.pdf](http://www.environnement.public.lu/developpement_durable/dossiers/pndd_2010/PNDD.pdf)

<https://www.gouvernement.lu/3595282/26-dieschbourg-revue?context=3316826>

<http://www.greng.lu/sites/greng/files/20120910-PKAgrofuelsfinal.pdf>

[http://www.myfootprint.lu/files/download.php?file=CSDD\\_Brochure\\_Interieur\\_2013\\_PROD\\_BasseDef.pdf](http://www.myfootprint.lu/files/download.php?file=CSDD_Brochure_Interieur_2013_PROD_BasseDef.pdf)

## Netherlands

Score 7

The Dutch government has traditionally been a strong supporter of EU leadership in the Kyoto process of global climate policy and advancing global environmental protection regimes like UN Environment Program, IMF World Economic Outlook,

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and many others. It has also signed related international treaties on safety, food security, energy and international justice. The government keeps aspiring to a coherent sustainability policy or a “policy agenda for globalization.” The government sees resource and energy scarcity, transborder disease control, climate change, transborder crime and international trade agreements as the great global issues. A coherent globalization policy also means research and monitoring of the undermining impacts of one policy on another policy. In spite of this intention, Dutch reassessment of development aid appears to favor bilateral over multilateral global sustainability policy. For example, the financing of Dutch initiatives in advancing global public goods is no longer separately budgeted, but instead part of the diminishing development aid budget. Military aspects have been added to the International Safety Budget which, so far, contained only diplomatic and civic activities. Recently, the Dutch government contributed €30 million to international efforts to fight the ebola-outbreak in West Africa. It bears mentioning, though, that defense spending in response to the revival of NATO in Europe and the threats of ISIS in the Middle East will increase by €100 million per year over the next years.

Citation:

Kabinetsreactie op het WRR-rapport: Minder pretentie, meer ambitie (2010) ([www.eerstekamer.nl/id/vimdknvvxfz/document-extern/briefmp110112](http://www.eerstekamer.nl/id/vimdknvvxfz/document-extern/briefmp110112))

Additional reference:

[http://www.aiv-advies.nl/ContentSuite/upload/aiv/file/webversie\\_AIV%2084\\_NL.pdf](http://www.aiv-advies.nl/ContentSuite/upload/aiv/file/webversie_AIV%2084_NL.pdf)

Rijksbegroting 2015 Defensie ([rijksoverheid.nl](http://rijksoverheid.nl), consulted 23 October 2014)

Nationale en internationale acties om ebola te bestrijden ([rijksoverheid.nl](http://rijksoverheid.nl), consulted 23 October 2014)

## United Kingdom

### Score 7

In past decades, the United Kingdom has resisted plans to extend environmental protection regimes at European level. This resulted from its industrial interests, the country's strong reliance on fossil fuels, and a geographic location that largely insulated it from the adverse effects of toxic emissions and acid rain. In the 1990s, beginning with the Major government, there was a policy shift, and the United Kingdom became one of the foremost nations pushing for environmental protection standards in the European Union. The country ratified the Kyoto Protocol, but it was skeptical about the promotion of any global environmental protection regimes, even if they were consistent with nationally pursued policies.

The present Conservative/Liberal Democrat government continues to verbally support climate protection policies. Prime Minister Cameron undertook a much-publicized trip to the Arctic Circle to signal his concern about global warming, and has continued the broadly supportive approach to EU energy initiated by the Labour government. Nationally, it has continued to pursue the Labour government's targets for cutting carbon emissions by a third by 2020, and agreed to the more demanding

targets set by the European Council in October 2014. Despite occasional voices of dissent, there has been no real move to renege on international commitments.

## Croatia

**Score 6** Croatia strongly adheres to international environmental standards. During the accession negotiations with the European Union, Croatia incorporated these standards in its national law almost completely. The country has also supported the goals of the Kyoto Protocol and played a major role in the United Nations' decision to make 2011 the International Year of Forests. In the period under review, however, Croatia did not launch any major global initiatives.

## France

**Score 6** All French governments in recent decades have been committed to advancing environmental policies at the global level. Former President Chirac (1995 – 2007) made a strong plea in favor of an international agreement in a speech in South Africa. Under former President Sarkozy, France was among the leading group of countries trying to secure an agreement on climate change mitigation at the 2009 U.N. Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

However, this openness to internationally approved, more drastic and protective policies reaches a limit when French interests are at stake. For instance, any policy which would reduce the capacity of the nuclear energy industry to grow is frowned on by France, despite the unresolved issue of nuclear waste dumps. More generally, there is a frequent contradiction between the support given to wide, abstract and long-term agreements negotiated at the international level and the reluctance to actually implement them.

## Japan

**Score 6** International climate policy for a long time considerably profited from Japanese commitment to the process. The Kyoto Protocol of 1997 is perhaps the most visible evidence of this fact. After Kyoto, however, Japan assumed a much more passive role. For instance, it had no reduction obligation for the second part of the Kyoto Round. It went into the Conference of Parties (COP 18) negotiation round in Doha in November 2012 with the intention of postponing agreement until 2015, thus delaying commitments and raising the prospect of further dissonances between advanced and less-advanced economies. It did not intend to go beyond its earlier commitment of a 25% reduction by 2020 as compared to the 1990 baseline. Thus, Japan is de facto assuming a low profile in this important field of global environmental protection.

The Fukushima disaster in 2011, after which Japan had to substitute its GHG-free nuclear power generation, made the earlier 2009 pledge to decrease GHG emissions by a quarter by 2020 (based on the 1990 benchmark) implausible. In the context of the COP 19 meeting in Warsaw in November 2013, the government announced new targets that actually imply a 3% rise by 2020 compared to 1990, which disappointed and even shocked many observers.

With respect to multilaterally organized protection of nature, Japan is particularly known for its resistance to giving up whaling. This is a high-profile, emotional issue, though perhaps not the most important one worldwide. Notably, Japan supports many international schemes to protect the environment by contributing funds and by making advanced technologies available.

## Malta

### Score 6

Because Malta is a small state it is not traditionally a key player in international forums on global policy. The country's last contribution, a resolution entitled, "Protection of Global Climate for Present and Future Generations of Mankind," although significant as it gave rise to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, dates back to 1988. Nonetheless, Malta has played a dynamic role in efforts to meet climate resolutions agreed to in Copenhagen in 2009. According to U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Malta is a key player in efforts to "seal the deal." Malta is party to a large number of multilateral environment agreements. As an EU member state, Malta is bound by the obligations of the EU's extensive environmental acquis. When Malta joined the European Union, it adopted some 200 environmental laws, which are now part of the overall Maltese legal framework. Still, Malta remains an insignificant, if active, player in global environmental protection.

Citation:

<http://mra.org.mt/climate-change/climate-change-introduction/>

[http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/s\\_gsm12196.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/s_gsm12196.doc.htm)

"Malta's International Obligations Re Environmental Matters", Simone Borg, November 2002

The Art of Doing Much with Little (MEPA News Article)

<http://www.mepa.org.mt/news-article1>

Malta National Report Submitted by the Government of Malta to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.(2002) [www.um.edu.mt/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/63699/Malta\\_WSSD.pdf](http://www.um.edu.mt/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/63699/Malta_WSSD.pdf)

## Mexico

### Score 6

Mexico is confronted with a dilemma. On the one hand, it is interested in raising its international profile as a supporter of the Kyoto agreement and other anti-climate-change measures. On the other hand, Mexico's economy still relies to a large extent on the export of oil and gas, and important legal initiatives (e.g., climate-change law)

have as a consequence faced serious implementation problems. Mexico relishes having an international profile in areas that allow it to show independence from the United States. Environmental policy is included in this category. Mexico is a leading international actor on environmental policy within the region, even if its policies are inconsistent at best. Mexico is still the second-biggest emitter of greenhouse gases in Latin America. Firewood is still the main fuel used by poor Mexican families. Moreover, the importance of the oil industry for the Mexican economy leaves it facing serious barriers to credible domestic action even as it seeks to position itself as a pioneer in international environmental protection. However, Mexican authorities and the public are at least much more aware of these environmental issues and the resulting problems and tensions than they were a generation ago. Mexico's climate-change law went into effect in October 2012, drawing international praise. There is an underfunded Climate Change Fund, created to finance adaptation and greenhouse-gas emissions-reduction initiatives. Its operating rules have apparently been completed, but as of the time of writing had not been published. Other problems associated with the implementation of the law have to do with the creation of a national climate-change information system, the effective reduction of greenhouse gases, and producing assessments of adaptation and mitigation measures.

Overall, Mexico was one of the first countries in the world to pass a specific law on climate change. The law set an obligatory target of reducing national greenhouse-gas emissions by 30% by 2020. The country also has a National Climate Change Strategy, which is intended to guide policymaking over the next 40 years. However, as of the time of writing, only 14 of Mexico's 32 states had drawn up a state plan on climate change, just seven had passed their own laws, and only 11 had begun measuring their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

## Slovenia

### Score 6

More than for most other countries, geography determines the priorities of Slovenia's international environmental relationships, notably with respect to water management and the conservation of biodiversity. Slovenia's commitment to sustainable development on a regional and subregional scale is articulated through various cooperation agreements covering the Alps, the Danube and its tributaries, and the Mediterranean (including the Adriatic). The Dinaric Arc area is an emerging focus of cooperation. Bilateral cooperation between Slovenia and its neighboring countries includes water management agreements with Croatia, Hungary and Italy, and agreements with Austria on spatial planning in border regions. Slovenia has continued to maintain many informal contacts at a professional/technical level with the countries of the western Balkans. Compared to these regional activities, Slovenia's contribution to the strengthening of global environmental protection regimes has been modest.

## South Korea

**Score 6** There has been little interest in moving South Korea from the developing country status it was accorded in the Kyoto protocol into the Annex 1 category. South Korea has reported the largest increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions since the 1990s among OECD countries.

At the same time, the South Korean government is hosting two important international environmental organizations. The Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) supports the efforts of developing countries to design environmental friendly policies and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) was established in 2012 to fund these activities.

GGGI and GCF have failed to show an expected performance due to the shortage of cooperation among concerned countries, poor governance structure and some financial scandals.

## Australia

**Score 5** Under John Howard's leadership (1996 – 2007), the Australian government rejected attempts to improve global environmental protection. Since then, there has been more support for such policies, helped by the strong position of the Green Party in the Senate. However, many Australian citizens have very limited sympathy for internationally negotiated projects that would raise the cost of energy to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. During the 2013 election campaign, the carbon tax became a major issue, with the Coalition promising to abolish the tax - which it ultimately did on winning the election. While this is a domestic issue, the strong anti-carbon tax posture of the Coalition indicates the Liberal Party and its coalition partner are, compared to the previous Labor Party government, much less enthusiastic about participating in a global environmental protection regime.

## Austria

**Score 5** Austria's approach to global environmental policy is full of contradictions. Rhetorically, Austria (the government, political parties, media) paints itself as a frontrunner in global governance, from Kyoto to Copenhagen. In practice, however, the country's efforts do not support this conclusion. Austria is still proud of its 1978 decision not to use nuclear energy, one of the first countries to do so worldwide. This has become a kind of national narrative, in which Austria is proud to be in the vanguard of enlightened environmental consciousness. Austria tends to lecture others, including its neighbors in Europe, about the need to improve ecological

standards. But when has come to the practical job of reducing CO2 emissions, Austria has fallen behind its peers. The real power of special interests (such as the automobile associations, goods transporters, and industry) has thus far proven too strong to overcome.

## Bulgaria

**Score 5** The Bulgarian government does not engage in the active promotion of collective action on climate and other global environmental issues. While it sticks to existing regimes, it takes positions only when the agendas of EU-level meetings require discussions of such topics. Along with other East-Central European member states, Bulgaria has opposed the most ambitious EU targets for the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions.

## Czech Republic

**Score 5** Environmental policy in the Czech Republic is strongly shaped by the country's obligations to implement EU legislation. Given the set of tasks and time schedules officially agreed upon during EU accession, environmental protection and sustainable development are now an important part of the government's agenda. However, the country is not a driving force in shaping EU legislation or setting other international agendas. Together with other East-Central European member states, the Czech Republic has opposed more ambitious goals for reducing carbon dioxide emissions. As of November 2014, parliament had not yet ratified the second phase of the Kyoto Protocol.

## Hungary

**Score 5** Global reforms have not been part of the official public discourse in Hungary. Like their predecessors, the Orbán governments have engaged in free-riding behavior. The third Orbán government has stressed its commitment to international efforts and has publicly supported the European Union's environmental policy, but remains far from being a driving force.

## Israel

**Score 5** Israel is only starting to get involved in advancing global environmental projects. In recent years, it has taken a larger role in environmental concerns, partly due to joining the OECD and partly due to a rise in public awareness surrounding these issues.

Israel has been forced to find technological and ecological solutions because of the unique and diverse nature of the Israeli climate and the country's scarcity of natural drinking water. Thus, leading up to the Rio Earth Summit in 2012, it launched a green technology project that aimed to show off its achievements in desalination and recycled water and share information and technologies with other countries. Israel is also involved in international efforts to fight desertification since it is an important exporter of new methods and technologies developed specifically for arid regions. However, it demonstrated lower levels of commitment to other important global issues such as the OECD air-pollution standards and the global strategy for reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.

Citation:

Shamah, David, "Israel flaunts green tech, but lags behind in alternative energy," *The Times of Israel* 26.6.2012

"A worldwide campaign: Israel front liner in the Green Tech industry," *Agrisupport* online website 21.6.2012 (Hebrew)

"Israel," *OECD better life index*

Jonna Lorenz: *Israel Climate Change: What's Jewish Nation's Stance and Policies on Global Warming?* *Newsmax*, 16.12.2014, <http://www.newsmax.com/FastFeatures/israel-climate-change-policies/2014/12/16/id/610892/>.

## Italy

Score 5

The contribution of the Italian government to international efforts in the field of global environmental protection has not been particularly active. It has in general been supportive of international concerted actions but has not played a significant leadership role. This is due also to the fact that the resources of the Ministry of Environment have been seriously curtailed. Moreover, because of the crisis the attention of the government and the priorities of the prime minister have been diverted.

## Latvia

Score 5

Latvia is not an international agenda-setter in the area of environmental policy. The country has agreed to comply with international agreements, such as the Kyoto Protocol, but does not have the political or economic capacity to lead on a global scale.

As an EU member state, Latvia is bound by EU legislation, with EU climate policy particularly influential. Latvia indirectly contributes to EU initiatives, but does not directly advance global environmental protection regimes.

Latvia has joined the following international conventions regarding environmental protection and preservation: the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the UNESCO

World Heritage Convention, the CITES (Washington) Convention, the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention), the Convention on Migratory Species (Bonn Convention), the Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats, the Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro Convention) and the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention).

Latvia has been a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) since 1995 and to the Kyoto Protocol since 2002. Under the Kyoto Protocol, Latvia and the other EU countries committed themselves to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 8% relative to the baseline-year level during the first commitment period, from 2008 to 2012. The 2012 Climate Change Performance Index, which evaluated emissions trends, emissions levels and climate policy, rated Latvia as a moderate performer.

Latvia has also signed bilateral cooperation agreements on the issue of environmental policy with Austria, Belarus, Denmark, Georgia, Estonia, Russia, Lithuania, Moldova, the Netherlands, Poland, Serbia, Finland and Ukraine. The country is party to the Helsinki Commission Baltic Sea Action plan of 2007, which aims to improve the Baltic Sea's ecological status by 2021.

## New Zealand

### Score 5

New Zealand has a mixed record with respect to its contribution to the global environmental protection regime. Major issues in recent years have been climate change and biodiversity. After initially committing to the Kyoto protocol, a change of government resulted in the decision to withdraw from the treaty – the commitment of its nearest neighbor, Australia, notwithstanding. In announcing its decision, the government claimed the treaty was outdated and insufficiently comprehensive in its response to the contribution of developing countries to the problem of global warming. It undertook to make its own separate commitment by working toward reducing emissions by between 10% and 20% by 2020. However, the country will not be able to fulfill its Kyoto protocol target to get greenhouse gas emissions back to 1990 levels, if not for the off-setting effects of its forestry policies.

#### Citation:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade: <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Foreign-Relations/1-Global-Issues/Environment/index.php> (accessed May 12, 2013).

"NZ fails environment tests," *The New Zealand Herald*, 8.8.2013, [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=10909645](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10909645)

Environmental Performance Index 2014 (Yale/Columbia: Yale University/Columbia University 2014).

## Portugal

**Score 5** Portugal agrees to and participates in EU-wide policies on the environment. Portugal has also signed the Kyoto Protocol. It agrees and participates in this legislation, but the main issue concerns implementation in both the domestic and global settings. According to the Climate Change Performance Index, Portugal is behind only Denmark and the United Kingdom in having the most effective environmental policies.

## Romania

**Score 5** Since 1992, Romania has ratified over 20 international environmental treaties. It was the first country to ratify the Kyoto Protocol in 2001. It has also made efforts to transpose the European Union's Environmental Action Program (EAP) under the National Sustainable Development Strategy of Romania for 2013 – 2020 – 2030. However, it has not played a very active role in the design and promotion of global environmental-protection regimes.

## Slovakia

**Score 5** Slovakia has not acted as an international agenda-setter for global environmental policy. It is rather difficult for a small country to shape the global framework. Moreover, given Slovakia's state of economic development, environmental issues are not the top priority of policymakers. However, Slovakia has taken a constructive role in developing EU environmental policy.

## Turkey

**Score 5** As a member of the OECD and the G-20, and as an EU accession candidate, Turkey has set sustainable-development targets. These are also a main concern of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Turkey's Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2023 stresses its adherence to international commitments, standards and measures, and foresees increasing cooperation with international actors, especially in the fields of combating climate change and improving energy efficiency, along with an active role in international activities more generally. In 2012, Turkey hosted a joint project with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) on protected marine areas. In this area, Turkey has made remarkable achievements with regard to fulfilling its commitments to protect the health, wealth and sustainability of marine ecosystems, as well as the biodiversity, goods and services they provide. The government plans to include the topic of climate change on its G-20 presidency agenda.

Citation:

Algedik, Önder (2014), Climate Negotiations Without Turkey? Turkish Policy Quarterly, vol. 13, no. 2, pp.129-137. Republic of Turkey, Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2023, [http://www.csb.gov.tr/db/iklim/editoridosya/IDEP\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.csb.gov.tr/db/iklim/editoridosya/IDEP_ENG.pdf) (accessed 5 November 2014)  
'Turkish G20 Presidency Priorities for 2015', 1 December 2014, <https://g20.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/2015-TURKEY-G-20-PRESIDENCY-FINAL.pdf> (accessed 7 December 2014)

## United States

Score 5

From the late 1960s to the early 1990s, the United States exercised leadership on a wide range of international environmental issues. The European Union was often a reluctant participant, although it eventually ratified all the significant international agreements during the period. However, the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gases (GHGs) was a turning point, as the Clinton administration signed the protocol, committing the United States to a schedule of emission reductions, but abandoned an evidently doomed effort to win Senate ratification. In 2001, the Bush administration formally withdrew the United States' endorsement of the protocol. Like most other countries, the United States has failed to achieve the GHG reductions it called for.

The Obama administration has sharply reversed Bush's policy direction on environmental issues for the executive branch, especially with regard to climate change. But limited support from Congress and the public have constrained U.S. positions in international negotiations. In 2013, the United States reached an important bilateral agreement with China to limit the use of hydrofluorocarbons. But while the United States rejoined the United Nations process on climate change at Copenhagen in 2007 and Cancun in 2010, it has taken a hard line on developing countries while resisting ambitious commitments for its own emission reductions. This has contributed to the negotiations' failure to establish firm targets to succeed the 2008 –2012 Kyoto targets.

Citation:

"The Shadow of Copenhagen; Towards a Treaty." The Economist. 20 Sept. 2014; 24. ProQuest. Web. 23 Oct. 2014.

## Belgium

Score 4

Global efforts to foster environmental protection are coordinated by the European Commission, and the Belgian government seems to prefer to sit on the backseat in that regard. The Minister of Sustainable Development was also the Minister of Finance in the previous government. Clearly, his attention was more focused on the finance component of his portfolio. There has been no particular role for Belgium, or proactive involvement of Belgium in the design and advancement of global environmental protection schemes – especially since several aspects of environmental protection policies have now been devolved to the regions; this leads to frequent difficulties in the formulation of a clear Belgian (federal/national) position.

## Canada

**Score 4** The government of Canada in principle supports the design and advancement of global environmental-protection regimes. In practice, the current government has demonstrated little if any commitment to this objective, as seen for example by its repeal of the Kyoto Accord. Canada's approach to environmental policy has in the past to a large degree followed that of the United States, given the close economic relations between the two countries. Under the Obama administration, the United States has taken a lead with its Global Climate Change Initiative; however, this did not appear to raise Canada's interest in this area. According to a 2014 report by Germanwatch, a sustainable-development advocacy group, "Canada still shows no intention [of] moving forward with climate policy and therefore remains the worst performer of all industrialized countries."

Citation:

Germanwatch, The Climate Change Performance Index 2014, posted at <http://germanwatch.org/en/download/8599.pdf>

## Chile

**Score 4** The government demonstrates commitment to existing regimes and international efforts. There has been at least one specific initiative regarding the protection of Antarctica, but in general terms, the government neither initiates appropriate reforms nor fosters significantly their advancement.

## Cyprus

**Score 4** Cyprus has ratified many international conventions and protocols related to environmental protection, and participates in numerous international organizations and meetings. However, authorities responsible for environmental issues appear almost exclusively concerned with meeting local obligations to the European Union and other bodies. Cyprus does not act as an agenda setter either in the European Union or internationally, although it occasionally takes an active ad-hoc role in international meetings. It has contributed to the shaping of EU policies in areas such as an integrated maritime policy.

1. Website of the ministry of Agriculture, Cyprus,

[http://www.moa.gov.cy/moa/agriculture.nsf/index\\_en/index\\_en?OpenDocument](http://www.moa.gov.cy/moa/agriculture.nsf/index_en/index_en?OpenDocument)

2. Events related to environmental policies during Cyprus presidency of the European Council,

[http://www.cy2012.eu/en/political-calendar?from\\_date=2012-12-13&to\\_date=2012-12-13](http://www.cy2012.eu/en/political-calendar?from_date=2012-12-13&to_date=2012-12-13)

## Greece

**Score 4** While environmental studies are undertaken in Greece, the country has never developed enough expertise on environmental protection. The Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs participates in international meetings and conferences that address environmental protection issues by sending diplomats tasked with such matters, but one cannot say that the Greek government has substantially contributed to efforts to strengthen global environmental protection regimes.

## Poland

**Score 4** Poland has largely implemented EU environmental standards. However, it has been one of the primary internal critics of the EU's climate policy and emissions-trading system. Across the political spectrum, large parts of the Polish political elite have feared that ambitious international or European climate-protection regimes will reduce Poland's energy independence and place a heavy burden on the Polish economy.

## Spain

**Score 4** Since arrival to office of the conservative Prime Minister Rajoy, the older Ministry of Environment, Rural and Marine Affairs was transformed into a new Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, marking a clear change of priorities from the period before 2012. Moreover, the two ministers of that department during the period under review (Miguel Arias Cañete and, after he was appointed EU Commissioner, Isabel Garcia Tejerina) were clearly much more connected to agriculture than to environment issues. In this not particularly promising political context, these responsibilities have been delegated to Secretary of State for Environment Federico Ramos de Armas.

To be sure, the Spanish government is not actively contributing to international efforts to design and advance global environmental protection regimes, although it is still committed to the existing conventions and has participated in the different UN COP meetings (including the 2013 Warsaw and 2014 Lima UN conferences) and the UN 2014 Climate Summit. During the review period, Spain has supported several international projects (such as wind farms in developing countries or emissions-trading projects) aimed at helping the country comply with the Kyoto protocol and allowing Spain to reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in order to meet its obligations. Spain also supports the fight against climate change at the EU level and, perhaps surprisingly considering what has been said above, the aforementioned Miguel Arias was appointed as Commissioner responsible for Climate Action and Energy in November 2014.

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