



Global Environmental Protection Report

Global Environmental Policy

Sustainable Governance Indicators 2017

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, including the Paris climate change conference in November and December 2015. 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. Sweden is also a very active player on the EU's environmental policy agenda.

Citation:

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

Germany

Score 9

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. The G7 summit held in June 2015 achieved remarkable progress toward an international agreement for global climate protection. Germany, using its presidency of the G7, was able to ensure that climate policy had the highest priority during the summit, setting the stage for the Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement committed to a maximum rise in average global temperatures of

“well below 2 degrees.” The Agreement is a breakthrough because, for the first time, nations have to define their contributions to fighting climate change (Germany: 2.56%). The Paris Agreement was formally ratified by the EU on 5 October 2016 and put into force 4 November 2016 (European Commission 2016). Germany also ratified the Paris Agreement. The Bundesrat agreed to it in September 2016 after the Bundestag unanimously approved it.

In 2014, Germany had reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by almost 27% in comparison to 1990 and is committed to a reduction of 40% by 2020 (Umweltbundesamt 2015). The country has achieved high economic performance levels with relatively modest energy consumption by international standards.

Citation:

Leaders' Declaration G7 Summit, (7–8 June 2015):
https://www.g7germany.de/Content/DE/_Anlagen/G8_G20/2015-06-08-g7-abschluss-eng.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=6

Umweltbundesamt (2015): <http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/daten/klimawandel/treibhausgas-emissionen-in-deutschland>

Greenpeace (2015): <https://www.greenpeace.de/presse/presseerklarungen/kommentar-zu-den-g7-beschlussen-zum-klimaschutz>

2016:

Statista (2016): Höhe der Treibhausgas-Emissionen in Deutschland in den Jahren 1990 bis 2015. Internet source:
<https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/76558/umfrage/entwicklung-der-treibhausgas-emissionen-in-deutschland/>

European Commission (2016): Paris Agreement. Online source:

http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/international/negotiations/paris/index_en.htm

Norway

Score 9

The Norwegian government promotes itself as a lead actor in international environmental efforts and climate negotiations. As an oil and gas producer, it is also a substantial emitter of CO₂. Norway is 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 CO₂ quotas instead of reducing emissions. Norway has invested in carbon-capture technologies, but positive results are not yet broadly evident. The country is additionally involved in helping to spread 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 EU.

Denmark

Score 8

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 CO₂ emissions and achievement of a higher energy efficiency. The EU commissioner for climate action (2009 to 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.

At the climate summit in Paris in December 2015 (COP21), a number of environmental NGOs criticized the Liberal government under Lars Løkke Rasmussen for lowering the country's environmental ambitions. The previous Social Democratic-Social Liberal government aimed to reduce CO₂ emission by 40% between 1990 and 2020, but the Liberal government reduced the objective to 37%. The government answered that Denmark was still a leading country in this area.

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).

"Danmark udpeget som klimaskurk på topmøde i Paris," <https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/indland/danmark-udpeget-som-klimaskurk-paa-topmoede-i-paris> (Accessed 23 October 2016).

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 climate change and air pollution, for example, Finland is still not among the agenda-setters with regard to the advancement of international regimes. However, the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy, a multilateral agreement among Arctic states adopted in 1991, was a Finnish initiative. Furthermore, Finland has received ratings ranging from “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.

United Kingdom

Score 8 Under the Conservative governments of John Major (1990-1997), there was a policy shift and the United Kingdom became one of the foremost advocates of environmental protection standards in the European Union. The UK ratified the Kyoto Protocol. Although the government remained skeptical about global environmental protection regimes, even though they were consistent with nationally pursued policies.

The United Kingdom has consistently pursued environmental protection and the reduction of carbon emissions. The previous coalition government continued the carbon emissions targets for 2020 set by the preceding Labour government. The new Conservative government is likely to maintain this approach. The Conservative government has announced plans to deregulate the permission process for the construction of on-shore wind farms to raise the UK’s share of renewable energies, although it also supports relaxing regulation on fracking for natural gas.

Prime Minister May pledged to ratify the Paris climate change deal by the end of 2016 and the government duly did so at the Marrakech COP 22 summit in November 2016.

Canada

Score 7 The government of Canada in principle supports the design and advancement of global environmental-protection regimes. In the past, Canada’s approach to environmental policy has, 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 had little influence on Canada's interest on this issue. Under previous governments, little effort was made to engage with global environmental protection, at home and abroad.

The new Liberal government is committed to changing this record. The 2016 federal budget included CAD 2.65 billion over the next five years to help developing countries address climate change. Additionally, while at the Paris Climate Conference (COP21), Prime Minister Trudeau announced CAD 30 million for the world's poorest countries to combat climate change, and CAD 300 million to the Green Climate Fund for clean technology innovation.

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. Estonia ratified the Paris Agreement (31 October 2016) and is taking steps to switch to more environmentally sustainable economic and behavioral models. In October 2014, Estonia agreed on EU energy and climate goals looking ahead to 2030. Broadly speaking, 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.

France

Score 7

All French governments in recent decades have been committed to advancing environmental policies at the global level. 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. In this tradition, French diplomats were particularly active in preparation for the U.N. Climate Change Conference chaired by France in December 2015. The global agreement reached at this conference is a success for French diplomacy.

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.

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, in the north of Iceland. In early 2016 it was decided to move the secretariat of the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) from Potsdam, Germany to Akureyri. The mission of IASC is to encourage and facilitate cooperation in all aspects of Arctic research, among all countries engaged in Arctic research and in all areas of the Arctic region.

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

Iceland is still engaged in a dispute with the EU over quotas for mackerel fishing. In 2014, an agreement was reached between the EU, Norway, and the Faroe Islands. However, the agreement did not include Iceland. Mackerel migrate in huge numbers from international to Icelandic waters and Iceland is accused of overfishing the mackerel stocks. At the time of writing, this dispute remains unresolved. Due to reduced quotas and a collapse in markets – following Russia's economic boycott – Iceland has suffered a reduction in income from mackerel fishing, and at least ten fishing communities were reported to suffer dramatically from this in a September 2015 report by the Institute of Regional Development in (Byggðastofnun 2015).

Iceland was fully engaged at the Paris conference on climate change in late 2015 and on 22 April 2016 the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources signed the Paris agreement.

Citation:

Byggðastofnun (2015): Byggðaleg áhrif viðskiptabanns Rússa. Skýrsla unnin fyrir Sjávarútvegs- og landsbúnaðarráðherra í september 2015. <https://www.byggdastofnun.is/static/files/Skyrslur/byggdaleg-ahrif-innflutningsbanns-russa-endanlegt.pdf>

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 stated 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 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 presidency of the European Council. 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. The capital’s first tram is expected to start operating in 2017, to provide a more sustainable and eco-friendly public transport system.

For several years, the development of an international public transportation system has been discussed as a means of reducing carbon emissions, while also providing a sustainable mobility policy for the Greater Region.

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 other countries, especially emerging ones.

Citation:

Der Ökologische Fußabdruck Luxemburgs. Conseil supérieur pour un développement durable, www.myfootprint.lu/files/download.php?file=CSDD_Brochure_DE.pdf. Accessed 21 Feb. 2017.

Dieschbourg, Carole. “Nur sieben Prozent unserer Fließgewässer sind in einem guten Zustand.” Le portal de l’actualité gouvernementale, 27 Mar. 2014, www.gouvernement.lu/3595282/26-dieschbourg-revue?context=3316826. Accessed 21 Feb. 2017.

Ein nachhaltiges Luxemburg für mehr Lebensqualität. Le gouvernement du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, 2010. www.environnement.public.lu/developpement_durable/dossiers/pnnd_2010/PNDD.pdf. Accessed 21 Feb. 2017.

OECD Economic Surveys Luxembourg. OECD, 2015. www.oecd.org/eco/surveys/Luxembourg-2015-overview.pdf. Accessed 21 Feb. 2017.

Turmes, Claude, and Henri Kox. Agrosprit - manner ass méi. Déi Gréng, 2012. www.greng.lu/sites/greng/files/20120910-PKAgrofuelsfinal.pdf. Accessed 21 Feb. 2017.

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. With regard to implementation of the targets set by the Kyoto Protocol, Croatia has reduced emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs). Also, the share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption is 20%.

Citation:

European Environment Agency (2015) The European Environment: state and outlook (SOER 2015)

Japan

Score 6

For many years, international climate policy profited considerably from Japanese commitment to the process. The Kyoto Protocol of 1997 was perhaps the most visible evidence of this fact. After Kyoto, however, Japan assumed a much more passive role. The Fukushima disaster in 2011, after which Japan had to find substitutes for its greenhouse-gas-free nuclear-power generation, rendered implausible a 2009 pledge to decrease greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions by a quarter by 2020 (as compared to 1990). In the 2015 energy outlook for 2030, Japan announced that it would slash its emissions by 26% in 2030 as compared to 2013 levels.

Japan formally fully supports the December 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change and has adopted relevant measures, including the May 2016 Plan for Global Warming Countermeasures. The plan reconfirms the 26% reduction goal for 2030, which is at the lower end for OECD countries, and sets out strategic action for the longer-term goal of 80% by 2050. Concrete decisions are controversial. In February 2016, the Environment Ministry reversed its earlier policy stance and agreed to building more cheap-to-fuel coal power plants. In return, the power companies are expected to follow stricter numerical targets for fuel efficiency; however, the legal basis for such oversight is weak and compliance, at least formally, voluntary.

Despite lingering political friction in Northeast Asia, Japan reached an agreement with China and South Korea in 2015 to tackle regional environmental issues jointly, based on a five-year action plan.

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.

Citation:

N. N. (Editorial): CO2 targets in doubt as Environment Ministry OKs new coal-fired power plants, *The Mainichi*, 12 February 2016, <http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160212/p2a/00m/0na/011000c>

Malta

Score 6

Malta's small size has traditionally hindered it from being a key player in international global policy fora. Nonetheless, since independence, it has been influential in the Law of the Sea and was instrumental in the adoption of the Protection of Global Climate for Present and Future Generations of Mankind resolution, which gave rise to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol in 1988. Moreover, Malta has played a dynamic role in efforts to meet climate resolutions agreed to in Copenhagen in 2009 with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon describing Malta as a key player in the 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. Malta has attempted to play a part in formulating a Mediterranean strategy for sustainable development.

In the run-up to the Paris Summit on Climate Change, Malta's prime minister hosted a special session on Climate for Leaders during the 2015 Commonwealth Heads of

Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Malta. More than a quarter of the 2015 CHOGM participants attended the Paris Summit and the 2015 CHOGM was used as a forum within which support was consolidated. In 2016, Malta became one of the first countries to complete domestic preparations for the ratification of the Paris Agreement and subsequently deposited its Instrument of Ratification to the UN together with other EU member states.

Nonetheless, Malta remains an insignificant, if active, player in global environmental protection.

Citation:

Times of Malta 12/12/2008 UN Secretary General recalls Malta's climate change initiative

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30544&Cr=Somali&Cr1=#.WBT4qfl95PY>

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

The Malta Independent 07/09/2015 CHOGM 2015 to give final push to Paris climate change Summit – Environment Minister

The Malta Independent 30/09/2016 Malta among first countries to finalise preparations for ratification of Paris Agreement

<http://foreignaffairs.gov.mt/en/Government/Embassy%20Press%20Releases/Pages/Instrument-of-Ratification-declaring-that-the-Government-of-Malta-has-ratified-the-Paris-Agreement-on-Climate-Change-of-Dec.aspx>

Environment and development in the Mediterranean planbleu.org

Mexico

Score 6

On the one hand, Mexico is interested in raising its international profile as a promotor of multilateralism by supporting the Kyoto Protocol and other multilateral environmental agreements. On the other hand, Mexico's own economy still relies to a significant extent on the export of oil and gas, so that important legal initiatives (e.g., climate-change law) face serious implementation problems.

Mexico relishes having an international profile that shows independence from the United States. International environmental protection contributes to such a profile. Mexico is a leading international actor on environmental policy within the region, even if its domestic policies are inconsistent: Mexico is still the second-biggest emitter of greenhouse gases in Latin America. Firewood remains the primary fuel used by poor Mexican families. Moreover, the importance of the oil industry for the Mexican economy creates substantial barriers to credible domestic action even as it seeks to position itself as a pioneer in international environmental protection.

Mexican authorities and the public are at least much more aware of environmental issues and their resulting problems than they were a generation ago. The country'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 have not yet been published. Additional challenges associated with implementing the law relate to 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, only about half of the Mexican states had drawn up a state plan on climate change, just seven had passed their own laws and only 11 had begun measuring their CO₂ emissions. Thus, on the one hand, Mexico has been very active in the preparation of the U.N. Global Goals (Sustainable Development Goals) agenda, reflecting the country's traditional multilateral approach to foreign policymaking. On the other hand, this proactive approach to environmental policymaking at the international level is not matched by a commitment to domestic environmental policymaking.

Netherlands

Score 6

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 is instead part of the diminishing development aid budget. Military aspects have been added to the International Safety Budget, which previously contained only diplomatic and civic activities. Though defense spending in response to the revival of NATO in Europe and the threats of ISIS in the Middle East will increase from €220 million to €345 million between 2016 and 2020. As mentioned under the previous indicator (P16), it is likely that the Paris Climate Accords will trigger new Dutch policy initiatives for global environmental protection.

Citation:

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

Additional reference:

http://www.aiv-advies.nl/ContentSuite/upload/aiv/file/webversie_AIV%2084_NL.pdf

Rijksbegroting 2016 Defensie (rijksoverheid.nl, consulted 8 November 2016)

New Zealand

Score 6 New Zealand has a mixed record with respect to its contribution to the global environmental protection regime. After initially committing to the Kyoto protocol, a change of government resulted in the decision to withdraw from the treaty. Nevertheless, the government has committed to reducing emissions to 30% below 2005 levels by 2030. However, the country would not be able to achieve this goal if the off-setting effects of its forestry policies were to be excluded. In accordance with the Paris Agreement on climate change, New Zealand committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 5% below 1990 levels by 2020. (The new post-2020 target is equivalent to 11% below 1990 levels by 2030). The government plans to ratify the Paris Agreement on climate change by the end of 2016. In December 2015, the government announced that New Zealand would ratify the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol and continue to apply the Kyoto rules under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The formal ratification took place in November 2016.

Citation:

Ministry for the Environment. New Zealand's 2030 climate change target (<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/more/environmental-reporting/about-act>) (accessed September 12, 2016).

"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.

New Zealand to ratify Paris agreement this year. 17 August, 2016. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new-zealand-ratify-paris-agreement-year> (accessed September 13, 2016).

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.

United States

Score 6 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 later 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. Limited support from Congress and the public have constrained U.S. positions in international negotiations. Nevertheless, the U.S. rejoined the United Nations process on climate change at Copenhagen in 2007 and Cancun in 2010. In 2013, the United States reached an important bilateral agreement with China to limit the use of hydrofluorocarbons. In November 2014, it committed to reducing total U.S. carbon emissions by 26% to 28% in comparison with 2005 levels. Although the United States played a leading role in the December 2015 U.N. Conference on Climate Change (COP21), it still lacks a comprehensive national carbon-pricing policy. In his presidential campaign, Donald Trump denied the reality of human-driven climate change and vowed to abandon costly policies designed to control greenhouse gases.

Australia

Score 5 During the 2013 election campaign, the carbon tax - implemented in 2012 - became a major issue, with the coalition promising to abolish the tax - which it ultimately did after winning the election. While this is a domestic issue, the coalition's strong anti-carbon tax posture indicates the Liberal Party and its coalition partner are much less enthusiastic than the previous Labor Party government 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 and Paris. 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 it has come to the practical job of reducing CO₂ emissions, Austria continues to fall 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 While environmental policy in the Czech Republic is strongly shaped by the country's obligations to implement EU legislation, the country is not a driving force in shaping EU legislation and remains a passive and ambivalent recipient of 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 2016, parliament had not yet ratified the second phase of the Kyoto Protocol (Doha Amendment).

Hungary

Score 5 Global environmental reforms have not been part of the official public discourse in Hungary, and 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 EU's environmental policy, but remains far from being a driving force. President János Áder has tried to find an international role for himself in global environmental policy, but has not launched any substantial initiatives. In the climate protocol Hungary follows the general EU line. With the planned extension of the Paks nuclear power plant, accepted by the EU, Hungary will have an instrument in climate change policy. At the same time questions concerning the storage of nuclear waste will arise.

Israel

Score 5 Israel is starting its involvement in advancing global environmental projects. In recent years it has taken a larger role in environmental concerns, partly due to joining the OECD in 2010, 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, it launched green technology projects 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 aiming 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 air-pollution standards and the global strategy for reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.

Citation:

Lorenz, J., "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/>.

Shamah, D., "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

"Israel and World Bank Group sign agreement to share innovative best practices in water", The World Bank website 17.6.2015:

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/06/17/israel-world-bank-group-agreement-innovative-best-practices-water>

Italy

Score 5 The contribution of the Italian government to international efforts in the field of global environmental protection has been generally positive. Italy has been supportive of coordinated international actions, including the recent COP 21 Paris conference, 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. Due to the recent economic crisis, the attention of the government and the priorities of the prime minister have been diverted to internal matters, and economic recovery.

Latvia

Score 5 Despite having a prime minister from the Union of Greens and Farmers party, Latvia is not an international environmental policy agenda-setter. 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.

Portugal

Score 5

Portugal agrees to and participates in EU-wide policies on the environment. Portugal has also signed the Kyoto Protocol and more recently the Paris Agreement, which it ratified in September 2016. However, the country's primary challenge here concerns implementation in both the domestic and global settings. Portugal has become much more active in promoting global protection of marine environments in particular.

Citation:
www.eea.europa.eu

Romania

Score 5

Romania participated in the 2015 Paris Conference on Climate Change and has undertaken some measures to uphold its commitments. Additionally, Romanian diplomats participated in the July 2016 Vienna climate meetings, focused on finding agreement on reducing Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). Industry and government

leaders have supported the effort, recognizing its importance in advance of a summit in Kigali, Rwanda in October.

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. The overall policy framework regarding climate change in the Slovak Republic is in line with EU strategies. Slovakia also complies with international treaties. In September 2016, the Slovak parliament ratified the Paris Agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, making the country the fourth to do so. The ratification by the end of 2016 of the agreement by all crucial states, including the EU itself, featured prominently among Slovakia's priorities for its EU presidency in the second half of 2016.

South Korea

Score 5 South Korea ratified the Paris Agreement of 2015 on 3 November 2016. However, the South Korean government does host two important international environmental organizations. The Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) supports the efforts of developing countries to design environmentally friendly policies, and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) was established in 2012 to fund these activities. Though the two organizations have shown many signs of faltering, Korea's initiative and cooperative efforts within the global environmental-protection regime are very significant.

Citation:

Korea Times, Korea to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 37% by 2030, Jun 30, 2015

Spain

Score 5 Spain is formally committed to existing international conventions seeking to preserve natural resources, and participated in the various U.N. COP climate-change meetings, including the decisive 2015 Paris conferences. During the review period, Spain supported some foreign projects (such as wind farms in developing countries and emissions-trading projects) aimed at helping the country comply with the Kyoto Protocol and reducing national CO₂ emissions so as to meet its obligations. Unfortunately, according to the 2015 edition of the annual European Environment Agency (EEA) report, Spain has not achieved its energy and climate-mitigation targets. In addition to this, although in part because of the long interim political

situation, Spain was not able to ratify the Paris Agreement on climate change during 2016.

Thus, it cannot be said that the Spanish government is actively contributing to international efforts to design and advance global environmental-protection regimes. In fact, Spain's past efforts in renewable-energy development might have been wasted. Since 2012, the government has demonstrated little domestic initiative, and has not acted as an agenda-setter within international frameworks. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation does not work closely with the Spanish Climate Change Office. The only notable external leadership has been Spain's cultivation of the Ibero-American Network of Climate Change Offices (RIOCC), building on historical ties with Latin America.

Citation:

Paris Agreement - Status of Ratification

http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9444.php

November 2016, "Government approves submission to Parliament of Paris Agreement on Climate Change"

<http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/lang/en/gobierno/councilministers/Paginas/2016/20161111-councilofministe.aspx>

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 planned to include the topic of climate change on its G-20 presidency agenda and thereby send a strong message from the G-20 Antalya summit to the Paris summit on climate change. Although this intention was overshadowed by the Paris terrorist attacks, Turkey was able to push several issues forward through its G-20 presidency. These include the G-20 Principles on Energy Collaboration (established in 2012), which recognize the need to support the poor through the consideration of energy access, energy efficiency, renewable energy, market transparency, and the rationalization and phase-out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption. As a result, the G-20 Ministers of Energy adopted a G-20 Toolkit of Voluntary Options on Renewable Energy Deployment and a G-20 Energy Access Action Plan, the Voluntary Collaboration on Energy Access.

Turkish reservations based on national concerns complicated negotiations of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which entered into force on 4 November 2016

after 55 Parties to the Convention (accounting in total for at least 55% of the total global greenhouse gas emissions) joined the agreement. The Turkish Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning signed the Paris Agreement in New York, and the Agreement was ratified by Turkey on 22 April 2016.

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/editordosya/IDEP_ENG.pdf (accessed 5 November 2014)

'Turkish G20 Presidency Priorities for 2015', 1 December 2014, <https://g20.org.tr/wpcontent/uploads/2014/12/2015-TURKEY-G-20-PRESIDENCY-FINAL.pdf>

'Communiqué G20 Energy Ministers Meeting 2 October 2015, Istanbul', <https://g20.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Communiqu—G20-Energy-Ministers-Meeting.pdf> (accessed 1 December 2015)

'G20 Action Plan on food security and sustainable food systems', <http://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000111212.pdf> (accessed 1 December 2015)

Belgium

Score 4

Global efforts to foster environmental protection are coordinated by the European Commission, and the Belgian government seems to prefer a backseat role in that process. In the previous government, the minister of sustainable development was also the minister of finance. In the present government, the minister for energy and the environment had never worked on energy or environmental matters before taking the position. Belgium has not sought or assumed a proactive role in the design and advancement of global environmental-protection schemes – especially since several aspects of environmental-protection policy have now been devolved to the regions, which leads to frequent difficulties in the formulation of a clear Belgian (federal/national) position.

Chile

Score 4

The government demonstrates commitment to existing regimes and international efforts but it is not a genuine promoter of global environmental protection. There has been at least one specific initiative regarding the protection of Antarctica, but in general terms, the government neither initiates significant reforms nor plays a leading role in their advancement. Chile signed the Paris Agreement on climate change in September 2016, but has not yet ratified the agreement.

Cyprus

Score 4

Cyprus has ratified many international conventions and protocols related to environmental protection, and participates in numerous international organizations and meetings. However, policies are not proactive, and authorities appear almost

exclusively concerned with meeting local obligations to the European Union and other bodies. Low grades in this respect mean Cyprus is not 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 shaping EU policies in areas such as an integrated maritime policy.

Greece

Score 4

Greece participated in the negotiations and signed the Paris Climate Agreement of December 2015. However, owing to its prolonged economic crisis, Greece has not carried enough international clout to substantially contribute to strengthening 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 too heavy a burden on the Polish economy. In line with this approach, it was also Prime Minister Szydło's goal at the World Climate Council in Paris, held in late November 2015, to get special conditions acknowledged because of the country's energy and economic dependence on its coal industry.

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