



Global Environmental Protection Report

Global Environmental Policy

Sustainable Governance Indicators 2022

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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, contributes to their being advanced and has introduced appropriate reforms.
- 8-6 = The government contributes to international efforts to strengthen global environmental protection regimes. It demonstrates commitment to existing regimes and occasionally contributes to their being advanced and/or has introduced some appropriate reforms.
- 5-3 = The government demonstrates commitment to existing regimes, but does not contribute to their being advanced and has not introduced appropriate reforms.
- 2-1 = The government does not contribute to international efforts to strengthen global environmental protection regimes.

Sweden

Score 10

Sweden continues to be a leader in global environmental protection. For example, in 2022, the country will host Stockholm+50, a UN conference aimed at accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). During COP26, Sweden launched an initiative to strengthen the participation of young people in the Stockholm+50 conference (Regeringskansliet, 2021a).

Indeed, the country has a record of going beyond the requirements of international accords, as a means of setting an example to other countries. Climate change and global warming can only be addressed through multilateral efforts and Sweden plays an important role toward such arrangements. Sweden is also a very active player on the EU's environmental policy agenda.

The Agenda 2030 document and attendant government proposition outline specific ways to work with SDGs internationally, including financing this work. Indicatively, Sweden sets aside a percentage of its GNI (SEK 44.5 billion for 2020) for international development financing (Regeringskansliet, 2021b; 2021c)

Citation:

Regeringskansliet [Government Offices of Sweden]. 2021a. "At COP26: Sweden Launches Global Initiative to Strengthen Young People's Participation During Stockholm+50." <https://www.government.se/press-releases/2021/11/at-cop26-sweden-launches-global-initiative-to-strengthen-young-peoples-participation-during-stockholm50/>

Regeringskansliet [Government Offices of Sweden]. 2021b. "Sveriges Genomförande av Agenda 2030 för Hållbar Utveckling." <https://www.regeringen.se/4aa057/contentassets/378ab5cbd6b148acaecce9413cc0e1ba/sveriges-genomforande-av-agenda-2030-prop.-201920188>

Regeringskansliet [Government Offices of Sweden]. 2021c. "Sveriges Genomförande av Agenda 2030." Proposition 2019/20:188. <https://www.regeringen.se/4aa057/contentassets/378ab5cbd6b148acaecce9413cc0e1ba/sveriges-genomforande-av-agenda-2030-prop.-201920188>

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 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 with its focus shifting toward global warming, thus targeting reductions in carbon dioxide emissions and higher energy efficiency levels.

In Denmark, global environmental protection is broadly perceived as an international issue. Being a front-runner in this regard is also broadly seen as important in inducing global action. Danish civil society is very active in pressuring politicians with regard to environmental protection policy issues. In domestic policy discussions, there is increasing debate about whether current policies are sufficiently ambitious, with particular focus being placed on alternative energy sources and reductions in CO₂ emissions.

The global P4G platform, which was initiated by the Danish prime minister, held a summit in Copenhagen in October 2018, with more than 800 participants developing public-private partnerships aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

In October 2019, the C40 World Mayors Summit took place in Copenhagen. The organization brings together representatives from 90 cities around the world that are leading the way on achieving the Paris Agreement goals at the local level. The group is also working to reduce air pollution in cities.

Citation:

Danish Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities. Klimaoprogram 2021. (https://kefm.dk/Media/637728248910613865/Klimaprogram_2021_a.pdf)

Danish Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities. Køreplan for et Grønt Danmark. 2021 (https://kefm.dk/Media/637687027970573761/Gr%C3%B8n_K%C3%B8replan-a.pdf)

P4G Copenhagen Summit 2018: Accelerating partnerships, <https://p4gsummit.org/> (Accessed 7 November 2018).

C40 World Mayors Summit, The Future We Want, Copenhagen 9th-12th October 2019, <https://c40summit2019.org/#> (Accessed 17 October 2019)

France

Score 9

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 was a success for French diplomacy. This commitment was supported by the entire political class and Macron has fully endorsed the policy choices made by Hollande. For instance, Macron has tried to convince U.S. President Donald Trump to remain committed to the pledge of the previous U.S. administration, and announced at the United Nations in September 2018 that France would not sign any international agreements with countries that are not part of the COP21 agreement. France has also been supportive of the Glasgow agreement reached during the COP26 negotiations, vowing that about one-third of the funds provided by the EU within the framework of the Recovery Plan will be devoted to investments or actions aiming at facilitating the ecological transition. At the same time, Macron has taken a stand regarding the necessity of further developing nuclear energy in the future in order to increase the production of green energy. The issue is very much disputed nationally and internationally, but most French political parties in fact support this option, and a slight majority of the population is also in favor of new civilian nuclear investments. On the EU front, Macron has announced that one of the priorities of the French presidency during the first semester in 2022 would be the launch of an EU carbon tax.

Luxembourg

Score 9

At the international level, at the EU and at the yearly COP meetings of the UNFCCC, Luxembourg has positioned itself as a steady supporter of ambitious climate action. In December 2020, Luxembourg adopted its climate law, introduced a climate neutrality target for 2050, a 55% emissions reduction target for 2030 and sectoral climate targets. Achieving these targets will not be easy, as Luxembourg still depends heavily on fuel sales to car and truck drivers passing through Luxembourg. These fuel sales represent a serious issue for Luxembourg's climate targets, as according to reporting rules defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, fuel sold at Luxembourg's petrol stations, after having been converted into GHG volumes, is included wholly in Luxembourg's GHG balance, even though around 70% of the emissions cannot be assigned to vehicles registered in Luxembourg, and are emitted mostly abroad

Alongside Germany, the country has the lowest level of environmental taxes at the EU level (accounting for only 4.4% of total tax revenue). With the introduction of the carbon tax in 2021, Luxembourg took a step toward the increase of environmental taxes. This will be increased progressively from €20/ton of CO₂ in 2021 to €30/ton of CO₂ by 2023. According to STATEC, the Grand Duchy's carbon tax on its own will not be sufficient to reach the targeted 55% decline in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

With no mineral or fossil resources, Luxembourg is a net energy importer, especially from Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. The Grand Duchy is a member of the Pentalateral Energy Forum, which includes six western European countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, France, Netherlands and Switzerland), and represents a pillar of Luxembourg's energy security. On 3 February 2021, the Chamber of Deputies adopted a law restructuring the electricity market with the aim of promoting renewable energy generation and consumption among the citizenry. One month later, the country released its new circular economy strategy, with the goal of improving the use of natural resources and supporting climate targets.

Luxembourg is one of the largest per capita donors of public international climate finance in the world. In July 2021, it was stated that the country had provided €20 million over the 2014-2020 period for adaptation and land-use actions (including the Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation program (REDD+)) in developing countries. The Grand Duchy will increase its international climate funding to €200 million by 2024. In line with the Sustainable Finance Initiative, Luxembourg was slated to launch its first sustainability bond in 2020 (destined for climate, environment and social issues) worth €1 billion.

Citation:

"Grand Duchy of Luxembourg International Climate Finance Strategy 2021 – 2025." The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Ministry of the Environment, Climate, and Sustainable Development (July 2021). <https://gouvernement.lu/dam-assets/documents/actualites/2021/07-juillet/26-fci-dieschbourg/Strategie-FCI.pdf>. Accessed 14 January 2022.

"Climate action in Luxembourg: Latest state of play 2020." European Parliament Research Service (2020). [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/690664/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)690664_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/690664/EPRS_BRI(2021)690664_EN.pdf). Accessed 14 January 2022.

"Fourth Biennial Report of Luxembourg under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2020 Report." The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Ministry of the Environment, Climate, and Sustainable Development (2020). https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/NationalReports/Documents/845269310_Luxembourg-BR4-2-BR4_LUX_Final_201123.pdf

"Assessment of the final national energy and climate plan of Luxembourg." European Commission. SWD(2020) (14 October 2020). https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/default/files/documents/staff_working_document_assessment_necp_luxembourg_en.pdf. Accessed 14 January 2022.

"Luxembourg 2020. Energy Security Report." International Energy Agency (2020). https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/8875d562-756c-414c-bc7e-5fc115b1a38c/Luxembourg_2020_Energy_Policy_Review.pdf. Accessed 14 January 2022.

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, Norway 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 domestic emissions. Norway has invested in carbon-capture technologies, but positive results are not yet broadly evident. The country is additionally involved in helping spread technology related to renewable energy. The Norwegian Government Pension Fund is increasingly concerned about climate risks. The fund has recommended diversifying away from oil and gas production and has promoted the carbon risk financial disclosure initiative.

United Kingdom

Score 9

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 among advanced nations. The United Kingdom ratified the Kyoto Protocol. Since then, successive governments have consistently pursued goals relating to environmental protection and the reduction of carbon emissions. Having previously encouraged fracking for natural gas, it now appears that public opposition to it has prevailed and it has all but ceased.

The United Kingdom ratified the Paris climate change deal at the Marrakech COP22 summit in November 2016 and continues to be in the mainstream of European opinion on these issues, and it welcomed the fact that the Biden administration rescinded the previous administration's rejection of COP21. Following a large-scale public consultation, the government plans to introduce new measures to curb the use of plastics, including plans to introduce a plastics tax, which was announced in the October 2018 budget and arguably demonstrates international leadership. The international aid budget includes "clean energy" projects.

In November 2021, the United Kingdom hosted the COP26 climate negotiations in Glasgow, presenting itself as leading voice on the global stage. In doing so, it was able to point to its own actions aimed at arriving sooner than most at "net zero." The difficult negotiations with the 196 nations participating, however, led to mixed results with agreements in some areas, but not enough to meet the goal set in the Paris Climate Accord.

Citation:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/nov/13/cop26-the-goal-of-15c-of-climate-heating-is-alive-but-only-just>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/752202/Budget_2018_red_web.pdf (see page 48)

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, Finland is not among the primary agenda-setters with regard to the advancement of international regimes. However, Finland is ranked high (10th out of 180 countries) in the latest Environmental Performance index. Finland chaired the Arctic Council during the 2017 – 2019 period, an obligation that inevitably strengthened the country's international position, especially with regard to questions pertaining to the Arctic region. In operational terms, Finland continues to promote the implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change and the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. The government has issued two reports on Finland's progress in implementing the Agenda 2030 goals. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has developed guidelines on how to arrange environmentally sustainable meetings, conferences and seminars. All meetings of the Finnish EU presidency in 2019 were held according to sustainability guidelines. Climate change took a considerably more prominent role in the Rinne/Marin government's program than in that of its predecessor.

Citation:

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

"Exploring Common Solutions – Finland's Chairmanship Program for the Arctic Council 2017-2019," Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2017.

<https://epi.envirocenter.yale.edu/>

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. The country is one of the countries that have consistently pushed for an ambitious climate policy both at the European level and in international climate negotiations. The country also played a crucial role in deciding on an increased EU climate target of a 55% reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2030. Concerning the climate conference in Glasgow in November 2021, however, Germany was limited in its statements, as the newly elected government had not yet formed a coalition, and the previous government was acting on a caretaker basis (Götze and Traufetter 2021).

In its landmark climate ruling from April 2021, the Federal Constitutional Court further emphasized the government's responsibility "to involve the supranational level in seeking to resolve the climate problem" (Federal Constitutional Court 2021) which follows from the state's obligation to protect future generations and their natural source of life as enshrined in Article 20a of the Basic Law.

However, the country's credibility in international negotiations has suffered in recent years because it has struggled to comply with its own national emission reduction plans. The new government's ambition to speed up the energy transition (see "Environmental Policy") is also crucial to maintaining Germany's leadership in the pursuit of international climate policies.

Citation:

Federal Constitutional Court (2021): Constitutional complaints against the Federal Climate Change Act partially successful, Press Release No. 31/2021 of 29 April 2021.

Götze, Susanne and Gerald Traufetter (2021): Deutschlands überraschend lahme Rolle in Glasgow, Spiegel Online 12.11.2021, <https://www.spiegel.de/wissenschaft/mensch/uno-klimakonferenz-deutschlands-ueberraschend-lahme-rolle-in-glasgow-a-bc4647df-1aa8-420d-821b-a094c3c98512> (accessed 19 February 2022)

Switzerland

Score 8

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. Thus, Switzerland's impact depends in large part upon efficient collaboration with the European Union.

Furthermore, 50.7% of the Swiss population supported a popular initiative named "Swiss Coalition for Corporate Justice" in 2020, which would have held corporations based in Switzerland accountable for complying with Swiss environmental and social standards abroad. However, the initiative failed because it did not meet the requirement of a double majority, as a majority of the cantons voted against it. Nevertheless, this result shows that the Swiss population has a will for a stronger environmental regime.

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. Over the duration of its mandate, the Liberal government has generally focused on domestic policy.

However, at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), Canada participated with Germany and Britain in releasing the Climate Finance Delivery Plan whose purpose is to deliver USD 100 billion in finance to developing countries in combating climate change. Canada has also committed to doubling its contribution to international climate finance to \$5.3 billion over the next five years.

The Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA), which was signed in November 2018 by Canada, the United States and Mexico as a replacement for the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), includes a chapter on environmental cooperation with the stated aim to "promote mutually supportive trade and environmental policies and practices." Although experts criticized CUSMA as being weak on environmental protection, in particular, because it does not directly address climate change, the new agreement no longer includes NAFTA's investor-

state dispute settlement (“ISDS”) system, which was often used to challenge Canadian environmental decision-making, and which many commentators believed had a chilling effect on environmental regulation in Canada.

Citation:
Government of Canada. “Canada’s international climate finance,” 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/canada-international-action/climate-finance.html>.

Michael Connell, Canada: USMCA Trade Deal And The Environment, October 2018, Siskinds LLP. Retrieved Nov 12 2019 at <http://www.mondaq.com/canada/x/748452/Environmental+Law/USMCA+Trade+Deal+and+the+Environment>.

Estonia

Score 7

Estonia has joined most important global and European agreements, and displayed its commitment to these international agreements and targets. Estonia has ratified the Paris Agreement, and is taking steps to switch to more environmentally sustainable economic and behavioral models. Estonia agreed to the EU energy and climate goals for 2030, and is negotiating a national plan of the Fit for 55 package. By 2050, Estonia aims to decrease greenhouse gas emissions by nearly 80% compared to 1990. In 2021, it was announced that the country will phase out the production of electricity from oil shale, which carries a big carbon footprint, by 2030. Its share in electricity production has already drastically decreased in recent years, from 86% in 2013 to 40% in 2020 (Truuts & Pukk 2021).

Estonia actively participated in the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow and co-organized several side events. The Estonian government occasionally contributes to the global fight against climate change by supporting the export of green technologies to developing countries. To support countries most at risk from climate change, Estonia contributed €1 million in 2021 to the Global Environment Facility hosted Least Developed Countries Fund.

A global bottom-up civil society movement, World Cleanup Day, was born in Estonia and has become one of the largest contemporary civil society movements worldwide. In 2019, 180 countries and 20 million people came together to rid the planet of trash – cleaning up litter and mismanaged waste from beaches, rivers, forests and streets.

Citation:
<https://www.worldcleanupday.org/about/>
Ministry of Environment 2021. <https://envir.ee/en/COP26EE> (accessed 03.01.2021)

Truuts, Helle & Pukk, Piret (2021), Elektri tootmine taasiseseisvunud Eestis – põlevkivist taastuenergiaksi. Statistikaamet. <https://www.stat.ee/et/uudised/elektri-tootmine-taasiseseisvunud-estis-polevkivist-taastuenergiaksi>

Iceland

Score 7

The new Ministry of the Environment, Energy and Climate is responsible for the country's involvement in international environmental affairs. Iceland participates in the United Nations Environment Programme and is active under the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 in areas of sustainable development. Iceland is also one of the eight member states of 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 EU member states as well as the United States, Australia, Brazil, Israel, Mexico, and New Zealand formally protested the continued practice of whaling in Iceland. The government of Iceland has not yet reacted to this protest and whaling continues, even though it is increasingly difficult to find markets for whale meat. Whale watching is popular among tourists.

Iceland is still engaged in a dispute with the European Union over quotas for mackerel fishing. In 2014, an agreement was reached between the European Union, Norway, and the Faroe Islands. However, the agreement did not include Iceland. Mackerel migrates in huge numbers from international to Icelandic waters and Iceland has been accused of overfishing mackerel. No agreement had been reached with these counterparties by early 2022.

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. New measures included in a new climate strategy (September 2018) are meant to help Iceland meet its Paris Agreement targets for 2030 and reach the government's ambitious goal to make Iceland carbon neutral before 2040.

Citation:

Fiskistofa (2022), Staða makrílveiða (The state of mackerel fishing), <http://www.fiskistofa.is/veidar/aflastada/aflimakril/>. Accessed 2 February 2022.

Ireland

Score 7

Ireland's environmental policies are largely framed within an EU context. The taoiseach (prime minister) attended the COP26 U.N. Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in October–November 2021. The taoiseach stated that “climate change is

real – we are seeing its serious impacts already. The IPCC Report in August confirmed to us that it is widespread, it is rapid, and it is intensifying.” Moreover, the taoiseach acknowledged that to achieve the goals of the 2016 Paris Agreement “immediate, large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are essential.” Ireland’s plan for spending Next Generation EU funds, approximately €1 billion, was accepted by the European Commission and commits about 35% of the budget to climate-related activities (EU Commission Representation in Ireland, 2021).

At the COP26 conference, the taoiseach set out Ireland’s commitment to a legally binding target for reducing emissions by 2030 to 51% below 2018 levels, reach climate neutrality by 2050, working closely with EU partners to achieve a green transition, and the implementation of a statutory system of carbon budgeting and emissions ceilings for each sector of the economy. The taoiseach also noted Ireland’s commitment to working on the U.N. Security Council to address the destabilizing impacts of climate change. Regarding support for the developing world, the taoiseach also announced that Ireland would more than double its contribution to developing countries to support the fight against climate change, delivering at least €25 million a year toward this endeavor by 2025 (Government of Ireland, 2021). Notably, Ireland’s sustained requests for exemptions regarding carbon emissions from the agricultural sector seem at odds with these commitments.

Citation:

EU Commission Representation in Ireland (2021), The Recovery Plan for Europe in Ireland’, https://ireland.representation.ec.europa.eu/strategy-and-priorities/recovery-plan-europe_en
Government of Ireland (2021) National Statement by the Taoiseach, COP 26, Glasgow, Department of

Italy

Score 7

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 COP26 Paris conference, but in general has not played a significant leadership role. This is due to the fact that the political weight and financial resources of the Ministry of Environment have not been very high while the attention of the government and the priorities of Italy’s prime ministers have been diverted to internal matters and economic recovery.

In selected fields, however, Italian policies have been more innovative. A good example is the mechanism of the national consortium for the recycling of packaging (CONAI), which has enabled Italy to exceed European 2020 targets in this field. This relates to a considerable proportion of plastics production and offers an efficient model for other countries. With regard to the maritime environment, in 2019, Italy joined France and Spain’s proposal to create a Mediterranean emissions control area (ECA).

Under the Draghi government, Italy's willingness to contribute to international efforts in this field has increased significantly. At the October 2021 G20 meeting, which was chaired by Italy, the prime minister and the minister of environment played an active role in promoting more ambitious environmental goals (e.g., deadlines for CO2 reduction and for preventing global warming) and affirmed Italy's strong support for COP26. These public statements demonstrate Italy's attitude toward sustaining global environmental policies.

Citation:

<http://www.conai.org/chi-siamo/risultati/>

Spain

Score 7

Spain is committed to existing multilateral environmental protection regimes (including the Paris Agreement on climate change, and the 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals). During the period under review, the Spanish government supported the efforts of the COP 26 climate summit. The Integrated National Plan of Energy and Climate (following the European climatic strategy) foresees regional cooperation with neighbor countries in terms of energy security at a minimum

According to the government, Spain will increase climate-related funding, seeking to increase current commitments in financial aid to less developed countries by 50% by 2025. Spain will also add the donation of 20% of its new Special Drawing Rights to vulnerable countries: a minimum of €350 million to the IMF's Poverty Reduction Facility and support the new Resilience and Sustainability Fund. This external action will be reinforced by Spain's contribution of €30 million to the United Nations Adaptation Fund in 2022.

Citation:

Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge (2020): Integrated National Plan of Energy and Climate, available at: https://www.miteco.gob.es/images/es/pniecconpleto_tcm30-508410.pdf

Austria

Score 6

Austria's approach to global environmental policy has long been full of contradictions. Rhetorically, Austria (i.e., the government, political parties and the 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 comes to the practical job of reducing carbon dioxide emissions, Austria continues to fall way behind many of its peers.

This particular behavior has also been identified at the level of European environmental policy. A recent study by Buzogány and Četković (2021) highlighted that Austrian opposition party members of the European Parliament (along with members from Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary) have supported their governments in rejecting environmental and climate policy (ECP) legislation. This was seen as proof of broader national resistance to certain ECP legislation, which is likely to persist independent of changes in the party complexion of the government.

Nevertheless, the participation of the Greens in the new government formed in early 2020 and the appointment of a Green climate minister marked a tangible change in Austria's performance at the international level. Climate Minister Leonore Gewessler (Green) went out of her way to present and position Austria as a future frontrunner at the Glasgow climate conference in late 2021. Specifically, she committed the government to ensuring that Austria would increase its contributions to the international Green Climate Fund from €6 million to €30 million by 2023.

Citation:

Buzogány, Aron & Četković, Stefan, Fractionalized but ambitious? Voting on energy and climate policy in the European Parliament, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 28:7 (2021), 1038-1056, DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2021.1918220

https://www.kleinezeitung.at/international/klima/6055426/Ministerin-Gewessler_Oesterreich-soll-in-Glasgow-als

Chile

Score 6

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. However, in general terms, the government neither initiates significant reforms nor plays a leading role in their advancement within the international community. Chile signed the Paris Agreement on climate change in September 2016, which was ratified by Congress in January 2017.

Working typically through the Chilean Development Agency, Chile implements and finances (albeit to a lesser extent) regional South-South and triangular cooperation projects in the field of environmental protection and energy efficiency. Nevertheless, given the country's size, those cooperation projects tend to be rather small in comparison to those supported by other OECD member countries.

Although the country was scheduled to host the 25th United Nations Climate Change Conference in December 2019, due to the social crisis of October 2019, President Piñera refrained from organizing the summit. The original intention to host the event can be interpreted as expressing an ambition to play a more active role in global environmental protection initiatives. At the same time, as of the end of the review period, Chile had not yet signed the regional Escazú Agreement on access to

information, public participation and justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Citation:

Ministry of Environment (Ministerio del Medio Ambiente), <https://mma.gob.cl>, last accessed: 13 January 2022.

On the Escazú-Agreement:

United Nations (UN) Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), <https://www.cepal.org/es/acuerdodeescazu>, last accessed: 13 January 2022.

OECD International Programme for Action on Climate – Data set on Chile:

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), <https://www.oecd.org/climate-action/ipac/dashboard?country=CHL>, last accessed: 13 January 2022.

OECD Environmental Performance Reviews:

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Chile 2016, July 2016, <https://www.oecd.org/chile/oecd-environmental-performance-reviews-chile-2016-9789264252615-en.htm>, last accessed: 13 January 2022.

Croatia

Score 6

Croatia is a member of the EU that is starting from a strong position when it comes to achieving the goals of decarbonization, green development and climate neutrality. Renewable energy already accounts for 28.5% of total energy consumption, which positions Croatia above the EU-27 average of 19.7%. The latest evidence of political commitment to these goals was Croatia's pledge at the Glasgow COP26 in November 2021 to end deforestation by 2030, phase out coal by 2033 and reduce methane emissions at least 30% from the 2020 levels by 2030. The political direction of environmental protection policy in Croatia is quite obvious. However, there are still some inconsistencies that do not fit into this conclusion nicely, such as the government's provision of financial incentives to farmers for intensive cattle farming, in spite of the EU's proclaimed intention to support extensive farming practices.

Interestingly, at the end of 2021 Croatia joined a group of 10 European countries led by France that have put pressure on the European Commission to grant nuclear energy a "green" label under the EU's sustainable finance taxonomy, which acts as a guide to climate-friendly investments. From the Croatian standpoint, nuclear energy is an important component for a smooth green transition. Croatia procures approximately 10% of electricity from the Krško nuclear power plant, and intends to expand its capacity alongside Slovenian partners.

Japan

Score 6

For many years, international climate policy profited considerably from Japanese commitment to the process, with the Kyoto Protocol of 1997 serving as the most visible evidence. Ever since, however, Japan has assumed a more passive role, though major Japanese cities such as Tokyo, Kyoto and Yokohama have shown substantial commitment to the elimination of carbon emissions. Following the

Fukushima disaster in 2011 Japan had to find substitutes for its greenhouse-gas-free nuclear-power generation. This rendered implausible Japan's 2009 pledge to decrease greenhouse-gas emissions by a quarter by 2020. Japan's position vis-à-vis the environment is somewhat inconsistent. For example, at COP26 in Glasgow 2021, Japan declared to reach carbon-neutrality by 2050; yet, it declined to sign the Global Coal to Clean Power Transition Statement, which called for ending the use of coal-fired plants by 2030.

Japan supports the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change and has adopted relevant measures. The plan reconfirms the goal of a 26% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030, which is at the lower end for OECD countries. After much criticism from international communities, Japan announced in 2021 that it will strive for 46% emission by 2030 in order to achieve carbon-neutrality by 2050.

Japan put climate change high on the agenda of the 2019 G-20 summit in Japan. However, due to U.S. opposition, little was accomplished. However, one notable success was the approval of the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision, aimed in particular at tackling plastic waste.

With respect to multilaterally organized conservation issues, Japan is known for its resistance to giving up whaling. Commercial whaling was resumed in mid-2019.

Japan supports numerous international environmental-protection programs by contributing funds and making advanced technologies available, with significant emphasis on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Through the Asian Development Bank, the Japanese government helped raised nearly \$30 billion between 2011 and 2018 for projects supporting green growth. Over the past decade, Japanese overseas development assistance has also put a strong focus on projects addressing energy efficiency and greenhouse-gas emissions.

Citation:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Japan), Analysis and Proposal of Foreign Policies Regarding the Impact of Climate Change on Fragility in the Asia-Pacific Region – With focus on natural disasters in the Region, September 2017

Japan 2021 Energy Policy Review, IEA, <https://www.iea.org/reports/japan-2021>

Japan raises emissions reduction target to 46% by 2030, ABC News, 22 April 2021, <https://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/japan-raises-emissions-cut-target-26-2030-77237114>

Robin Harding, Japan restarts commercial whaling after 31 years, Financial Times, 2 July 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/1c128f4c-9bd3-11e9-9c06-a4640c9feebb>

Leslie Hook, Japan dilutes G-20 climate pledge in push to win US trade favors, Financial Times, 19 September 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/65c7501e-9692-11e9-8cfb-30c211dcd229>

Elliot Silverberg and Elizabeth Smith, Does Japan have a global environmental strategy?, Japan Times, 12 November 2019, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2019/11/12/commentary/japan-commentary/japan-global-environmental-strategy/#.Xe9tpv1KiUk>

Latvia

Score 6

Latvia is not an international environmental policy agenda-setter. As an EU member state, Latvia is bound by EU legislation, with EU climate policy being particularly influential. Latvia indirectly contributes to EU initiatives and has agreed to comply with international agreements and conventions, such as the Kyoto Protocol, the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, the Bern Convention, the Helsinki Convention and others. 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. In addition, Latvia is party to the Helsinki Commission Baltic Sea Action Plan, which aims to improve the Baltic Sea's ecological status. Nevertheless, Latvia does not have the political or economic capacity to lead on or directly advance global environmental protection regimes.

Latvia has been a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) since 1995 and to the Kyoto Protocol since 2002. The 2019 Climate Change Performance Index, which evaluated emissions trends, emissions levels, and climate policy, rated Latvia as a high performer overall, especially regarding the management of greenhouse gas emissions. However, that ranking had fallen 13 spots to 26th place by 2022, and Latvia is now rated as a medium performer overall, remaining strong in the renewable energy and climate policy categories, but lagging behind in national climate policy and scoring particularly low with regard to energy use. The report notes that Latvia seems to be moving in the wrong direction because of increasing per capita emissions, and it is therefore not on track for the 2°C target.

Citation:

1. Germanwatch (2019). Climate Change Performance Index. Available at: <https://germanwatch.org/sites/germanwatch.org/files/CCPI-2019-Results-190614-WEB-A4.pdf>, Last accessed 04.01.2022.

2. Germanwatch (2022). Climate Change Performance Index: Latvia. Available at: <https://ccpi.org/country/lva/>, Last accessed 04.01.2022.

2. Yale University (2020), Environmental Performance Index Rankings, Available at: <https://epi.envirocenter.yale.edu/epi-country-report/LVA>. Last assessed: 04.01.2022.

Lithuania

Score 6

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 EU 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. In 2019, Lithuania approved a National Energy and Climate Action Plan for 2021 – 2030 as well as a National Progress Plan for 2021 – 2030, in accordance with the Governance of the Energy Union Regulation. The country's institutions are most active at the regional level, for instance addressing issues related to the Baltic Sea. In recent years, concerns about the safety of the Astravyets nuclear power plant, currently under construction in neighboring Belarus, have become an important issue. Lithuania has outlawed the use of electricity derived from Belarusian nuclear power plants, and is trying to dissuade other Baltic countries from buying it.

Citation:
National Energy and Climate Action Plan of Lithuania for 2021-2030
https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/lt_final_necp_main_en.pdf

Malta

Score 6

Malta's small size has traditionally hindered it from being a key player in international global policy forums. 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 former UN 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 environmental agreements. As an EU member state, Malta is bound by the obligations of the European Union'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. Nonetheless, the island fell five places in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals since 2019.

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 United Nations together with other EU member states.

In October 2017, Malta hosted the European Union's Our Ocean Conference. The conference led to the adoption of 437 tangible and measurable commitments, among other deliverables. The Ocean Tracker (an interactive map that follows over €10 billion in commitments made by governments, businesses and NGOs), which was launched at the EU level, was one of the commitments made during this conference. More recently, Malta's prime minister stressed the grave danger that climate change poses to small island states during the UN-led COP26 Climate Summit. Malta also doubled its contribution to the green climate fund in a bid to help developing countries navigate the challenges associated with climate change.

However, Malta remains an insignificant, if active, player in global environmental protection, attempting to play a role in climate diplomacy with a focus on islands. To this end, in 2020, Malta appointed an ambassador to deal specifically with island and small state issues.

Citation:

Times of Malta 12/12/2008 U.N. Secretary-General Recalls Malta's Climate Change Initiative

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30544&Cr=Somali&Cr1=#.W BT4qfl95PY>

Times of Malta 03/08/2021 Malta Drops Five Places on Sustainable Development Goals

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 finalize preparations for ratification of Paris Agreement

<http://ourocean2017.org/>

European Commission Press Releases 22/10/2019 EU makes 22 new commitments for clean, healthy and safe oceans and launches The Ocean Tracker

Times of Malta 02/11/2021 Small Island States in 'Grave Danger,' Robert Abela Warns COP26 Climate Summit

The Journal.mt 21/08/21 Malta's Climate Change Battle, A holistic effort is a must

New Zealand

Score 6

New Zealand has signed a number of multilateral agreements on environmental protection, thus signaling that these issues are considered global common goods rather than just domestic problems. These include agreements regulating toxic chemicals and greenhouse gases (e.g., the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol, the Stockholm Convention, the Rotterdam Convention), international traffic in hazardous waste (e.g., the Basel Convention, the Waigani Convention, the Rotterdam Convention), biodiversity and species conservation (e.g., the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals), and natural resources (e.g., the Noumea Convention). New Zealand is also a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It signed the Kyoto Protocol (which sought to reduce greenhouse emissions during 2008-2012 time period) but did not join the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol (2013-2020). New Zealand is also a member of the Green Climate Fund but has formally pledged only USD 0.57 per capita (compared to Australia's per capita

pledge of USD 8 and Sweden's per capita pledge of USD 59). In 2016, New Zealand ratified the Paris Agreement, thereby pledging to limit global warming increases to 1.5°C in the future. However, Climate Action Tracker rates New Zealand's domestic measures as "highly insufficient," meaning that "current policies are not consistent with holding warming to below 2°C, let alone limiting it to 1.5°C as required under the Paris Agreement, and are instead consistent with warming between 3°C and 4°C." (Climate Action Tracker 2021).

Citation:

Climate Action Tracker (2021) <https://climateactiontracker.org/>

Portugal

Score 6

Portugal agrees to and participates in EU-wide policies on the environment. Portugal signed the Kyoto Protocol and, in September 2016, ratified the Paris Agreement.

The country has also become much more active in promoting the global protection of marine environments, taking advantage of its unique and very large maritime area. Indeed, Portugal has the third largest exclusive economic zone in the European Union and the 20th largest in the world. This is reflected in the fact that the country cohosted the annual Oceans Conference in 2021 and was scheduled to do so again in 2022, attracting ministers responsible for ocean/maritime affairs from around the world.

Portugal's commitment to advancing global environmental protection is reflected in its performance in the "International Climate Policy" indicator of the 2022 CCPI, which specifically assesses the quality of countries' international climate diplomacy. Portugal is rated as "high" in this indicator, reflecting its collaborative role in international negotiations. It is one of 12 (out of 64 assessed) to receive this rating. Nevertheless, the proviso in the previous question regarding implementation of domestic environmental policy is applicable at the global level as well.

Citation:

Jan Burck, Ursula Hagen, Franziska Marten, Niklas Höhne, Christoph Bals (2019), The Climate Change Performance Index Results 2019, available online at: <https://www.climate-change-performance-index.org/sites/default/files/documents/ccpi-2019-results-190614-web-a4.pdf>

Slovakia

Score 6

As part of the European Union, Slovakia supports the European Union's 2030 climate and energy policy framework, and its contribution to the global Paris Agreement. Slovakia was the fourth country to ratify the Paris Agreement. The new government demonstrates greater commitment to addressing climate issues than does the previous one, and it is very eager to comply with the European Commission's most recent Green Deal efforts. This is reflected, for example, in Slovakia's establishment of a Government Council for the European Green Deal for cross-sector

coordination. Slovakia signed a contribution agreement with the Green Climate Fund in September 2019, but it has not acted as an international agenda-setter for global environmental policy.

Slovenia

Score 6

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). Slovenia has signed and ratified almost all multilateral environmental agreements. The Dinaric Arc area is an emerging focus of cooperation. Bilateral cooperation between Slovenia and its neighboring countries includes various cross-border agreements, such as water management agreements with Croatia, Hungary and Italy, as well as 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 strengthening global environmental protection regimes has been modest.

South Korea

Score 6

Although South Korea typically ratifies international agreements regarding environmental protection issues, it does not tend to take the initiative in this area, and the agreements do not play an important role in domestic political decisions. The country ratified the Paris Agreement of 2015 on 3 November 2016, hosts both the Global Green Growth Institute and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and in October 2019, President Moon promised to double Korea's contribution to the GCF.

While the Moon government demonstrated greater ambition in targeting reduced emissions than it did in targeting other areas relevant to protecting the environment, the challenges ahead remain substantial. The Moon administration – like previous governments – did not place a particularly high priority on its global environmental responsibilities. Instead of articulating a comprehensive strategy for a transition to a carbon-neutral society, the government was quick to give in to populist demands for low electricity and fuel prices.

Korea is the world's eighth-largest emitter of carbon-dioxide emissions, and 12th-largest with regard to total greenhouse gas emissions. In 2021, Korea officially announced that it would cut its domestic emissions to a level 40% below 2018 levels by 2030. This is a significant improvement compared to its previous target of 24.4% below 2017 levels. In 2020, Korea committed (and enshrined in law) to achieving

carbon neutrality by 2050. Nevertheless, the Climate Action Tracker (CAT) notes that with its current policies and measures – including an emissions-trading system for key sectors, a green building plan, an incentive system supporting electric and hybrid vehicles, and measures supporting environmentally friendly public transportation – Korea is unlikely to achieve its nationally determined contribution target. To achieve this, CAT estimates that Korea needs to reduce domestic emissions by at least 59% by 2030.

The 17th Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI, published November 2021) – which evaluates climate policy and implementation among the 64 countries responsible for 90% of global greenhouse gas emissions – ranks South Korea at 59th place. Korea is thus not only near the bottom of the list (with only five countries ranked lower), but it also dropped three places compared to 2020.

Korea is the world's second-largest investor in the global coal-finance market, following China. International environmental NGOs have for years pushed Korea's government to stop funding coal power in developing countries such as Indonesia. As a result, Korea committed in 2021 to stop coal financing, albeit with some exceptions for retrofitting and approved projects. Following this, major Korean financial groups (e.g., KB, Shinhan, Hana and Woori) announced plans to make their investment portfolios carbon neutral by 2050.

Citation:

"Climate Action Tracker 2021 – South Korea." Accessed January 18, 2022. <https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/south-korea/>.

"Climate Change Performance Index 2022," December 3, 2021. <https://ccpi.org/country/kor/>.

"Environmental Performance Index 2020." Accessed January 18, 2022. <https://epi.yale.edu/epi-results/2020/component/epi>.

Lee, Keun-young. "Despite Lofty Goals and Declarations, S. Korea Ranks among Worst on Climate Change Action." Hankyoreh, November 10, 2021. https://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_national/1018756.html.

Australia

Score 5

Australia is not prioritizing the advancement of global environmental protection regimes. After winning the 2013 election, the coalition abolished the carbon tax introduced by the previous labor government. While this is a domestic issue, the coalition's strong anti-carbon tax posture indicates the Liberal party and its coalition partner is much less enthusiastic than the previous Labor party government about participating in a global environmental protection regime.

The current Morrison government has retained the Abbott government's reluctance to advance global cooperation to protect the environment, though it participates in numerous multilateral and bilateral forums that deal with environmental issues, and is a signatory to many international treaties/agreements. Most recently, the Morrison government signed up to the Glasgow Climate Pact at the 26th U.N. Climate Change Conference of the Parties in November 2021. However, the Australian Climate

Council argues Australia increasingly lags behind other developed countries in both its commitments and actions to reduce carbon emissions.

Citation:

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/sep/02/australia-will-honour-paris-climate-agreement-simon-birmingham-says>

<http://www.environment.gov.au/about-us/international>.

<https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/resources/crunch-time-climate-action-2020s-define-australia/>

Bulgaria

Score 5

While environmental sustainability issues are topics of concern within the Bulgarian government, successive governments have not sought to proactively shape international environmental and climate policies. While the country has a relatively large share of renewables in its energy mix, it is among the group of East-Central European countries that are comparatively cautious about adopting aggressive carbon reduction targets. Bulgaria also contributes relatively little to the Green Climate Fund.

Since 2019, and especially in 2021, in relation to the EU Green Deal and recovery plans, Bulgaria expressed its support and commitment, but did very little to make a difference. Bulgaria has directed only one-third of the EU resources earmarked for green goals as part of the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Bulgaria toward modern environmental investment projects.. The 2021 government, with the involvement of the Greens, is likely to attempt a more substantial involvement of Bulgaria in the global environmental protection.

Citation:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility/recovery-and-resilience-plan-bulgaria_en

Israel

Score 5

Israel is a relatively small participant in the international climate policy network and by no means a leader in global efforts to tackle environmental issues. In recent years, it has taken a larger role in environmental policy matters, partly due to a rise in public awareness of these issues, and partly due to its accession to international organizations and treaties. Israel has signed, ratified or acceded 20 environmental conventions, as well as several amendments and protocols to those conventions.

The country has been forced to develop technological and ecological solutions due to the unique and diverse nature of the Israeli climate, the country's scarcity of natural drinking water, and its hostile neighboring countries. The country has developed an industry of more than 400 companies dedicated exclusively to sustainable water, energy, and environmental technologies. It has launched green-technology projects

aimed at demonstrating its achievements in the fields of desalination and water recycling, and actively shares information and technologies with other countries. Israel is also involved in international anti-desertification efforts since it is an important exporter of new methods and technologies developed specifically for arid regions.

One of the main global events in the field of environmental protection was the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, more commonly referred to as COP26, which was held in Glasgow. The Israeli delegation was one of the largest at the summit. Its main focus was on climate innovation, namely using existing and developing new high-tech advancements to combat climate change.

Citation:

“Bennett at COP26: Israel can be ‘climate innovation nation’.” I24NEWS. 01.11.2021. <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/1635785702-bennett-at-cop26-israel-can-be-climate-innovation-nation>

“Government OKs Decision to Implement Sustainable Development Indicators,” Ministry of Environmental Protection, 14.7.2019 (Hebrew): https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/government_approved_implementation_of_sdgs

“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>

Israel Ministry of Environment Protection: http://www.sviva.gov.il/English/env_topics/InternationalCooperation/IntlConventions/Pages/default.aspx

OECD, “Israel’s Green Tax on Cars” OECD Environment Policy Paper, July 2016, http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oced/environment/israel-s-green-tax-on-cars_5jlv5rmnq9wg-en#.WdJ0SBOCy34#page5

Mexico

Score 5

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. Mexico is also one of the main

recipients of clean development mechanisms in Latin America. It has advocated for the continuation of this development and environmental cooperation mechanism in several environmental policy forums.

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. Furthermore, 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. Mexico has been an active participant in climate-change talks involving international organizations.

However, President López Obrador has yet to emerge as an internationally networked environmentalist. He did not travel to COP26 in Glasgow in 2021, and is considered an opponent of renewable energy. Unlike large parts of the global community, he continues to promote fossil fuels such as gas and oil. All in all, the global stance of Mexico in this crucial area is far from sufficient, and the president is failing to recognize the urgency of this topic for Mexico.

Citation:

<https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/mexico/>

<https://www.dw.com/de/mexiko-schwimmt-gegen-den-strom/a-59478792>

Netherlands

Score 5

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. It has also signed related international treaties on safety, food security, energy and international justice. In Glasgow, the Netherlands signed the COP26 deal to end fossil fuel investments, following initially sharp criticism both within the country and abroad.

The government continues to aspire to a coherent sustainability policy or a “policy agenda for globalization.” It regards resource and energy scarcity, transborder disease control, climate change, transborder crime, and international trade agreements as the most pressing global issues. The amalgamation of trade and development work has gone further under Rutte III. The new coalition agreement has the ambition to green its trade instruments, shift toward more justice in trade practices and cut aid to fossil industries.

As an immediate response, climate change is addressed mainly as a mitigation effort, for example, through the Dutch Risk Reduction Team, offering assistance and expertise to water-related risk areas around the globe. A coherent globalization policy also means that research is conducted and monitoring is performed regarding any ways that one policy may undermine others. 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.

The Netherlands participates in efforts targeting global climate resilience that are focused on tapping technological innovation to reduce CO₂. Bilateral projects with various countries outside the EU are centered on knowledge sharing, particularly in the area of water management. Water management is also a key element of the Dutch contribution to the Global Commission on Adaptation, of which the Netherlands is initiator, a convening country and a direct funder. Water management systems are also a key asset in Dutch trade.

However, the Dutch economy is currently one of the worst polluters in Europe, not at home but through its trade activities beyond the country's borders and their impact on people and ecosystems. The Netherlands ranks last (31st) on the EU spillover list. The list compares the effect of national policies on the life and welfare of other member states. The main reason for this abysmal score is Dutch tax policy. The Netherlands occupies fourth place in the ranking of tax-havens in the world, with a total of 12,400 mailbox companies. This means that other countries lose approximately €20 billion in tax revenue on a yearly basis.

The Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment is an independent advisory body composed of experts. In 2017, it won an award for the quality of its services. It provides advisory services and capacity development to international governments, focusing on the quality of environmental assessments, with the aim of contributing to sound decision-making. However, on the domestic front, its data on nitrogen deposits in protected natural areas were called into question by major political parties when court cases on the issue forced the government to take urgent measures in the agricultural and construction sectors.

Citation:

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

Adapt now: a global call for leadership on climate resilience. Global Commission on Adaptation, September 2019

Additional reference:

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

Rijksbegroting 2016 Defensie (<http://www.rijksbegroting.nl/2019/voorbereiding/begroting>, consulted 6 November 2019)

<https://www.rvo.nl/subsidies-regelingen/dutch-risk-reduction-team-drr-team>

Netherlands Commission on Environmental Assessment, 2018 (era.nl, accessed 8 November 2018)

<https://nltimes.nl/2021/11/08/netherlands-signs-cop26-deal-end-fossil-fuel-investments>

Romania

Score 5

Romania's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has adopted the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as the main instrument for addressing climate change, ratifying it under Romania's Law no. 24/1994. Romania was also a signatory to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, ratifying it in 2017. The European Union and its member states, including Romania, committed to reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% in order to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. In 2019, Romania joined 50 UN member states to set up the Group of Friends on Climate and Security, which aims to find solutions to the impact of climate change on security policy and stimulate UN involvement in this field. Romania partook in the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP26) and the Glasgow Climate Pact in November 2021, agreeing to accelerate efforts toward phasing out unabated coal power and the inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, while recognizing the need to support a just transition. Moreover, the government pledged to stop land degradation by 2030. Romania has established a network of climate diplomacy in May 2021, and the government has also appointed a special representative for energy and climate diplomacy.

While Romania's actions on the global stage are small, the government has taken a more prominent role regionally. Romania, alongside nine regional partners in southeastern Europe, signed the common Declaration for Cooperation, which acknowledged the importance of coordination within the Danube river basin, took into account the need for concerted action, promoted the "protection of water resources and prevention of floods" for the benefit of the general public, and fostered cooperation in the field of strategic policy. The partnership was founded to counter disasters intensified by climate change in the Danube microregion. The DRIDANUBE project has resulted in transnational cooperation, improved responses to drought emergencies (strategy), and strengthened cooperation between operational services and decision-making authorities in the Danube region at the national and regional level.

Citation:

Climate Adapt. "Good practices and lessons learnt." Romania: National circumstances relevant to adaptation actions. Accessed 7 January 2022. <https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/countries-regions/countries/romania>
Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "Climate Change." Global Issues. Accessed 7 January 2022. <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/2134>

Turkey

Score 5

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.

Reservations based on national concerns complicated negotiations over the Paris Agreement on climate change. Although Turkey struggles to manage its waste, it has become a collector of waste from industrial countries, including some southeast Asian countries.

Due to public pressure, Turkey banned the import of mixed plastics in 2021. In December 2020, Turkey introduced a ban on the import of mixed plastics as of 2021, but it has not ratified the Basel Convention 2019 Amendment. Similarly, the National Biodiversity strategy had not yet been legislatively implemented, although wastewater treatment capacity has been greatly expanded. In the 2022 Climate Change Performance Index, Turkey was ranked at 42nd place out of 60 countries. Turkey is not part of the Aarhus or Espoo conventions, but is part of the EU sea basin strategy, the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea (CMA). This was endorsed by a ministerial declaration in May 2019, and seeks to improve marine health and coastal ecosystems in the Black Sea.

Citation:

Climate Change Performance Index. 2021. <https://ccpi.org/country/tur/>

European Commission. "Turkey Report 2021. Commission Staff Working Document." October 19, 2021. https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/turkey-report-2021_en

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. 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.

During the 2016 presidential campaign, Donald Trump denied the reality of human-driven climate change and vowed to abandon costly policies designed to control greenhouse gases. As president, Trump withdrew the United States from the international climate-change regime and canceled U.S. contributions to support conversion to clean energy by low-income countries.

The advent of the Biden administration in early 2021 marked yet another reversal in the U.S. stance regarding global environmental protection. The Democratic president signaled the return of the United States to the international climate-change regime and the deployment of an approach to global climate change mitigation similar to the one prevalent during the Obama years. On the global stage, the Biden administration is committed to double by 2024 the funds allocated to developing countries to help them fight climate change.

Belgium

Score 4

Global efforts to foster environmental protection are coordinated by the European Commission. Until recently, the Belgian federal government took a backseat role in that process. As an illustration, in the 2009 – 2014 federal government, the portfolio of minister of sustainable development was held by the minister of finance.

Things have changed since the formation of the most recent federal government (the De Croo I cabinet, installed in 2020), with two Green Party ministers now in charge of the environmental and of energy portfolios. However, these ministers in some cases face resistance from regional governments with different party majorities. As a case in point, the federal minister of energy has made it her top priority to enact the 2003 law that called for the closure of nuclear power plants by 2025. One key strategic element of that strategy is the auctioning of new gas-powered units to partially compensate for the lost capacity. However, the Flemish minister in charge of awarding building permits belongs to the right-of-center N-VA, which is fiercely opposed to the Green Party and altogether quite pro-nuclear power. Unsurprisingly, that minister blocked the permit for one of the main gas-powered stations, de facto forcing the federal minister to put the country's energy supply security at risk.

The lack of a clear environmental strategy was dramatically visible at the COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021. This meeting called for immediate action, but Belgium managed only to commit to a policy initiative led by Denmark to lay the groundwork for a zero-emission maritime transport sector. Both the OECD and the European Commission also stress the need for new measures to maintain biodiversity in the country.

Given the strong popular demand for a more active environmental policy, a demand reinforced by the catastrophic floods that hit Belgium in the summer of 2021, there is a reasonable chance that Belgium will eventually take a more active role in developing international (or at least EU) climate policy. But the path leading to this more active role is neither obvious nor certain.

Cyprus

Score 4

Cyprus has ratified many international conventions and protocols relating to environmental protection, and it participates in numerous international organizations and meetings. However, policies are not proactive and authorities often fail to act efficiently. With the promotion of the European Union's Recovery and Resilience Fund, Cyprus participates in climate and environmental policy meetings with other EU and non-EU countries. Following a 2019 initiative of President Anastasiades concerning cooperation among eastern Mediterranean countries on climate change, a

second conference was held in Nicosia in 2021. Given the country's poor environmental performance, only tangible results could lead to a re-evaluation of Cyprus's performance.

Citation:

1. 8th Summit of the Southern Countries of the European Union, Declaration, Athens, 17.9.2021, https://www.pio.gov.cy/assets/pdf/newsroom/2021/09/EU%20MED_Declaration_Climate-Environment.pdf
2. PIO, Speech by the President of the Republic, Mr. Nicos Anastasiades, at the 2nd International Conference on Climate Change ..., 13 October 2021, <https://www.pio.gov.cy/en/press-releases-article.html?id=23318#flat>

Czechia

Score 4

Over time, Czechia has moved from being a passive recipient of EU and international agendas to playing an active role in blocking the European Union's establishment of more ambitious environmental goals. Like Estonia, Hungary and Poland, Czechia is not ready to wean itself off coal. The country also does the least amount possible to fulfill EU obligations and is not very effective when doing so. In November 2021, Prime Minister Babiš demanded major changes to the EU Green Deal, including postponing the proposed 2035 ban on combustion engines, which would significantly hurt the Czech automotive industry. Together with France and Finland, Czechia also pushed to include nuclear energy in the EU sustainable finance rules (nuclear comprised 37% of total energy sources in Czechia in 2020 compared to 70% in France). The demand was supported by Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Slovenia.

Greece

Score 4

Greece participated in the negotiations and signed the Paris Climate Agreement of December 2015. Since November 2021, Greece has also followed the COP26 guidelines in preparing to shift to a sustainable environmental regime. Owing to its relatively recent economic problems, Greece could not accumulate adequate international clout to help shape the newly envisaged international environmental regime. Yet, the Greek government has committed to implementing that regime, which includes gradually shifting away from polluting operations. In April 2021, the Greek government announced that the last coal plant will close by 2025.

Citation:

- Information on Greece's efforts to "turn green" in accordance with COP26: <https://www.economia.gr/en/cop26-greece-is-doing-its-part-and-turns-green/>
- Information on Greece's plan of phasing-out lignite extraction and use: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/climate-environment/news/greece-confirms-last-coal-plant-will-be-shut-in-2025/>

Hungary

Score 4 Hungary signed the Paris Agreement and has adhered to EU agreements. János Áder, the country's president from 2012 to 2022 and founder of the Blue Planet Foundation, has been quite active on the international scene. As Fidesz's "man for the environment issues," he has praised the Orbán government's environmental commitment and policies. The big facade event in 2021 was the Planet Budapest 2021 Sustainability Expo and Summit with participants from 120 countries from all over the world, including some heads of state, personally or online. However, the Hungarian government has opposed most attempts to strengthen the European Union's environmental ambitions. Hungary was among the four countries that – eventually without success – tried to block the European Union's plans to become carbon-neutral by 2050. More successful has been the country's attempt to include nuclear power in the calculation of European climate change policies.

Poland

Score 4 Poland has signed the Paris Climate Agreement and has committed itself to phasing out coal power in line with Glasgow Summit agreement in November 2021. Poland has hosted several high-level conferences on climate change in the past. Within the European Union, the primary focus of Poland's environmental policies is somewhat restrictive. It has opposed the von der Leyen European Commission's Green Deal, and along with Estonia, Hungary and the Czech Republic, blocked a declaration to achieve environmental neutrality by 2050. Some initiatives have been brought forward under the Visegrad cooperation framework, such as a November 2021 joint declaration stating that the four Visegrad countries plan to collaborate further to achieve climate neutrality and engage together in the construction of new nuclear energy plants.

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