

## Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)



### WHAT IS SECRETARIAT OF UNFCCC?

Established in 1992 at the time of the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the UNFCCC secretariat (UN Climate Change) is the United Nations entity tasked with supporting the global response to the threat of climate change. Focusing in its early years largely on facilitating the intergovernmental climate change negotiations, the secretariat today supports a complex architecture of bodies that serve to advance the implementation of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.

### WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE SECRETARIAT?

The secretariat organizes and supports two negotiating sessions each year. The most prominent is that of the Conference of the Parties (COP), held annually and hosted in different locations around the globe.

The secretariat also supports the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action, launched by the High-Level Champions and endorsed by governments to signal that successful climate action requires strong support from a wide range of actors, including regions, cities, business, investors and all parts of civil society.

Marrakech  
Partnership



### WHAT IS UNFCCC?

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an international environmental treaty addressing climate change, opened for signature by 154 states on the margins of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, informally known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992. Today, it has near universal membership (197 Parties). Parties under the Convention:

Report regularly on climate change policies and measures

Track greenhouse gas emission yearly, from 1990 onwards

For industrialized nations, provide financial support for action on climate change.

The Convention acknowledges the vulnerability of all countries to the effects of climate change and calls for special efforts to ease the consequences, especially in developing countries which lack the resources to do so on their own. In the early years of the Convention, adaptation received less attention than mitigation, but subsequently Parties have agreed on a process to address adverse effects and to establish funding arrangements for **adaptation**.

Under the UNFCCC, Parties have, among others, agreed to “Cooperate in preparing for adaptation to the impacts of climate change; develop and elaborate appropriate and integrated plans for coastal zone management, water resources and agriculture, and for the protection and rehabilitation of areas, particularly in Africa, affected by drought and desertification, as well as floods”.

UNFCCC's [Climate Action Pathways](#) under the Marrakesh Partnership set out sectoral visions for achieving a 1.5°C resilient world in 2050, with overarching transformational milestones, and key impacts that need to be achieved to realize them, with the cooperation of a range of State and non-State actors. Developed in 2020, the [Climate Action Pathway for Water](#) states that **water management** and the **protection of freshwater ecosystems** are vital elements of global climate mitigation activities and strategies.

The **[national adaptation plan \(NAP\)](#)** process enables Parties to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs) as a means of identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs and developing and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs. It is a continuous, progressive and iterative process which follows a country-driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and fully transparent approach.

Under the UNFCCC, the **[Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform \(LCIPP\)](#)** has been established to strengthen knowledge, technologies, practices, and efforts of local communities and indigenous peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change, to facilitate the exchange of experience and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner, and to enhance the engagement of local communities and indigenous peoples in the UNFCCC process.

In the context of the **[Lima Adaptation Knowledge Initiative](#)** -a joint initiative between the UNFCCC and UNEP in prioritising and closing knowledge gaps in subregions, several knowledge gaps have been prioritized: for example, lack of knowledge to include women, girls, people with disabilities in designing and implementing adaptation plans and policies for Pacific SIDS. The initiative also entails convening partners and experts in these subregions to close these priority knowledge gaps.

## THE WAY FORWARD

**Climate change is one of the main global threats that hinders the exercise and enjoyment of human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation. Climate change has further aggravated the challenges faced by those who are in vulnerable situations. I hope to collaborate with the Secretariat of the UNFCCC to establish resiliency and adaptation mechanisms to mitigate the impact of climate change on the human rights to water and sanitation.**

Pedro Arrojo-Agudo,  
UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation

\*The Special Rapporteur held a meeting with UNFCCC representatives on 5 March 2021

