

Views on the Paris Agreement

By comparison to what it could have been, it's a miracle. By comparison to what it should have been, it's a disaster ... Until governments undertake to keep fossil fuels in the ground, they will continue to undermine the agreement they have just made.

George Monbiot, *The Guardian*, December 12, 2015

You will undoubtedly hear some denounce the Paris Agreement for what it does not do. It does not respond with sufficient urgency. It does not use the levers available to governments to craft a treaty that is enforceable with trade sanctions to add some teeth. ... Nevertheless, the Paris Agreement is an historic and potentially life-saving agreement. It does more than many of us expected ... What matters now is what we do next ... Paris threw us a lifeline. Don't let it slip between our fingers.

Elizabeth May, *National Observer*, December 14, 2015

Though far from perfect, it's a significant achievement ... Compromises produced a final product that falls short of assigning liability for past emissions and providing dependable "loss and damage" payments to nations already suffering from the effects of climate change. Ongoing pressure is also needed to ensure targets are met and become more ambitious over time. Despite these shortcomings, the Paris Agreement is a leap forward in the fight against climate change. Funding for vulnerable and developing nations, plans to ratchet up ambition at regular intervals and recognition of the role of indigenous knowledge will play major roles in future action ... The first step in realizing stronger goals for Canada begins now.

David Suzuki, *David Suzuki Foundation Blog*, December 17, 2015

Today the human race has joined in a common cause, but it's what happens after this conference that really matters. The Paris Agreement is only one step on long a road, and there are parts of it that frustrate and disappoint me, but it is progress. This deal alone won't dig us out the hole we're in, but it makes the sides less steep ... Indigenous Peoples rights are in the pre-amble and in the Adaptation section of the Agreement. But they're not given the protection they deserve, particularly given that forest protection will be key to achieving 1.5 degrees.

Kumi Naidoo, *Greenpeace International Press Release*, December 12, 2015

Today the President of COP21 delivered the first global climate agreement that, if adopted, would see all countries in the world agreeing to phase out fossil fuels. While there are gaps in the agreement that require further work, its historic significance cannot be overstated.

Catherine Abreu, *Ecology Action Centre Press Release*, December 12, 2015

À l'issue de la COP21 de Paris, il est clair que si le Canada veut être un acteur crédible dans la lutte aux changements climatiques, il doit cesser de financer les énergies fossiles ... De plus, il n'a jamais été aussi évident que l'oléoduc Énergie Est est un projet dépassé qui n'a plus de sens dans une société où l'on cherche à se libérer du pétrole.

Monique Pauzé, Communiqué sur www.blocquebecois.org, 14 décembre, 2015

The Conservative Party welcomes the progress that was made at the Paris Climate Change Conference (COP 21) ... We are very concerned that, without prior notice or consultations with Canadians, the Prime Minister has chosen to transfer \$2.65 billion of taxpayers money into the United Nations Green Climate Fund, money that will be spent on climate change projects, not within Canada, but in foreign countries.

Hon. Rona Ambrose, Statement on www.conservative.ca, December 12, 2015

With the hope that special attention for the most vulnerable populations is guaranteed, I exhort the whole international community to proceed on the path undertaken in the name of an ever more effective solidarity.

Pope Francis, *Catholic Herald*, December 14, 2015

The Paris Agreement: Key Points

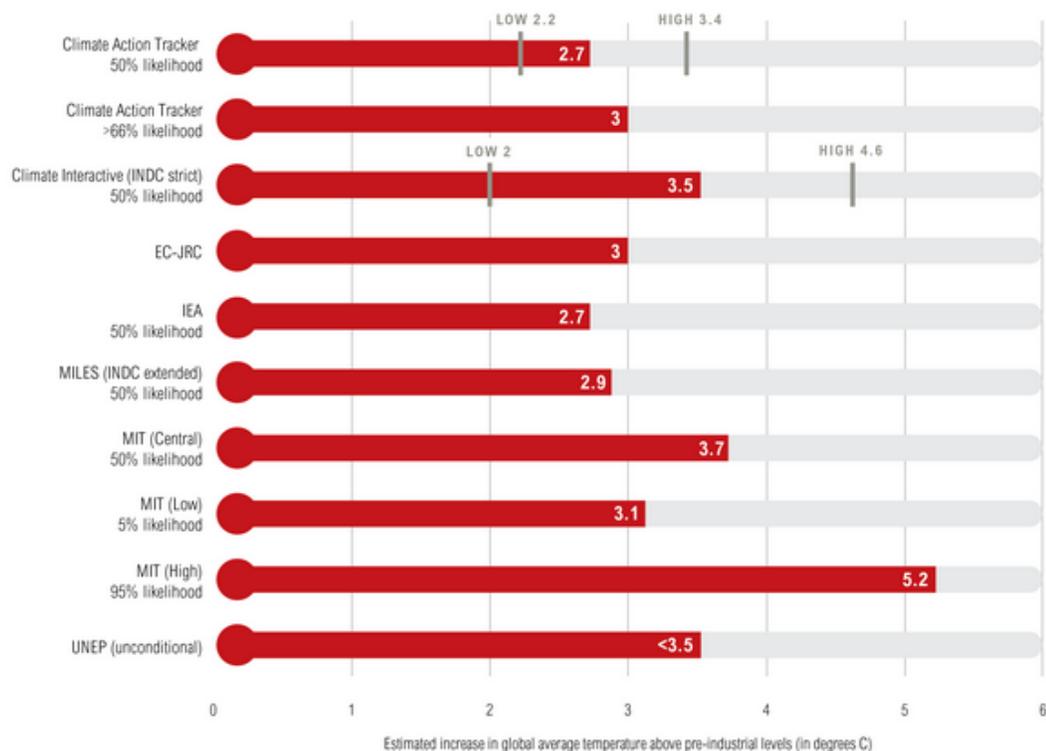
What we like:

- Universal adoption. 196 countries now committed to mitigation (including Canada and Australia)
- Ambitious goals. Commitment to “holding global mean temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels”; Net carbon neutrality “in the second half of this century”
- Transparency and accountability. Commitments and mitigation efforts will be revisited and strengthened every 5 years
- Adaptation. Similar 5-year cycle for enhancing adaptation efforts, including support for developing countries for adaptation
- Loss and damage. Acknowledgement of the issue of loss and damage when mitigation and adaptation efforts fail, including displacement and provisions for addressing these issues (the Warsaw International Mechanism)
- Climate finance. Provisions to support developing countries in mitigation and adaptation efforts

Challenges and compromises:

- Strategic ambiguity throughout (e.g. "support shall be provided..." without indicating how much support and where that support will come from)
- Not legally binding and no enforcement mechanism (reference instead to "non-adversarial and non-punitive" mechanisms)
- Inadequate commitments: even if fully met, pledges would lead to a temperature rise of 2.7 to 3.7 °C (depending on modelling assumptions):

Estimates for Global Temperature Rise with INDCs



Note: "Likelihood" refers to the probability of limiting global warming to a specified temperature by 2100. For instance, >66% likelihood provides a "likely" chance that warming will not exceed the given temperature.