



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Parliamentary committees on climate and the environment: How can they drive climate action?

4 March 2024, 11:00-12:30 CET

Concept note

Background

Climate change has put the planet on track for catastrophic warming. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), nearly half of the world's population is located in areas that are highly vulnerable to climate change.¹ As global greenhouse gas emissions rise at an alarming pace, biodiversity loss, desertification, sea-level rise, heatwaves and flooding continue to intensify. While impacts are felt across populations, it is the most vulnerable that bear the brunt of the consequences.

The first-ever global stocktake, which concluded at the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai, provided an assessment of collective progress made towards meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement. It showed that implementation of both mitigation and adaptation objectives is lacking across all areas. The outcome of the stocktake called for a transformation, in which climate resilience is mainstreamed as part of sustainable development for the long-term.

At the Parliamentary Meeting at COP28, parliaments recognized that climate action must be urgently accelerated if we are to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5°C, in line with the Paris Agreement goals. The [outcome document](#) of the meeting highlights that countries will need to transform to low-carbon economies, increase investment in renewable energy and set clear targets for reaching net zero by 2050. It calls on parliaments to take a leading role in climate action, including by encouraging their governments to update and enhance Nationally Determined Contributions and adopting legislation and budgets that align national and international climate goals.

Parliamentary committees form an important part of parliamentary scrutiny. Committees focused on climate and the environment have an integral role to play in advancing parliamentary efforts to confront the climate crisis in particular. They are uniquely positioned to examine climate issues in detail, including proposed climate legislation and government performance on climate commitments. By giving close consideration to climate topics, they can offer a strong, well-informed perspective to parliament on how to advance national climate efforts.

Focus and objectives

Building on the momentum of COP28 and preparing for COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan in November 2024, the IPU is seeking to advance the work of parliamentary committees on climate and the environment to accelerate global, regional and national climate action.

As a first activity, the IPU is organizing a global virtual meeting for Chairs and members of parliamentary committees on climate and the environment. The meeting will provide a platform for representatives from such committees to have an interactive discussion in order to:

- exchange insights on the challenges and opportunities around advancing climate objectives in their committees;

¹ https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_LongerReport.pdf

- identify approaches for promoting cross-party agreement on climate issues;
- discuss processes for reviewing climate legislation and scrutinizing government action on climate change in line with the Paris Agreement;
- share experiences in using public inquiries to advance climate objectives, and explore options for strengthening the engagement of academia, civil society and media to enhance committee work;
- implement the outcome document of the COP28 Parliamentary Meeting at the national level and support preparations for COP29.

This event is aimed at Chairs and members of parliamentary committees focused on climate and environment-related topics. Committee clerks and staff from the same committees are also encouraged to attend. It will take place on the Zoom platform. Simultaneous interpretation in English and French will be provided.