

A five-point scorecard that predicts success at the Paris climate talks

Written by The Conversation USA

I returned from a brief trip to Paris two days before the [horrific events](#) of November 13, which shocked and saddened civilised people everywhere. I was in Paris for discussions regarding climate change policy at [OECD](#) headquarters.

Now I'm preparing to return to Paris for COP21, with my colleagues from the [Harvard Project on Climate Agreements](#). From there, I will post periodic updates here on The Conversation's COP21 blog.

Before I depart Boston for Paris, here is my scorecard and my predictions of five key elements that – if all were achieved — would constitute an exceptionally successful 21st Conference of the Parties:

1.

Include at least 90% of global emissions in the set of climate pledges (called [INDCs](#)) that are submitted as part of the Paris Agreement (compared with 14% in the current commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol). This will definitely be achieved.

2.

Establish credible reporting and transparency requirements. It is likely that this will be achieved.

3.

Begin to set up a system to finance climate adaptation (and mitigation) — the famous US\$100 billion commitment. A key question is whether it includes private-sector finance, in addition to public-sector finance (that is, foreign aid). This is likely to be achieved.

4.

Agree to return to negotiations periodically, such as every 5 years, to revisit the ambition and structure of the INDCs. It is likely this will be achieved.

5.

Put aside unproductive disagreements, such as on so-called “loss and damage”, which looks to rich countries like unlimited liability for bad weather events in developing countries. Another unproductive disagreement is the insistence by some parties that the INDCs themselves be binding under international law. This would probably mean that the Paris Agreement would require Senate ratification in the United States, which means that the United States would not be a party to the agreement. I can only hope that the delegates will realise the futility of pursuing such unproductive elements.

As you can see, I anticipate that elements 1 to 4 will be achieved in the Paris Agreement, and hopefully number 5 as well. So my fundamental prediction for Paris is success. Unfortunately, some greens and some members of the press will mistakenly characterise this same outcome as “failure”, simply because the 2°C target has not been achieved immediately.

Finally, for those of you who will be in Paris and/or would like to keep up on the work of the Harvard Project on Climate Agreements, you can find a web page describing our activities in Paris and related to the Paris climate talks [here](#) .

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Read more <http://theconversation.com/a-five-point-scorecard-that-predicts-success-at-the-paris-climate-talks-51380>