

From Talanoa to Action

Key messages from the speakers at the briefing in the Federal Foreign Office on 8 November 2018 in the run-up to the UN Climate Change Conference COP24

Prof. Hoesung Lee, Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);

Prof. Hans-Otto Pörtner, Co-Chair of IPCC-Working Group II „Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability“, IPCC

1. Climate change is already affecting people, ecosystems and livelihoods all around the world.
2. Limiting warming to 1.5°C is not impossible but would require unprecedented transitions in all aspects of society.
3. There are clear benefits to keeping warming to 1.5°C compared with 2°C or higher. Every bit of warming matters.
4. Limiting warming can go hand in hand with achieving other world goals, such as achieving sustainable development and eradicating poverty.

Dr Christiane Averbeck, Executive Director, Climate Alliance Germany

1. Every tenth of a degree counts:
The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change presented its Special Report in early October. The report makes it very clear that the impact of climate change will be much more serious if we do not manage to limit global warming to 1.5°C. The poorest people in developing countries will be hit especially hard. The report must be a wake up call for more climate protection and adaptation to climate change – also in view of the fact that Germany has failed to meet its climate targets.
2. Delivering at national level – meeting climate targets:
The goals set in Paris can only be reached with ambitious national climate plans. The German Government therefore has to present a plan at COP24 on how it can meet its own climate targets by 2020. This can only be achieved by closing coal fired power stations in the near future.
3. Getting Germany back on track – adopting more ambitious European climate targets:
The EU has to make it clear that its own climate targets are insufficient and that they have to be raised in good time before 2020. The German Government must give up its obstructionist stance to relevant proposals put forward by other EU member states and live up to its international responsibility.

4. Bringing Germany back on the climate protection course:
Germany's national climate policy is not in good shape as Germany's overall emissions have not decreased for the last nine years and are stuck at a high level.
In order to restore Germany's credibility in this field, Germany has to devise an immediate action programme on climate protection and adopt a climate protection act in 2019 which will ensure that the 2030 climate targets are met.

Michael Marten, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

1. Due to growing ecological challenges, an ambitious environmental and climate policy will inevitably make necessary large scale changes in nearly every area of society.
2. We are talking here about urgently needed transformation processes in the economy and society, right now most particularly in the energy industry, mobility/transport and agricultural sectors.
3. This means that an integrated environmental and climate policy is necessary which, not least, must take into consideration social dimensions and effects.
4. In the international and increasingly also in the national context, the term "just transition framework" has become established.
5. With regard to the world of work, for example, this means that the impact of environmental and climate programmes and measures on employment always has to be examined: how and by what means can good new work be created – where are traditional working processes and value chains interrupted or eroded?
6. Currently here in Germany, and also in many other countries, we are faced with the major challenge of phasing out coal based power generation, necessary due to climate policy, in a way which is socially just and makes economic sense. The aim of this process is to create a sustainable energy sector which meets the challenges posed both by climate policy and by industrial and labour policy.
7. Just transition becomes concrete at this juncture and we have to demonstrate that it is not just a catchy term but that action will be taken by showing that a modern environmental and climate policy really can be shaped in a way that is socially just and sustainable in terms of industrial and innovative policies.