



Paris, 17 May, 2022

Launch of high-level global Commission to craft strategy to reduce risks from higher global warming

Sixteen global leaders today launched a new high-level Commission which will explore how to reduce the rising risks to people and nature if global warming continues its present trajectory, threatening to exceed goals.

The primary approach to combatting climate change should remain the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. But as temperatures continue to rise and overshooting the Paris Agreement's global warming goals becomes more likely, additional approaches to reduce climate risks have been proposed.

These include expanded and accelerated adaptation, the large-scale removal of excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and possibly cooling the planet by reflecting incoming sunlight. Research indicates that, if these options supplemented emissions cuts and were governed well, they could help ward off harms to people and the planet.

The Global Commission on Governing Risks from Climate Overshoot—or “Climate Overshoot Commission”—will present the first integrated strategy that considers these additional options and how they could be governed ahead of the UN Climate Change Summit in 2023. The Commission will focus on ways of effectively minimizing climate risks that are evidence-based, resilient, just, and equitable.

The Climate Overshoot Commission includes four former presidents and prime ministers, six national ministers, two senior international officials, three leaders of major environmental organizations, and an expert in sustainable development and global governance (see full list below), with the majority of Commissioners coming from the Global South. It is chaired by Pascal Lamy, President of the Paris Peace Forum and former Director-General of the World Trade Organization. The Commission will consult with a wide range of stakeholders, civil society organizations and youth movements, and be assisted by high-level scientific advisors.

Mr Lamy said: *“All of us would prefer not to confront the consequences of insufficient action. Importantly, we will continue to work towards achieving the world’s climate goals as best we can. But we also have an overriding responsibility to be prepared, in case we do not succeed. That means considering and anticipating all potential responses that could minimize the damage and suffering, especially the most vulnerable.”*

The Climate Overshoot Commission is initially hosted by the Paris Peace Forum and is supported by Open Philanthropy, The Rockefeller Foundation, Cohler Charitable Fund, and LAD Climate Fund. Its first meeting will be held in early June at The Rockefeller Foundation’s Bellagio Center in Italy.

Further details, including the history and approach of the Commission, can be found at www.overshootcommission.org.

List of Commissioners

Pascal Lamy, President of the Paris Peace Forum; former Director-General of the World Trade Organization, France

Celso Amorim, former Minister of Foreign Relations and of Defence of Brazil

Muhamad Chatib Basri, former Minister of Finance of Indonesia

Frances Beinecke, President Emerita, Natural Resources Defense Council; board member, World Resources Institute, United States

Felipe Calderón, former President of the United Mexican States

Kim Campbell, Canada's 19th Prime Minister, Founding Member of Club de Madrid

Jamshyd Godrej, Chairman of the board of Godrej & Boyce and of the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, India

Mahamadou Issoufou, former President of Niger Republic, President of Issoufou Mahamadou Foundation

Agnes Matilda Kalibata, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy to the Food Systems Summit; President, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, Rwanda

Hina Rabbani Khar, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan

KŌNO Tarō, member of the House of Representatives; former Minister for Foreign Affairs, of Defense, and for Administrative Affairs of Japan

Ibrahim Thiaw, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Mauritania

Anote Tong, former President of the Republic of Kiribati

Laurence Tubiana, CEO of the European Climate Foundation; former Climate Change Ambassador and Special Representative for COP21 of France

Margot Wallström, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden

XUE Lan, Cheung Kong Chair Distinguished Professor and Dean of Schwarzman College, Tsinghua University, China

A selection of Commissioner quotes

"To be clear, the primary strategy is and should remain the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. But we need to consider and anticipate all potential responses that could minimize the damage and suffering to people and the planet. Our aim is to recommend an integrated strategy – based on independent scientific advice and stakeholder consultations – that for the first time brings all the options together."

- Pascal Lamy, President of the Paris Peace Forum; former Director-General of the World Trade Organization, France

"After decades of working to limit climate change, it is with a heavy heart that I join a Commission to consider what we do in case we fail to stay within 1.5°C. As impacts for people and planet worsen, so too will the pressure to explore novel strategies. Identifying research requirements, potential risks, and governance challenges is necessary. Continuing to focus on reaching the Paris commitments remains paramount."

- Frances Beinecke, President Emerita, Natural Resources Defense Council; board member, World Resources Institute, United States

"International policy-makers have been reluctant to consider approaches to reduce impacts of global warming above 1.5 or 2°C, because their focus has understandably been on avoiding that scenario. But insufficient action means these goals are slipping away. We need to consider how to reduce risks in the likely event of a temperature overshoot."

- Kim Campbell, Canada's 19th Prime Minister, Founding Member of Club de Madrid

"Overshooting warming targets will irreversibly impact vulnerable communities and fragile ecosystems. While greenhouse gas emissions reductions should remain our top priority, we must prepare for additional approaches, possibly including sunlight reflection methods, which carry their own risks. We do not have the regulatory instruments to ensure responsible, transparent, and legally permissible research and deployment of such technologies. The independent Climate Overshoot Commission will address the critical gap of governance and promote inclusive and science-based decision making."

- Jamshyd Godrej, Chairman of the board of Godrej & Boyce and of the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, India

“Producing less than 4% of greenhouse gas emissions, Africa is less responsible for climate change than other regions of the world. Yet its citizens and ecosystems are and will continue to be impacted by the inaction of those who are not doing enough to meet the temperature targets agreed upon in the Paris Agreement. Sharing a vision of the “African solution” to climate change and aiming at seeking fair and equitable solutions is the motivation of my participation in the Climate Overshoot Commission.”

- Mahamadou Issoufou, former President of Niger Republic, President of Issoufou Mahamadou Foundation

“While governments are still wrangling to agree on urgently scaling up mitigation ambition to bend the temperature curve closer to 2°C and keep 1.5°C global temperature goal alive, the IPCC has warned us that there is a serious chance of surpassing that lower goal within next two decades. Countries’ pledges to date only put us on track for 2.7°C warming by end of this century. It is high time to brace ourselves for this worst eventuality.”

- Hina Rabbani Khar, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan

“Politicians must learn the reality of climate change and must know the options to cut the emissions. Politicians need to know the science in order to make the right decision for the people. We must pay attention to what our grandchildren and their grandchildren will face if we cannot achieve the target. It will no longer be a science fiction for them.”

- KŌNO Tarō, member of the House of Representatives; former Minister for Foreign Affairs, of Defense, and for Administrative Affairs of Japan

“Without fundamentally transforming our food and land use systems, it will not be possible to mitigate the climate risks projected in business-as-usual scenarios. Sustainable land and water management practices are proven and cost-effective solutions – not only to reduce emissions but to increase our resilience in the face of inevitable challenges.”

- Ibrahim Thiaw, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Mauritania

“Humankind’s insatiable quest for economic and technological progress has most regrettably now transcended into a conflict between those who profit from causing climate change and those who will pay the ultimate price. In spite of the very clear signals indicating our planet’s systems failure, those who profit from it continue to undermine the remedies needed. Consequently, the future of our people in the Pacific and indeed the rest of humanity is in serious jeopardy.”

- Anote Tong, former President of the Republic of Kiribati

“We are entering a new era of complex risks. Climate change is a risk multiplier for every vulnerability and tension around the globe. It is time to use the powers we have wisely.”

- Margot Wallström, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden

The Paris Peace Forum's policy initiatives

Since 2021, the Paris Peace Forum has been transforming from an organization centered on delivering an annual event into a policy-oriented platform working year-round. Our policy team incubates multi-actor initiatives, hosts and boosts others' solutions to promote new global governance solutions to today's greatest challenges. Each program pioneers new forms of cooperation between governments, international organizations, civil society and business – inclusive of the global South – to deliver concrete results.

The main objectives of the Forum's Environment Program are to accelerate emission reductions in critical domains to complement broader global efforts, and to limit the risks associated with climate change, and in particular the impact of climate change on the most vulnerable. Throughout the past year, the Paris Peace Forum has been driving a global multi-actor effort to consider how to address these issues, incubating the Climate Overshoot Commission, an initiative to propose new solutions to this immense challenge for global security and welfare.

Press contacts

Climate Overshoot Commission - For inquiries and interview requests related to the Commission, please contact Jesse Reynolds, Executive Secretary of the Climate Overshoot Commission, at jesse.reynolds@parispeaceforum.org

Paris Peace Forum - For inquiries and interview requests related to the Paris Peace Forum policy programs and initiatives, please contact Amanda Mehtala, Acting Head of Communications of the Paris Peace Forum, at media@parispeaceforum.org.