

## Topic Page: [Kyoto Protocol](#)

Definition: **Kyoto Protocol** from *Dictionary of Energy*

*Policy.* an international agreement signed in 1997 at a convention in Kyoto, Japan; it sets binding emissions reductions of greenhouse gases with an average 5.2% reduction below 1990 levels for industrial countries. See next page.

### Summary Article: **Kyoto Protocol**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

International protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that was agreed at Kyoto, Japan, in December 1997. It commits the 186 signatory countries to binding limits on carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping 'greenhouse gases', which many scientists believe contribute to global warming. For industrialized nations, Kyoto requires cuts in greenhouse gas emissions to an average of 5.2% below 1990 levels by 2012. Developing countries are also committed to emissions targets. The text of the UNFCCC was adopted in 1992 and promoted at the climate summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992. The convention entered into force in 1994, with 166 countries as signatories. The protocol was adopted at the December 1997 Kyoto conference on the UNFCCC. It will come into force on the 90th day after it is ratified by at least 55 parties to the convention which accounted in total for at least 55% of global carbon dioxide emissions in 1990.

A controversial feature of the protocol is that it allows countries to count, as reducing emissions, 'carbon sinks' (forests and grasslands) added to soak up emissions of greenhouse gases (which include carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide). The accord was dealt a blow in March 2001 when US president George W Bush announced that the USA, which emits 25% of world greenhouse gases with a 15% increase in emission levels over the last ten years, would not ratify Kyoto as mandatory pollution reductions would harm US economic interests. A European Union (EU) summit held in Göteborg, Sweden, in June 2001, centred on the EU's attempt to persuade the USA to accept the Kyoto Protocol on climate change. However, five hours of talks between President George W Bush and EU leaders yielded no movement from the USA, and the EU member states declared that they would ratify the protocol without US involvement. However, the international effort to save the protocol was dealt two severe blows in July 2001, when first Japan and then Australia both said they would not sign up to any agreement that did not include the USA. The decisions had come despite the efforts of a European Union (EU) delegation that had sought to secure Japanese and Australian involvement. An environmental summit held in Bonn, Germany, in July 2001, ended with a compromise deal based on a more flexible version of the protocol. All sides gave ground in order to salvage the treaty, but the biggest compromises were made by the EU, who eventually conceded substantial 'carbon sinks' to Canada, Japan, and Russia. The EU's earlier objection to the widespread use of 'sink' forests had led to the withdrawal of the USA from the protocol: however, despite the concessions, the USA maintained its opposition. In March 2002, the EU agreed to be legally bound by the terms of the protocol.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported, in January 2001, that the Earth is warming faster than at any time for 10,000 years and that most of the warming is attributable to human activities. It predicts a rise in average global temperatures of between 1.5 °C–5.8°C/34.7°F–42.44°F over the next hundred years, as against the rise of 1.5°C–4.5°C/34.7°F–40.1°F predicted by the

UNFCCC in 1992.

**APA**

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Kyoto Protocol. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. Abington, UK: Helicon. Retrieved from [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/kyoto\\_protocol](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/kyoto_protocol)

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## Chicago

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## Harvard

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## MLA

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