



Download audio -- choose a format: [RealAudio](#) | [MP3](#)

DATE=8-10-01

TITLE=ENVIRONMENT REPORT - Climate Change Agreement

BYLINE=Mario Ritter

This is the VOA Special English Environment Report.

Representatives from one-hundred-seventy-eight countries have agreed to a complex plan meant to improve the environment. The nations agreed to limit the production of gases that cause climate change. The United States was the only industrial country that did not approve the plan at the meeting in Bonn, Germany.

The agreement is part of a developing document called the Kyoto Protocol. In Nineteen-Ninety-Seven, more than one-hundred nations met in Kyoto, Japan, to negotiate a plan to limit "greenhouse gases." Scientists say such gases cause warming of the Earth. However, exact requirements for the plan were not settled.

Last month, delegates met in Bonn to set the requirements for reducing carbon-based gases. The requirements would have the force of international law. But several compromises had to be reached before major industrial nations would agree to the document.

The Kyoto Protocol had required industrial nations to reduce the amount of gases released, or emissions, by five-point-two percent. But the current compromise requires only a one-point-eight percent reduction in emissions each year.

However, an important issue concerning enforcement appears to be settled. The agreement will become international law for countries that sign it. Japan, Russia and Australia negotiated to have special consideration for a period of time, if they do not meet their requirements.

The compromise also counts forest land against carbon emissions. This permits countries with large forest areas, like Russia and Canada, to have smaller reductions in emissions.

The delegates also agreed to put more than five-hundred million dollars into the Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund. The money will be used to develop cleaner kinds of energy technology. Part of that money is meant to aid oil-producing nations to improve their economies so that they depend less on oil.

Developing nations will not have to meet the emissions requirements of the Kyoto Protocol. Instead, industrial nations will receive credit for their own emissions if they invest in cleaner technologies in developing nations.

The compromise reached in Bonn will be developed further in Marrakech, Morocco, later this year. Fifty-five countries must accept the agreement before it can go into effect.

This VOA Special English ENVIRONMENT REPORT was written by Mario Ritter.

» » **Publishers: Please contact us if you would like to use our scripts**

E-mail: special@voa.gov	VOA Special English
Web: http://www.voa.gov/special	Washington, D.C. 20237
Fax: 202-619-2543	USA
