

Another COP? Another Op?

It may be that by the time you read this, the Paris Accord will have been formally ratified. As I write, enough countries to meet the participatory quorum has been reached and the collective emissions threshold is on the verge of being achieved, with India scheduled to ratify on Gandhi's upcoming birthday.

So why another COP this November, if that is the case? Aren't things on autopilot now, you might ask? My answer to the latter question is no, and as for the former there are a several reasons why COP-22 will be important, even if it does not have the hype and visibility of COP-21 held in Paris.

A wide majority of officials, scientists and observers have declared the Paris Agreement a major achievement and milestone but yet say that it is insufficient to put the world on a path towards keeping global temperatures at an acceptable level, even if the emissions goals of the countries signing on are accomplished.

Instead, they talk about the Agreement as establishing a framework that could result in the ultimate temperature goals being eventually reached. As I wrote in my reports from Paris last year, I agree with this view and suggested then that the importance of such a framework means that a "vehicle" is in place to allow countries to act collectively to increase goals, speed up action, etc.

Now for the question of why have a COP-22. I have already alluded to one reason above, i.e. keeping the vehicle on the road and tuned up. Having a COP every year provides a place for the countries to work with each other and share information, and if necessary, negotiate changes to the Agreement. In the case of this upcoming COP, think of the

Paris Accord as a law, and not regulations, rules and procedures need to be promulgated to implement the law.

But COPs are much more than about the policy work. Not all the attendees from a given country are "negotiators". Many come from the country's energy/environmental ministry to learn what is going on in the rest of the world. They want to know who is doing what, and what kind of projects and programs they might adopt and include in the climate plan their country is still working on and/or implementing.

Moreover, not all attendees are official government personnel. Increasingly, COPs are drawing from the business community. Part of this is due to the importance of the policy being debated and the business community's stake in that outcome, but part of it is also marketing and business development. Think about what I said in the paragraph above about ministry attendees, and how some of them are shopping for ideas and specific things that they can do. If you are a businessperson with a present or possible interest outside of the U.S, these may be people you want to talk to.

I am going to stop there. If you want to see my full thoughts on COPs and my reports from Paris, go to my website (www.wedgemere.com/blog/). Also, if you actually want to go to COP-22, please let me know and I can help you do that, as you can't just show up and expect to join in. (I guess I should say now that this next COP is in Marrakesh, Morocco. If I had told you that up front you may have tuned out, saying that sounds too far to go)

Let me close with a reiteration of my other point raised early on. Ratification of Paris does not mean we are on autopilot. When it comes to addressing climate challenges, we all have our hands on a number of different wheels and we can control the direction and speed at which we move to meet

those challenges. Think about whether you might be able to step on the gas and help all of us get to the place we need to be. We all need to do our part to make it down this road.

Best,

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