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New life given to Kyoto Protocol

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11 December, 2005

THE ARTICLE

New life given to Kyoto Protocol

More than 150 countries agreed on December 10 at the climate change conference in Montreal to extend the life of the Kyoto Protocol on global warming. An eleventh-hour deal was reached to start formal talks from May 2006 on discussing further mandatory reductions in greenhouse gas emissions after the year 2012. Unfortunately, the United States, which produces 25 percent of the world's pollution but houses just four percent of the global population, has only agreed to join non-binding talks. The U.S. Government rejects the Kyoto Protocol, denouncing it as an economic straitjacket. President Bush, urged by oil, gas and coal industry lobbyists, has put his faith in scientists somehow finding ways of curbing greenhouse gas emissions that do not hurt America's economy.

Former President Bill Clinton received a rapturous applause for his 30-minute speech, in which he said Mr. Bush was "flat wrong". Mr. Clinton, a leading proponent on the urgent need for immediate action on saving the environment, said: "There is no longer any serious doubt that climate change is real, accelerating and caused by human activities." Environmentalists expressed their content at seeing the deadlock broken at the end of the marathon 12-day talks. A World Wildlife Fund representative said: "The Kyoto Protocol is alive and kicking." Greenpeace agreed the conference had strengthened the Protocol. These sentiments were seconded by Canada's Environment Minister, who closed the conference by stating: "We are going to reconcile humanity with its planet."

WARM-UPS

1. ALTERNATIVES: In pairs / groups, talk about the alternatives to fossil fuels that might clean up the environment. How effective do you think they are? When do you think they will be a major part of your life?

- Wind farms
- Solar cells
- Nuclear power
- Biofuels
- Hydrogen-powered cars
- Underground thermal energy
- Wave power
- George W. Bush's scientists

2. CONSEQUENCES: With your partner(s), look below at the consequences of global warming the world has witnessed this year. Talk about them and where they happened. Which caused the greatest harm? What will happen if each gets worse year by year?

- Deadly hurricanes and typhoons
- Forest fires
- Flooding
- Melting glaciers
- Drought and famine
- Fish populations disappearing

3. KYOTO PROTOCOL SEARCH: Talk to as many other students as you can to find out what they know about the Kyoto Protocol. After you have talked to lots of students, sit down with your partner(s) and share your information. Tell each other what you thought was interesting or surprising. Would you like a stronger Kyoto Protocol?

4. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Climate change / Montreal / eleventh-hour deals / greenhouse gases / pollution / the Kyoto Protocol / straitjackets / Bill Clinton / marathons / Greenpeace / kicking

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

5. 2-MINUTE CLIMATE DEBATES: Have the following (for-fun) 2-minute debates. Students A take the first argument, students B the second. Change partners often.

- Global warming is not manmade. vs. Global warming is totally manmade.
- The Kyoto Protocol hurts industry. vs. The Protocol creates new industries.
- President George W. Bush knows what he's talking about. vs. Excuse me?
- It's too late to save the environment. vs. The Earth will repair itself
- The crazy weather in 2005 was due to global warming. vs. Just a coincidence.
- Scientists will find solutions to stop global warming. vs. I don't think so.
- China and India should immediately curb emissions. vs. America first.
- There is great hope for the environment. vs. The environment is doomed.

6. CLIMATE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "climate". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. The Montreal climate change conference was not a total failure. T / F
- b. An agreement was reached on further discussions just past 11 pm. T / F
- c. Mr. Bush says the Kyoto Protocol is an economic straitjacket. T / F
- d. Mr. Bush says scientists will find ways of curbing greenhouse gases. T / F
- e. Former President Bill Clinton said George W. Bush was "flat wrong". T / F
- f. Bill Clinton is an outspoken opponent of the Kyoto Protocol. T / F
- g. Environmentalists were furious at the lack of progress in Montreal. T / F
- h. A Canadian politician seconded comments made by environmentalists. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| a. extend | harmonize |
| b. eleventh-hour | compulsory |
| c. mandatory | damning |
| d. denouncing | impasse |
| e. curbing | backed |
| f. rapturous | restricting |
| g. proponent | prolong |
| h. deadlock | fervent |
| i. seconded | advocate |
| j. reconcile | last-minute |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| a. extend | a rapturous applause |
| b. An eleventh-hour | straitjacket |
| c. further mandatory | urgent need for immediate action |
| d. an economic | humanity with its planet |
| e. finding ways of curbing | reductions in greenhouse gas emissions |
| f. Bill Clinton received | the life of the Kyoto Protocol |
| g. a leading proponent on the | by Canada's Environment Minister |
| h. The Kyoto Protocol is alive | greenhouse gas emissions |
| i. These sentiments were seconded | and kicking |
| j. We are going to reconcile | deal was reached |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

New life given to Kyoto Protocol

More than 150 countries _____ on December 10 at the climate change conference in Montreal to _____ the life of the Kyoto Protocol on global warming. An eleventh-hour _____ was reached to start formal talks from May 2006 on discussing further _____ reductions in greenhouse gas emissions after the year 2012. Unfortunately, the United States, which produces 25 percent of the world's pollution but _____ just four percent of the global population, has only agreed to join non-binding talks. The U.S. Government rejects the Kyoto Protocol, denouncing it as an economic _____. President Bush, urged by oil, gas and coal industry _____, has put his faith in scientists somehow finding ways of _____ greenhouse gas emissions that do not hurt America's economy.

Former President Bill Clinton received a _____ applause for his 30-minute speech, in which he said Mr. Bush was "_____ wrong". Mr. Clinton, a leading _____ on the urgent need for immediate action on saving the environment, said: "There is no longer any serious doubt that climate change is real, accelerating and caused by human activities." Environmentalists expressed their content at seeing the _____ broken at the end of the _____ 12-day talks. A World Wildlife Fund representative said: "The Kyoto Protocol is alive and _____." Greenpeace agreed the conference had strengthened the Protocol. These sentiments were _____ by Canada's Environment Minister, who closed the conference by stating: "We are going to reconcile _____ with its planet."

houses
deal
lobbyists
agreed
straitjacket
curbing
extend
mandatory
seconded
proponent
marathon
rapturous
humanity
deadlock
flat
kicking

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

New life given to Kyoto Protocol

More than 150 countries _____ on December 10 at the climate change conference in Montreal to extend the life of the Kyoto Protocol on global warming. An _____-_____ deal was reached to start formal talks from May 2006 on discussing further _____ reductions in greenhouse gas emissions after the year 2012. Unfortunately, the United States, which produces 25 percent of the world's pollution but _____ just four percent of the global population, has only agreed to join non-_____ talks. The U.S. Government rejects the Kyoto Protocol, denouncing it as an economic _____. President Bush, urged by oil, gas and coal industry _____, has put his faith in scientists somehow finding ways of _____ greenhouse gas emissions that do not hurt America's economy.

Former President Bill Clinton received a _____ applause for his 30-minute speech, in which he said Mr. Bush was "flat wrong". Mr. Clinton, a leading _____ on the urgent need for immediate action on saving the environment, said: "There is no longer any serious doubt that climate change is real, _____ and caused by human activities." Environmentalists expressed their content at seeing the _____ broken at the end of the marathon 12-day talks. A World Wildlife Fund representative said: "The Kyoto Protocol is alive and _____." Greenpeace agreed the conference had strengthened the Protocol. These _____ were seconded by Canada's Environment Minister, who closed the conference by stating: "We are going to _____ humanity with its planet."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'climate' and 'change'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "KYOTO PROTOCOL" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about the Kyoto Protocol and global warming.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| • December 10 | • rapturous |
| • deal | • leading |
| • 2012 | • human |
| • four percent | • deadlock |
| • straitjacket | • kicking |
| • somehow | • reconcile |

CLIMATE CHANGE DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. How often do you worry about climate change?
- c. What do you know about the Kyoto Protocol?
- d. What do you know about events at the Montreal Conference on Climate Change?
- e. Do you think the agreement to meet again in May 2006 is a good conclusion to the conference?
- f. What do you think of America's rejection of the Kyoto Protocol?
- g. Do you think George W. Bush's actions put the world in an environmental straitjacket?
- h. How does the world stop the new economic powers such as China, India and Brazil from adding to global warming?
- i. What would you say to people who reject the idea that global warming is manmade?
- j. Were you affected by global warming this year?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you think the Kyoto Protocol is the answer to the environment's problems?
- d. Do you think the USA will ever accept Kyoto or similar protocols?
- e. What do you think of Bill Clinton saying George W, Bush is "flat wrong"?
- f. Do you think alternative energies can sustain the world's growing energy needs?
- g. What happens to the world's economies after the oil dries up?
- h. Do you think governments can "reconcile humanity with its planet"?
- i. What can or do you do to conserve energy?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

PRACTICAL ENERGY: In pairs / groups, talk about the practicality of the following sources of energy. Write down ideas for the costs and benefits.

ENERGY	COSTS	BENEFITS
Fossil fuels		
Solar power		
Wind power		
Thermal energy		
Nuclear power		
Wave power		
Hydro-electric power		
Biofuels		

- Change partners and share and compare the costs and benefits you thought of.
- Decide on the three most practical sources of energy for your country.
- Talk about the likelihood of each of the alternative energy sources above replacing fossil fuels.
- Return to you original partner(s) and share and compare the three energy sources you chose. Make sure you agree.
- Make and give a presentation of your choices. Vote on the best ideas.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on the Kyoto Protocol. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

3. 2005 WEATHER: Write a short report about the world's weather in 2005 and all the terrible things that happened. Read your report to your classmates in your next lesson. Does everyone agree with you?

4. LETTER TO MR. BUSH: Write a letter to U.S. President George Bush. Tell him what you think of his stance over the environment and the Kyoto Protocol. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give him some advice. Did you all write about similar things and give similar advice?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T b. F c. T d. T e. T f. F g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| a. extend | prolong |
| b. eleventh-hour | last-minute |
| c. mandatory | compulsory |
| d. denouncing | damning |
| e. curbing | restricting |
| f. rapturous | fervent |
| g. proponent | advocate |
| h. deadlock | impasse |
| i. seconded | backed |
| j. reconcile | harmonize |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| a. extend | the life of the Kyoto Protocol |
| b. An eleventh-hour | deal was reached |
| c. further mandatory | reductions in greenhouse gas emissions |
| d. an economic | straitjacket |
| e. finding ways of curbing | greenhouse gas emissions |
| f. Bill Clinton received | a rapturous applause |
| g. a leading proponent on the | urgent need for immediate action |
| h. The Kyoto Protocol is alive | and kicking |
| i. These sentiments were seconded | by Canada's Environment Minister |
| j. We are going to reconcile | humanity with its planet |

GAP FILL:

New life given to Kyoto Protocol

More than 150 countries **agreed** on December 10 at the climate change conference in Montreal to **extend** the life of the Kyoto Protocol on global warming. An eleventh-hour **deal** was reached to start formal talks from May 2006 on discussing further **mandatory** reductions in greenhouse gas emissions after the year 2012. Unfortunately, the United States, which produces 25 percent of the world's pollution but **houses** just four percent of the global population, has only agreed to join non-binding talks. The U.S. Government rejects the Kyoto Protocol, denouncing it as an economic **straitjacket**. President Bush, urged by oil, gas and coal industry **lobbyists**, has put his faith in scientists somehow finding ways of **curbing** greenhouse gas emissions that do not hurt America's economy.

Former President Bill Clinton received a **rapturous** applause for his 30-minute speech, in which he said Mr. Bush was "**flat** wrong". Mr. Clinton, a leading **proponent** on the urgent need for immediate action on saving the environment, said: "There is no longer any serious doubt that climate change is real, accelerating and caused by human activities." Environmentalists expressed their content at seeing the **deadlock** broken at the end of the **marathon** 12-day talks. A World Wildlife Fund representative said: "The Kyoto Protocol is alive and **kicking**." Greenpeace agreed the conference had strengthened the Protocol. These sentiments were **seconded** by Canada's Environment Minister, who closed the conference by stating: "We are going to reconcile **humanity** with its planet."