

Six issues to watch at the Paris climate talks

Tension is mounting at the UN climate summit in Paris. As the meeting heads into its second week, negotiators are busy sifting through the draft agreement to limit greenhouse-gas emissions — line by excruciating line.

In the bewildering world of international treaties, progress is often measured in terms of brackets, which contain contested text, and options, which represent proposals from different countries. Then there are brackets within brackets within options.

When the negotiations began on 30 November, there were 1,617 brackets and 228 options in a 54-page text. Progress at reconciling these points of conflict has been painfully slow. The second draft, released on 3 December, contains 1,718 brackets and 205 options in a 50-page text, says John Niles, a foreign-policy expert and lecturer at the University of California, San Diego, who is leading a team that is tracking the evolution of the draft agreement.

Negotiators are expected to work through the night and produce a new text on 5 December. That document will be forwarded to government ministers, who have set an 11 December deadline to agree on a final deal. Here, Nature lays out some key issues heading into the crucial second week of the talks.

1. Who will foot the bill

One of the biggest questions in Paris is how much aid developed countries will give to their developing counterparts. Rich nations previously agreed to provide US\$100 billion per year in aid to developing countries by 2020; these funds would come from public and private sources. A July report by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development found that developed countries supplied a total of \$62 billion in 2014 to help developing countries reduce emissions and adapt to global warming. But India and other developing countries say that the report overestimates the total. They are calling for a better tracking system for climate finance.

2. Whether to make a tough long-term goal tougher

Although the world has formally adopted a goal of limiting global warming to 2 °C, many of the most vulnerable developing countries — such as low-lying island nations — want to aim for an even stricter target: 1.5 °C. Negotiators remained at loggerheads this week, says Andreas Fischlin, an ecological modeller at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich and co-facilitator of a scientific review of the 1.5 °C and 2°C options. “This is going to go down to the very end,” Fischlin says.

3. How to track emissions cuts

Whatever agreement comes out of Paris will be based on the honour system — and a fair amount of peer pressure. As such, governments, scientists and advocacy groups need to be able to track which nations are fulfilling their commitments to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions, and which are not. That will require regular access to reliable data, and countries are still debating precisely how to deliver it. The United States and many developed countries want to see better reporting from developing countries, which counter that they often do not have the technical capacity to accurately track and report their emissions.

Just as the pledges vary according to national capacity, they argue, so must the requirements for reporting and verification.

4. When to tighten the screws

Getting to Paris was tough enough. Inking a new climate deal will be even harder. But before that's done, negotiators must decide when countries should gather for the next major climate summit with renewed commitments to reduce emissions even further. Environmentalists are calling for a major summit in 2020. China, the United States, and France are among the major players proposing a review of emissions targets in five years, but India is arguing for a 10-year plan. The issue has yet to be resolved.

5. How to deal with unavoidable climate impacts

On 2 December, Cook Islands prime minister Henry Puna talked openly about the possibility that his people will lose their homes to the sea. "Forced migration is not an option," he said. "Movement and migration must happen with dignity." Humans may not be able to adapt to some impacts from global warming, and this leads to questions about how to cope with unavoidable losses. The United States has opposed mentioning such "loss and damage" in the Paris agreement, because it wants to avoid a discussion of financial compensation. Small island nations have agreed not to use the word "compensation", but want a permanent process for dealing with the issue.

US president Barack Obama and secretary of state John Kerry have been negotiating directly with the island nations, says Saleemul Huq, director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and an adviser to the least-developed countries. "It's behind closed doors at a high political level," he says. "If they can work something out, the rest of us will agree to it."

6. What's on the sidelines

The negotiations aren't the only climate-related activity in Paris right now. Thousands of people are running a simultaneous conference that looks at sustainability from all angles — including the influence of cities, aviation, shipping and biodiversity. These issues don't feature in the political debate in Paris, but many scientists and environmental campaigners say they will must be part of the solution moving forward.

For instance, a cadre of researchers at the Paris meeting is working to focus attention on the world's oceans, which soak up roughly a quarter of the carbon dioxide emitted by humanity, support near-shore fisheries and wetlands that help buffer coasts from storms, and can also provide energy in the form of wind and waves. "I think we should start talking about the blue-green economy," says Lisa Levin, director of the Center for Marine Biodiversity and Conservation at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, California.

Source: <http://www.nature.com/news/six-issues-to-watch-at-the-paris-climate-talks-1.18950>

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Questions:

- What issues will be discussed?
- How are they planning to solve them?
- Will the solutions be long-term?

Word List:

to mount - to set in position for use - namestiti

to sift - to examine - pregledati

excruciating - unbearable - neznosen

bewildering - confusing - tak, ki vzbuja zmedo

treaty - an agreement - sporazum

to be at loggerheads - to be constantly opposing, fighting each other - biti si v laseh

Summary:

This year's climate talks in Paris will begin on 30 November at it seems like there will be six issues to talk about. Most of them will be about emissions like carbon dioxide and similar greenhouse gasses. They will also be talking about some countries that have yet to sign an agreement to cut their emissions. Overall, this is still a big problem in some of the biggest countries like China, Russia and India, although things are constantly getting better. Every year, things are getting better and it looks like we're finally making progress towards a cleaner and greener Earth, which we all want to live in. However, some people see it as an obstacle for their profit, which can slow progress down.

Paleontologists Discover Adorable Horned Dinosaur Baby

Dinosaur, roughly translated, means “terrible lizard.” The title works any way you look at it. Dinosaurs really were “terrible lizards” because they were about as unlizardlike as a reptile could possibly be. Looking at it another way, the title encompasses the size, the teeth, and the apparent ferocity of our favorite dinosaurs. But it’s also a misleading moniker. Dinosaurs were not monsters. The non-avian species didn’t spend over 180 million years constantly stabbing, biting, and clawing each other. Tyrannosaurus was a terror and Stegosaurus was gnarly, yes, but there’s so much more to dinosaurs. For instance, some of them were downright cute.

In 2010, while looking for fossils along Alberta’s Red Deer River, paleontologists stumbled across part of a skull peeking out of the Cretaceous rock. Excavation revealed more and more bones, adding up to a nearly-complete skeleton, articulated and intact down to skin impressions on the ribs and the delicate ring of bones that were once encapsulated in the dinosaur’s eye. All cleaned up and now described by Phil Currie and colleagues, the dinosaur has turned out to be a baby *Chasmosaurus* – the smallest and most complete baby ceratopsid yet found.

A few pieces of the body went missing in the last 75 million years. The forelimbs and shoulders of the baby apparently fell into a sinkhole sometime before discovery, and the very tip of the tail broke off. But otherwise it’s a gorgeous for a dinosaur skeleton of any size, and drew audible gasps when Currie presented some initial photos to attendees of the annual Society of Vertebrate Paleontology meeting a few years back.

That the nearly five-foot-long skeleton is from a baby, rather than a small species, is given away by various osteological details. Aside from the size, Currie and colleagues point out, the dinosaur has a bone texture typical of young, fast-growing animals, parts of the dinosaur’s vertebrae aren’t completely fused, it has a large orbit for its skull, and its frill had not yet grown the outer set of decorations called epioassifications, in addition to other traits. It all adds up to one unbearably adorable little dinosaur.

But there’s a greater paleontological reason for quantifying the cuteness. In the past paleontologists sometimes named baby ceratopsids as dwarf species, such as “*Brachyceratops*”.

That risk is still there. When Currie and colleagues put all the baby Chasmosaurus traits into a program to figure out its relationships to other dinosaurs, the infant came out as a primitive ceratopsid. But when they tossed out all the characteristics known to change with age, the infant fell into its proper place with Chasmosaurus. In short, we need to know how dinosaurs changed with age in order to make sure we're getting an accurate count of how many dinosaurs there actually were.

Currie and colleagues will continue to learn more about the baby dinosaur over the years. The new paper is just an initial description. And while it runs counter to a mature and staid appreciation of nature expected of science writers, I can't help but look at the skeleton and artist Michael Skrepnick's restoration and think "Aww." The infant Chasmosaurus has the same big-eyed, short-faced look of a kitten and looks about as fierce as a puppy. Had non-avian dinosaurs survived to the present, and had evolution still allowed us to develop alongside them (which, hah!, not a chance), perhaps our Facebook pages and Twitter feeds would be filled with gifs of playful baby dinosaurs in addition to our mammalian companions.

Source: <http://phenomena.nationalgeographic.com/2016/01/25/paleontologists-discover-adorable-horned-dinosaur-baby/>

Date of Publishing: 25 January 2016

Questions:

- Where was the dinosaur discovered?
- Does it belong to a previously unknown species?
- Where will it be displayed?

Word List:

to encompass - encircle - obsegati

ferocity - wildness - divjost

moniker - nickname - vzdevek

gnarly - misshapen - grčast

articulated - spoken clearly - razločen

encapsulated - enclosed - zaprt

staid - relaxed - umirjen

Summary:

Archaeologists are constantly digging at interesting places and every once in a while, when we think we've discovered it all, they find something new. And this time, it's an adorable baby dinosaur - with a horn! Surprisingly, the skeleton was preserved in its entirety, which is a big rarity in the world of archaeology. This discovery will help us understand how many different species actually existed back then and how this number changed through their age. Pictures of this skeletons also found their way onto the world wide web, where they cheer the masses with it's cuteness and rarity.

Adblocking almost as popular on mobile devices as desktops

Adblocking became almost as popular on mobile devices as on desktops and laptops at the end of last year, just months after Apple introduced the ability to block ads on iPhones and iPads.

Data from the last three months of 2015 from GlobalWebIndex recorded a rise in those reporting they had used an adblocker on mobile devices within the last month, compared to 38% on computers, which was also up by 10 percentage points on previous quarters.

The figure is skewed slightly by the high prevalence of adblocking in Asia, where the practice has been common for longer and where at the end of 2015 it was approaching half of all those surveyed. However it is still almost a quarter of mobile users in Europe and almost 30% in the US.

In a further worrying sign for companies who make money from digital advertising, more than 40% of those surveyed by GlobalWebIndex said they were interested in blocking ads on their mobiles in the future.

GlobalWebIndex research and insight director, Jason Mander, said: “Arguably the most striking aspect of this data is the huge potential for adblocking to continue growing. Across every single age and gender break, it’s at least 70% who say they’re either blocking ads already or are interested in doing so in the future.”

The survey, which assessed more than 50,000 internet users globally, is one of the few independent sources of data on adblocking.

Apple began allowing iOS users to download apps that block ads, in an update in September. As well as opening up a huge new potential audience for adblocking, coverage of the move also made more people aware they could block ads.

“A number of factors have combined to cause this rise, from the almost-constant media coverage enjoyed by the subject to the proliferation of free and easily available tools,” said Mander. “But

the arrival of adblocking on mobile has also been encouraging people to adopt this approach across all of their devices.”

The incentive for users to block ads is stronger on mobiles than other devices, as they slow down page-load times already constrained by mobile data connections, increase the amount of data used and take up screen space. However, blocking rates were slightly higher for those with 4G connections, suggesting that faster load speeds were not enough to make people put up with mobile ads, though people who pay for faster connections may also be more sensitive to delays.

The sharp increase in adblocking on mobiles is an especially big problem for publishers who are seeing more and more of their traffic coming from smartphones and are already making less per mobile ad than they did on desktops and laptops.

Apple, Google and Facebook have all been working on solutions that promise to make articles and ads load faster on mobiles. However, only Google's, which is yet to launch, offers a high degree of control over how articles and advertising are delivered. Publishers are also wary of handing over significant control of their relationships with readers to companies that compete for advertising revenue.

The GlobalWebIndex survey also recorded significant variations in enthusiasm for adblockers among different demographics. Younger users are more likely to have used an adblocker, with more than 40% of both 16-to-24-year-olds and 25-to-34-year-olds saying they have used one, compared to just over 20% of over-55s.

The only bright spot for publishers from the data is that the proportion blocking ads is lower in the top 25% and middle 50% of incomes than among the lowest 25% of earners. These high-earners are worth more to advertisers and thus generate more revenue.

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/jan/26/adblocking-mobile-devices-desktops-apple-iphones-ipads>

Date of Publishing: 26 January 2016

Questions:

- How does Adblock affect website's revenue?
- How did Adblock programs get to mobile devices?
- What are companies doing to prevent people from using Adblock?

Word List:

prevalence - dominance - prevlada

survey - a questionnaire - anketa

insight - the ability to see a true nature of a situation - vpogled

striking - shocking - osupljiv

proliferation - spreading - množitev

proportion - ratio - razmerje

Summary:

Since the internet was discovered, there were of course many people who tried to money out of it. And the easiest way to do this is by placing advertisements. And where are adverts, there are people who try to enjoy an ad-free experience. That's how a program called Adblocker was invented. Until recently, this was only available on PCs and Macs, but now they also got to mobile devices like iPhones and advertisement companies started to notice an drop in their revenue. Instead of making ads more resistant, they started thinking how to make them more user-friendly and now, they're trying to make them smaller in size, which would mean faster loading and less hassle for users.

Diversity on television is not just a black and white issue

It's not funny any more. Even though UK viewers are likely to see more sexist behaviour per hour of primetime comedy than in any other genre of television, the lack of diversity on and behind our screens is a little less than LOL.

The fact that men outnumber women two to one on television, that women disappear almost completely after the age of 50, that there are hardly any disabled presenters on air of any age, or that black men are only listened to about the industry's lack of diversity once they've become really famous in America; none of it is all that funny.

Nor is the fact that Idris Elba decided to move to America only when he realised he wasn't being sent parts calling for people with "twinkly eyes". Instead, as he told a roomful of MPs and journalists in Westminster last week, he was always asked to audition for "athletic types" or just "black males". And that was just on *Crimewatch*, he joked, never for the leading man.

Actors moaning about racism and women about sexism – none of it is new. After a campaign led by Sir Lenny Henry, the BBC pledged to increase the number of black, Asian and minority ethnic people on air by more than 40% as long ago as June 2014, as well as to almost double the number of senior managers from those groups who work at the corporation by 2020.

But more than a year on, a joint industry campaign, Project Diamond – launched in November 2015 to monitor diversity across the BBC, Channel 4, ITV and Sky – is still not quite off the ground. Channel 4, which is proving its public service credentials by leading the way on diversity issues, hopes it will be up and running by the summer.

On the same day that Elba gave broadcasting inequality the star factor in London, Jada Pinkett Smith joined others such as Spike Lee in pledging support for a boycott of the Oscars this year over the failure to nominate a single black actor for the second year running. There also wasn't a single female director nominated.

Criticism over a lack of diversity tends to reach a fever pitch during awards season – only when recipients gather together to collect gongs does their physical similarity to each other really stand out, it seems. It isn't just in the film and television industries that white men dominate, of course. In last year's British press awards, women once again reached equality in numbers only in the categories for newcomer or interviews.

But by the time people are winning awards - ok, with the exception of the newcomer categories - it's already a bit late.

Elba's speech was so good because he made a claim not just for black men but for people of all colours and shapes. He also highlighted the tendency for one class to dominate the media. What

he said is worth repeating: “Diversity in the modern world is more than just skin colour. It’s gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, social background, and – most important of all, as far as I’m concerned – diversity of thought.”

He may have provided the Richard Littlejohn wishlist from hell – you know the one, about the one-legged black lesbian in a hijab favoured by the politically correct – but as a Hollywood A-lister, the joke’s no longer on him.

Elba, whose Sierra Leonean dad worked in a Dagenham car factory while his Ghanaian mum worked in an office, pointed out that while talent was evenly distributed, opportunity was not. He went on to thank Prince Charles for giving him his start as an actor, as a £1,500 grant from the Prince’s Trust allowed him to audition for the National Youth Music Theatre.

There are signs of change, albeit slow and pretty inadequate, such as a forthcoming BBC1 drama with two black actors in the leading roles. What’s more, Sophie Okonedo plays a senior lawyer while Adrian Lester is an ex-police officer. Undercover sounds brilliant but one programme does not a revolution make.

The signs of change when it comes to social mobility are even weaker. The media remains dominated by the privately educated, 43% of national newspaper columnists and 26% of BBC’s most senior managers, according to the Social Mobility and Child Poverty commission report in 2014, compared with just 7% of the country as a whole.

Student tuition fees and the collapse in paid entry-level reporting jobs in local newspapers mean that those with access to the bank of mum and dad are even more likely to predominate in the media.

Yet the world is changing. The leaked draft report by Dame Janet Smith into the Jimmy Savile scandal last week served to remind us that the television sexism and racism of the 1970s and 80s are no longer acceptable.

Women have long made up 50% of the population, but 40% of Londoners are now from an ethnic minority, and other minorities – whether disabled, transgender or just other – are making their voices heard. And where better to get your voice heard than in the media?

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/jan/24/diversity-race-gender-media-television>

Date of Publishing: 24 January 2016

Questions:

- What caused the recent talks about discrimination of actors?
- How are white people defending themselves?
- Is this issue expected to resolve itself?

Word List:

outnumber - to be bigger in number - nadštevilčen

diversity - having different things - različnost

inequality - not being equal - neenakost

newcomer - someone who is new to some position - novinec

tendency - a likelihood - nagnjenost

tuition - a fee for instructions - šolnina

predominate - to gain power over something - prevladovati

Summary:

Recently, a number of black actors complained because all people nominated for Oscars were white, but none of them black. White actors are of course defending themselves that it's not their fault if black actors are not as good as they are. But there is some truth in discrimination in acting circles as people are oftenly insulted for being of different religion, race, sexual tendency or other things. As in all things, people are slowly gaining more acceptance towards people that are different from them, but this is sadly still an issue that needs to be talked about. Hopefully, some black people will be nominated for Oscars next year, if they weren't this year.