
COP21 Attendees Reveal What Scares Them Most About Climate Change

11/12/2015



PARIS -- Representatives of more than 190 nations are currently negotiating a treaty that will hopefully commit all signatories to keeping global temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius or below. The agreement is expected by this weekend.

But what if no agreement is reached? Or, more likely, what if there is an agreement, but it allows for a temperature rise above 2 degrees?

The Huffington Post asked attendees at various Paris events -- from the conference center itself north of the city at Le Bourget to Paris City Hall to a number of side events -- "What terrifies you the most about the prospect of not getting a strong agreement in Paris?"

For islands like [Barbados](#) and [St. Lucia](#), whose prime ministers responded for this video, the threat is an existential one: can their countries survive rising sea levels? Both island nations are officially classified as Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and are fighting to keep global temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius (with a rallying cry of "1.5 to Stay Alive").

And for others, fears range from a disproportionate burden for women or the poor, to ocean acidification to the consequences for youth. Others had granular complaints about [photosynthetic biomass](#) or the restoration of [peatlands](#) -- underreported keys to fighting climate change that are not getting the attention the respondents felt they deserved at COP21.

A group of 10 U.S. senators also made the trip to Paris to rally support for a strong agreement. [Delaware Sen. Chris Coons](#) expressed concern that, without a strong agreement, "global warming will continue to accelerate."

Watch the video above to see answers from all over the world.

This piece is part of a series produced by The Huffington Post on the U.N.'s 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris (Nov. 30-Dec. 11), aka the climate-change conference. The series is putting a spotlight on the mayors of C40 cities, a network of the world's megacities committed to addressing climate change, and is part of HuffPost's [What's Working](#) editorial initiative. To view the entire series, visit [here](#).
