

Blog – New Internationalist Australia

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Discussions at the Paris climate talks take place within incredibly narrow parameters. In fact, it would not be too great an exaggeration to say that the summit's main purpose is to send the private sector a message about which way it should steer its future investments.

The financial press tends to be the most explicit on this point. The Financial Times, for instance, [described](#) the purpose of the Paris summit like this:

Investors will need to be persuaded that governments are going to make it easier for them to make money from a new electric bus system or a wind farm rather than a highway or a coal power plant.

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Today began with Elephants in the Room and Chocolate!

I joined Belgian friends to support an EU action outside Le Bourget to highlight the importance of including international aviation and shipping in negotiations, respectively responsible for 5% and 3% of all greenhouse gas emissions. Security restrictions meant that no pink elephants appeared on the scene, but leaflets were discretely distributed.

The Change Chocolate came from [Plant a Tree for the Planet](#) specially wrapped for COP21 with a message calling on us all to plant trees and support the planet. Combined with an apple picked 60km away, it made for an interesting breakfast .

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It's hard not to be overwhelmed (bouleversé, knocked over) by the intensity, complexity, sheer scale and fascination of a [Conference of the Parties \(COP\)](#) to the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)...

Thousands of people milling about with one common purpose in minds: how to bring our world back from the brink of catastrophic run-away climate change and create the chance for a safer future for future generations of all species.

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Leaving at a more civilized hour from the youth hostel led to a slightly less civilized trip in the shuttle bus from the RER station. Queuing to get past security gave me an idea of the sheer numbers that the organisers are dealing with at the COP21 site at Le Bourget.

Hard to imagine so many meetings, conversations, information and people can fit into a single day. I guess stalwarts who've attended numerous COPs take it in their stride.

Today began with a short briefing for our Climate Action Network Australia (CANA) team, before we walked in to meet Leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten in one of the formal meetings room available for delegations and side meetings.

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An early start, walking with the [AYCC/SEED](#) crew to Gare du Nord under streetlights and a sinking moon, since we'd heard it might be difficult to get in today with all the leaders in town.

On the shuttle bus (*navette*), I met Yhro from Niger. We discussed deforestation, desertification and the unsustainable use of groundwater (*nappe phreatique*).

My entry into Le Bourget COP21 venue was slow while security officers took an inordinate interest in the [Catholic Earthcare](#) and [Multifaith SA](#) banners, but I was allowed through once they'd been closely scrutinized and deemed harmless.

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Only once before have I attended the UN Climate Summit as a community delegate. It was at **COP15** (Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) in Copenhagen in 2009. I met courageous people from across the world, all clearly committed to doing whatever it takes to tackle climate change for the sake of future generations, many with far fewer resources than I.

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This is the final part of a three-part essay on the prospects for a global climate deal at the Paris 2015 talks. You can read part 1 [here](#) and part 2 [here](#).

Much like the internet, climate change is here, and as each day passes, it only gets bigger. This is true not only of the science – another year passes, greenhouse gas concentrations rise, and the warming and severe weather events intensify – but also of the human, political and policy response to the problem. There is always another international meeting to prepare for, a new report to digest, a new policy to consider.

It is the relentlessness of the problem that can drive fatigue. People feel they have heard it before. Policies have been tried, their success has been mixed, and the debate – certainly in Australia – is either nasty, or tired, or both. [Continue reading](#) →

This is part 2 of a three-part essay on the prospects for a global climate deal at the Paris 2015 talks. You can read part 1 [here](#).

For three years leading up to the last significant United Nations climate summit, at [Copenhagen in 2009](#), I was the strategic director of the [Copenhagen Climate Council](#). The purpose of this group – which included chief executives of major global businesses headquartered in China, Europe, and the United States, as well as policy experts, scientists and other leading academics – was to shed light on the importance of reaching a global climate agreement, and to define what that agreement should include. [Continue reading](#) →

With only nine months to go before the most important international meeting on climate change since [Copenhagen](#) in 2009, what are the chances of success at this year's Paris talks? What might "success" mean? And can the mistakes and challenges that have befallen previous meetings be avoided and tackled?

To help address these questions, let's first dispense with three pervasive myths that continue to make the task of achieving an adequate global response to climate change harder. [Continue reading](#) →