

Climate Change

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As part of our advocacy work, Article 13 is committed to following the issues related to climate change and disseminating up-to-date information and resources amongst our wide networks. In this fact file, we highlight climate change, what it is, its potential impacts and some of the efforts that are being made to tackle it through legislation and voluntary corporate citizenship initiatives.

Climate change refers to the long-term significant change to our average weather patterns and world temperature. The affects of climate change are evident for all to see, with drastically changing ecosystems, heightened societal and environmental risks and a decrease in endemic species of biodiversity, wildlife and plant life. This in some areas has lead to a heightened awareness and improved management systems in the areas of sustainable development, natural resource management and business responsibility.

Over the last century the concentration of GHGs has increased, primarily due to human interference and subsequent over-reliance on fossil fuels, with activities such as combustion and deforestation. These activities are pinpointed by climate specialists as two of the main causes of climate change, leading to massive emissions of gases, which in turn have resulted in increased air temperatures, sea level rises, melting of glaciers (e.g. the Antarctic ice sheets) and have lead to increased variation in precipitation and seasonal patterns.

Across the globe there are heightened regulations and rules attempting to decrease the negative effects of, and adapt human life to, global climate change. Governments, businesses and citizens are being pressurised to take actions which mitigate their effect on climate change, whether it's small changes to reduce an individual's carbon footprint or huge investments in clean technology. There are initiatives and international systems that have been developed to help businesses lower their impact on climate change, which include:

- The United Nations Global Compact (UNGC): This is a voluntary agreement that companies can sign up to, engaging them to commit to ten principles and implement more efficient systems to decrease their impact on the environment. (See http://www.article13.com/csr/ungc_iip_values.asp)
- Kyoto Protocol: International agreement linked to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (See <http://www.article13.com/csr/climate-change-cont.asp>)
- Climate Change Act 2008: Introducing the world's first legally binding framework to tackling the problems relating to global climate change. (See <http://www.defra.gov.uk/ENVIRONMENT/climatechange/uk/legislation/>)

Here is a recent news article on climate change:

- 'More bad news' on climate change: Scientists are concerned that the 2007 reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) are already out of date. (URL at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/7934046.stm>)

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THE RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS EXPERTS

Climate change and global warming issues have traditionally been viewed as being the responsibility of government. Today responsive and leading businesses have begun evaluating the opportunities and risks faced by their own organisations in the face of climate change. These businesses are seeking to put in place appropriate responses, going beyond legal obligations. Here at Article 13, we believe that everyone from the individual to the global community should aim at reducing the emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases through a significant shift in behaviours and actions.

If you would like additional information, or more detailed advice on how you and/ or your business can be further involved in addressing inevitable climate change, visit Article13's resource pages:

- Article 13 climate change resource centre: <http://www.article13.com/csr/climate-change-cont.asp>
- Poverty and Climate Change: Protecting Vulnerable Communities:
http://www.article13.com/A13_ContentList.asp?strAction=GetPublication&PNID=1122
- Climate Change: A Road Map for Business
http://www.article13.com/A13_ContentList.asp?strAction=GetPublication&PNID=1121
- Climate Change, Innovation and Opportunity
http://www.article13.com/A13_ContentList.asp?strAction=GetPublication&PNID=1229

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A notable CoP signatory of the United Nations Global Compact – www.unglobalcompact.org
Article 13 are experts in business responsibility, typically in the areas of corporate social responsibility (CSR), sustainability and governance. Article 13 seeks to embed and integrate responsible business practices in organisations by means of consultancy services, training, coach-mentoring and thought leadership.



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