

# Paris climate talks: Voices from the frontline

Politicians, scientists, environmentalists and others tell *Nature* about their hopes for the UN climate summit — and what comes next.

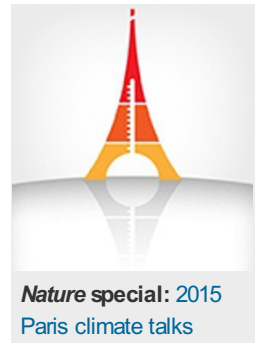
Noah Baker & Jeff Tollefson

30 November 2015

## PARIS

Negotiators from more than 190 nations have gathered in Paris to hash out a new global agreement to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions.

*Nature's* roving reporters are on the scene at the [United Nations climate summit](#), interviewing key players in the talks about why they're at the meeting, how they define a "good deal", and why they care about climate change.



- [Christiana Figueres](#), executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- [Jostein Solheim](#), CEO of ice-cream maker Ben & Jerry's
- [Margaret Leinen](#), director of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography
- [Brian Schatz](#), US senator from Hawaii
- [Bill Gates](#), philanthropist and Microsoft founder
- [Lidy Nacpil](#), environmental activist from the Philippines
- [Anote Tong](#), president of Kiribati
- [Diana Liverman](#), co-director of the University of Arizona Institute of the Environment
- [Izabella Teixeira](#), Brazil's environment minister
- [Saleemul Huq](#), advisor to least-developed nations
- [Manuel Pulgar Vidal](#), Peru's environment minister
- [Sam Smith](#), leader of the WWF Climate and Energy Initiative
- [Karsten Sach](#), German negotiator
- [Wimar Witoelar](#), spokesman for Indonesia's environment minister
- [Andrew Steer](#), president of the World Resources Institute
- [Henry Puna](#), prime minister of the Cook Islands
- [Chebet Maikut](#), a negotiator for Uganda

### Christiana Figueres, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

Christiana Figueres is the UN's top climate-change official. She tells *Nature* about her hopes for the climate talks in Paris.



**Jostein Solheim, CEO of ice-cream maker Ben & Jerry's**

Jostein Solheim is the CEO of ice-cream maker Ben & Jerry's. Solheim, who's in Paris for the UN climate summit, tells *Nature* about private industry's role in fighting global warming.

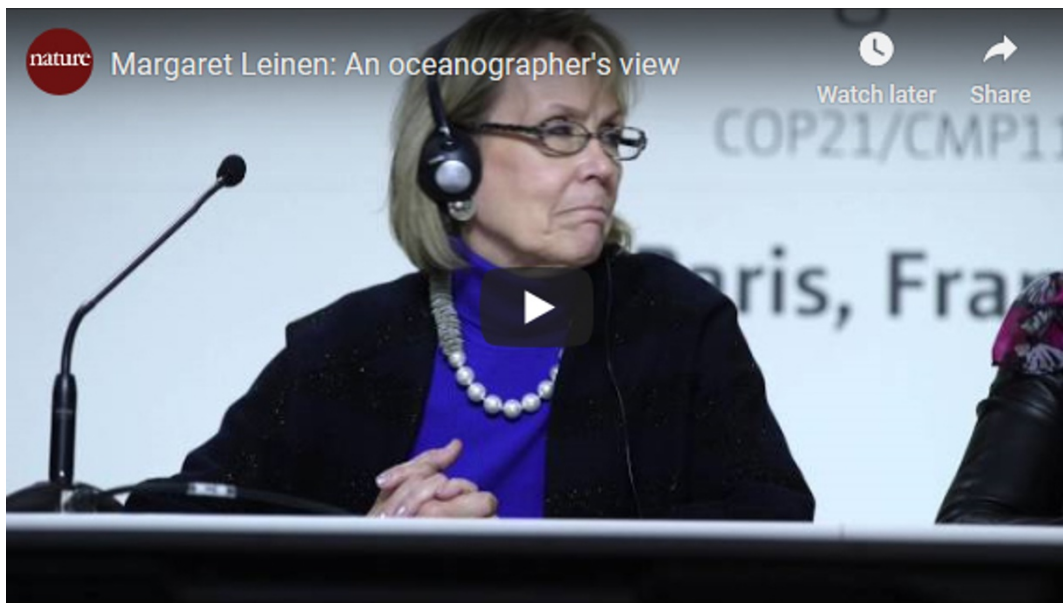


A video thumbnail featuring Jostein Solheim, CEO of Ben & Jerry's. He is wearing glasses and a dark suit over a light blue shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in a public setting. A semi-transparent text box at the bottom of the image contains the following text:

**Jostein Solheim: Ice cream for progress**  
Jostein Solheim is the CEO of ice-cream maker Ben & Jerry's. Solheim, who's in Paris for the UN climate summit, tells *Nature* about private industry's role in fighting global warming. "A little bit of ice cream helps with everything," he says — even climate change.

**Margaret Leinen, director of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography**

The outcome of the Paris climate talks will have a great impact on the marine sciences. Margaret Leinen, director of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California, San Diego, gives her thoughts on COP21.



A video thumbnail featuring Margaret Leinen, director of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. She is wearing a blue top, a black jacket, and a pearl necklace, and is wearing large headphones. She is seated at a table with a microphone in front of her. The background shows a banner for "COP21/CMP11 Paris, France". The video player interface includes a "nature" logo, the title "Margaret Leinen: An oceanographer's view", and "Watch later" and "Share" buttons. A play button is centered over the video. Below the video, a text box contains the following text:

**Margaret Leinen: An oceanographer's view**  
The outcome of the Paris climate talks will have a great impact on the marine sciences. Margaret Leinen, director of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California, San Diego, gives her thoughts on COP21.

**Brian Schatz, US senator from Hawaii**

Schatz, a US senator from Hawaii, explains the urgent need for action to protect our 'Island Earth'.



**Bill Gates, philanthropist and Microsoft founder**

Billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates is in Paris to announce a new US\$2-billion effort by private investors — including his own Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation — to [accelerate the development of clean-energy technologies](#).



**Lidy Nacpil, environmental activist from the Philippines**

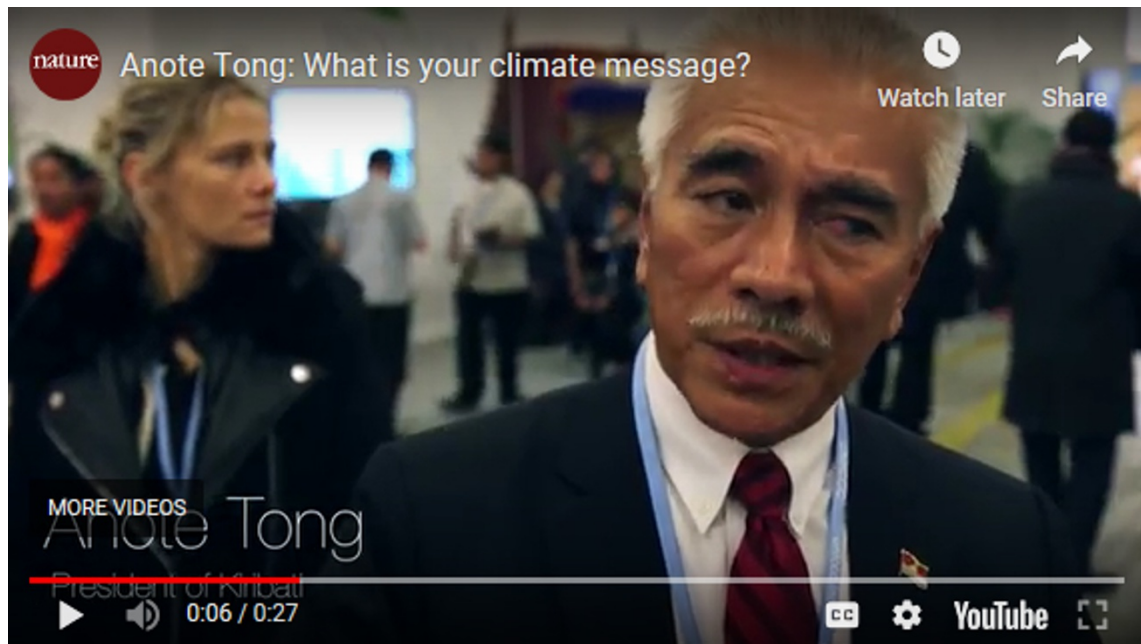
Lidy Nacpil is an environmental activist and the coordinator of Jubilee South, a network of anti-debt coalitions in more than 60 countries across Asia, Africa, and Latin America.



**Anote Tong, president of Kiribati**

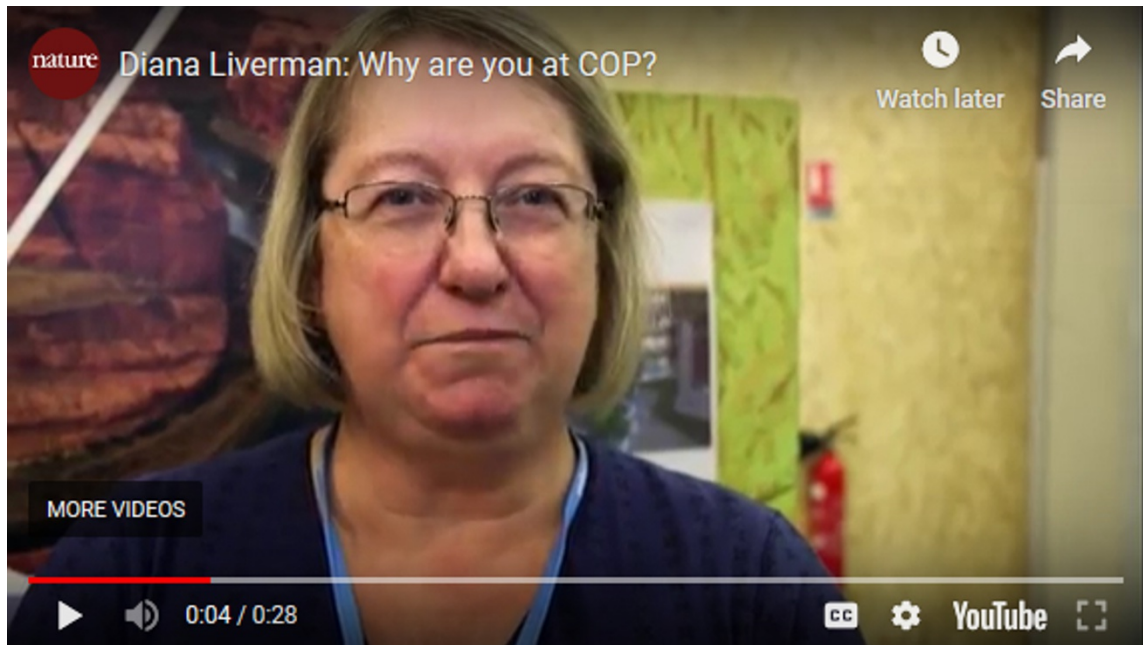
Anote Tong is the president of Kiribati, a small Pacific island nation that is threatened by rising sea levels. For years, Tong has warned that flooding will soon render his country's citizens homeless.





**Diana Liverman, co-director of the University of Arizona Institute of the Environment**

Diana Liverman is a geographer whose research has focused on the human impacts of climate change.



**Izabella Teixeira, Brazil's environment minister**

Izabella Teixeira is Brazil's environment minister.





**Saleemul Huq, advisor to least-developed nations**

Saleemul Huq is director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and an adviser to the least-developed countries.



**Manuel Pulgar Vidal, Peru's environment minister**

Manuel Pulgar Vidal was the president of the last major round of UN climate talks, [in Lima in 2014](#).





**Sam Smith, leader of the WWF Climate and Energy Initiative**

Sam Smith leads the climate and energy initiative at the environmental group WWF. Although the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's official goal is to [limit global warming to 2 °C](#), the WWF is pushing for a stricter target — just 1.5 °C.





**Karsten Sach, German negotiator**

Karsten Sach is Germany's lead negotiator at the Paris climate talks.



**Wimar Witoelar, spokesman for Indonesia's environment minister**

Wimar Witoelar is a spokesman for Indonesia's environment minister. [Fires have ravaged Indonesia's forests](#) this year, temporarily turning the nation into the world's biggest emitter of carbon dioxide.



**Henry Puna, prime minister of the Cook Islands**

Henry Puna is the prime minister of the Cook Islands, a small Pacific island nation threatened by climate change.



**Andrew Steer, president of the World Resources Institute**

Andrew Steer is the president of the World Resources Institute, an environmental think-tank based in Washington DC.



**Chebets Maikut, a negotiator for Uganda**

Chebets Maikut is the commissioner of Uganda's climate change department and one of the country's negotiators at the Paris talks.



