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Home ► All Journals ► Environment and Sustainability ► Climate Policy ► List of Issues
► Volume 16, Issue 6 ► Compliance of the Parties to the Kyoto P

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Volume 16, 2016 - [Issue 6](#)

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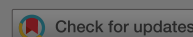
RESEARCH

Compliance of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol in the first commitment period

Igor Shishlov ✉, Romain Morel & Valentin Bellassen

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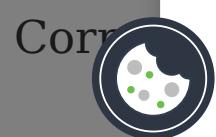
Overall, the countries party to the Protocol surpassed their aggregate commitment by an average 2.4 GtCO₂e yr⁻¹. Of the possible explanations for this overachievement, ‘hot-air’ was estimated at 2.2 GtCO₂e yr⁻¹, while accounting rules for land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) further removed 0.4 GtCO₂e yr⁻¹ from the net result excluding LULUCF. The hypothetical participation of the US and Canada would have reduced this overachievement by a net 1 GtCO₂e yr⁻¹. None of these factors – some of which may be deemed illegitimate – would therefore on its own have led to global non-compliance, even without use of the 0.3 GtCO₂e of annual emissions reductions generated by the Clean Development Mechanism. The impact of domestic policies and ‘carbon leakage’ – neither of which is quantitatively assessed here – should not be neglected either.

Policy relevance

Given the ongoing evolution of the international climate regime and the adoption of the Paris Agreement in December 2015, we believe that there is a need to evaluate the results of the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. To our knowledge there has been no overarching quantitative ex post assessment of the Kyoto Protocol based on the final emissions data for 2008–2012, which became available in late 2015. This article attempts to fill this gap, focusing on the domestic and international compliance of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol in the first commitment period.

KEYWORDS

Carbon accounting



This article examines the impact of the Kyoto Protocol on the global climate and the impact the academic community has on the global climate.

Notes

1. See Appendix 1 for a detailed list of countries.

2. For example, Poland’s target was –6%, and its average annual aggregated GHG emissions in 2008–2012 were 29.7% below base year. It therefore overreached its target by $29.7 - 6 = 23.7\%$.

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