

UN Climate Talks: The Ritual

1. The Hopes



2. The Last Chance



3. Time is Running Out



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5. The Deadlock



6. The Breakthrough at 5 past midnight



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CREDITS

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THE GLOBAL WARMING POLICY FORUM

UN Climate Talks **THE RITUAL**



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Introduction

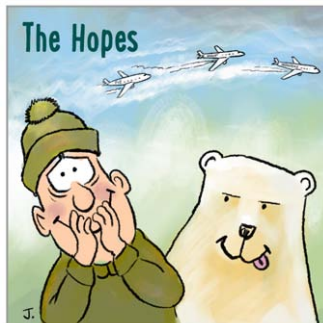
Each year since 1995, the nations of the world have gathered to try to reach a global agreement on carbon dioxide emissions. These 'Conferences of the Parties', or COPs as they are usually termed, involve all of the members of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and take place towards the end of the year. This year will see the twenty-first COP take place in Paris.

Over the years the COPs have developed a style all of their own. Indeed, *some* observers have even gone as far as to suggest that each year sees less and less by way of meaningful activity, and more and more liturgy and ritual.

They may just have a point.

COP 13

Bali 2007



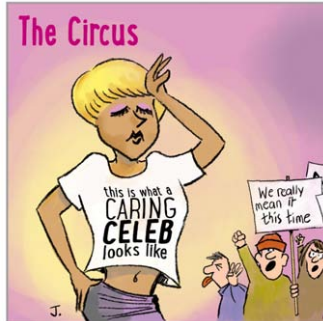
'The conference hopes to make progress towards a "Kyoto II" deal.'¹



'Bali could be the last chance to avoid the worst effect of global warming.'²



'Evidence is fast mounting that time is running out for nations to unite in a credible response to climate change.'³



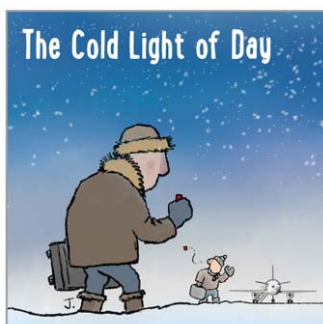
'[Bali attendees 'Local Governments for Sustainability'] has registered 282 delegates [including] a selection of Hollywood celebrities such as Michelle Yeoh, Brad Pitt, Cameron Diaz and George Clooney...'⁴



'The Bali talks are deadlocked over terms for launching two years of negotiations on a new climate deal.'⁵



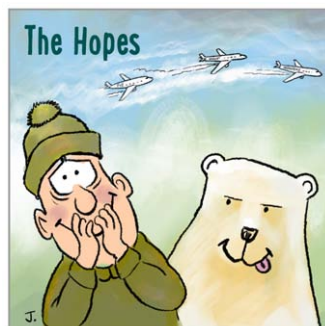
'A compromise deal for a new international climate change agenda was agreed at the UN summit in Bali today. The move was hailed by environment secretary, Hilary Benn, as "an historic breakthrough".'⁶



'Bali...may make things worse.'⁷

COP 14

Poznan 2008



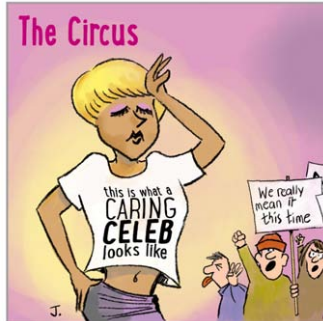
'[UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon] voiced hope that the next set of UN climate change talks in the Polish city of Poznan in December will produce results...'⁸



'The world will "suicide" if it cannot strike a strong climate pact soon.'⁹ '[The summit is] the world's last chance to stop climate change before it passes the point of no return.'¹⁰



'A [carbon dioxide] level of no more than 350 ppm is still feasible, with the help of reforestation and improved agricultural practices, but just barely – time is running out.'¹¹



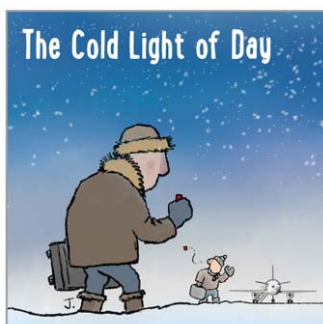
'Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Scarlett Johansson and Annie Lennox... said leaders meeting for UN climate talks in Poznan, Poland, this week must step up their commitment.'¹²



'...environmentalists said the talks were deadlocked in a committee.'¹³



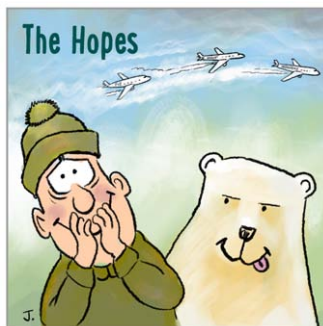
'Poznan talks 'step on way to new climate regime.'¹⁴



'...we were disappointed with the lack of progress made at the UN climate negotiations...'¹⁵

COP 15

Copenhagen 2009



'...world leaders hope to come to an agreement on a new climate treaty as a successor to the Kyoto protocol'.¹⁶

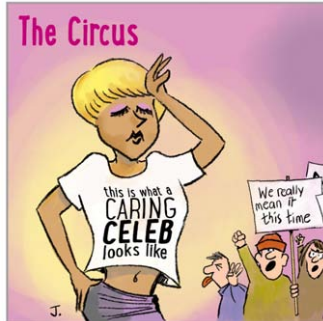


'Copenhagen summit is last chance to save the planet: Lord Stern'.¹⁷

'Copenhagen Climate Talks are last chance, says Gordon Brown'.¹⁸



'The summit "hangs in the balance", [President Obama] said. "We are running out of time".¹⁹



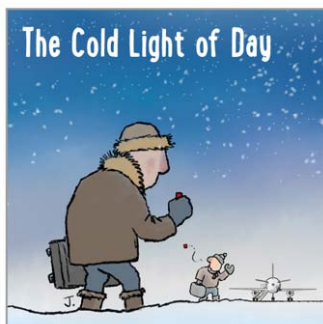
'Up to 80,000 will gather for mass demonstrations in Copenhagen today...Celebrities including Danish supermodel Helena Christensen, Helen Baxendale of Cold Feet and Bollywood actor Rahul Bose will take part.'²⁰



'US bids to break Copenhagen deadlock.'²¹



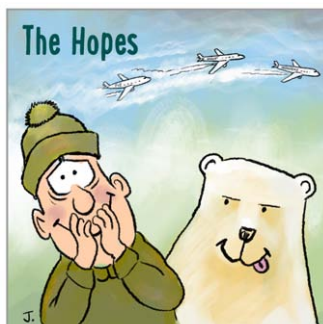
'...the United States, China and several other countries reached an 'unprecedented breakthrough' Friday to curb greenhouse gas emissions...'²²



'Though many throughout the world hoping for a binding international treaty viewed Copenhagen as a disappointment, it was never likely that the 2009 U.N. climate change conference could have ended in a binding agreement.'

COP 16

Cancun 2010



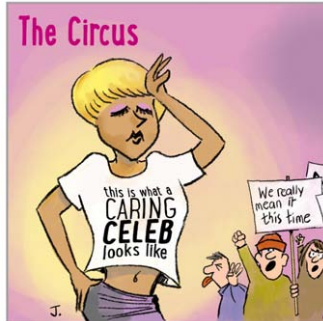
'Climate envoy... has high hopes for Cancun.'²³



'Jairem Ramesh, the Indian environment minister, sees [the meeting] as the 'last chance' for climate change talks to succeed.'²⁴



'Ministers have begun talks at the UN climate summit in Cancun amid warnings that time is running out to curb climate change and save the UN process'.



'Scarlett Johansson, Helena Christensen and Bill Nighy are among celebrities who are petitioning negotiators at next week's climate change summit in Cancun, Mexico.'²⁵

'Environmentalists meanwhile are staging protests and stunts around the luxury conference centre to raise awareness...'²⁶



'Deadlock over Kyoto means Cancún talks have little to show after two weeks... turning into a never-ending global talking shop, say many of the ministers involved.'²⁷



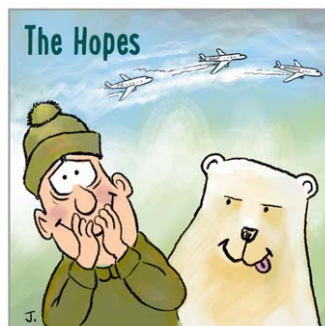
'Cancun climate breakthrough: It's not perfect, but it's a deal.'²⁸



'Last year's talks in Cancun, Mexico, left open the most difficult issue of whether to extend emissions limits in Kyoto or start afresh with a new treaty.'²⁹

COP 17

Durban 2011



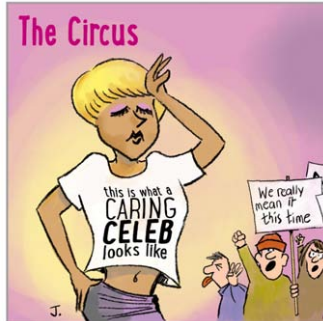
'Our partners are planning a 'Caravan of hope' where campaigners from across Africa will travel through 10 nations en route to Durban.'³⁰



'...the World Council of Churches general secretary, Reverend Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, called the United Nations UNFCCC COP 17 meeting a "last opportunity for the international community to be responsible in addressing climate change".'³¹



'Time is not on our side; report after report has shown this. This is not a trade discussion and we cannot wait until the next meeting or the meeting after that to take action. Time is running out for the planet.'³²



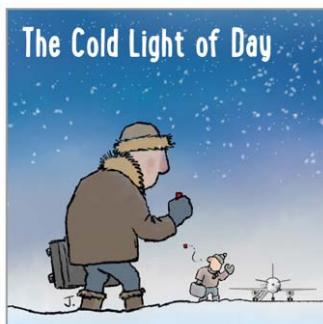
'...world-famous celebrities will attend the upcoming UN climate change conference scheduled to start in Durban later this month...including Arnold Schwarzenegger and British billionaire Sir Richard Branson. Other celebrities also planning to attend include Leonardo DiCaprio, Angelina Jolie and U2 frontman Bono.'³³



'Deadlock looms over CO2 cuts as Durban summit begins.'³⁴



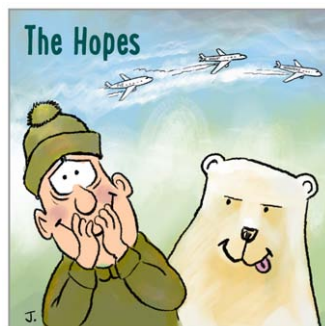
'Durban climate change conference: breakthrough reached on course for future accord.'³⁵



'The UN climate talks in Durban followed a familiar script of inaction.'³⁶

COP 18

Doha 2012



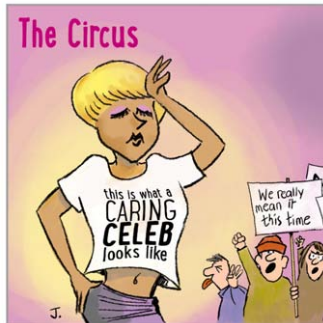
'...the hope is that some tough decisions will be made at the upcoming international climate talks in Doha.'³⁷



'Tomorrow: the earth's last chance with climate change?'³⁸



'Ms. Figueres stressed that countries can still reverse [emissions] trends if they decide to act, since the knowledge, technology and policy options needed to curb emissions are already available to them. However, she emphasized that time is running out.'³⁹



'Paul McCartney wants climate talks not to forget about the meat industry.'⁴⁰

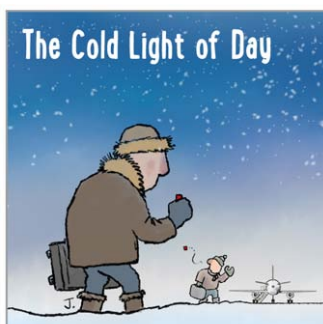
'Qatar deports activists after climate talks protest.'⁴¹



'Climate change talks deadlocked on final day of UN summit.'⁴²



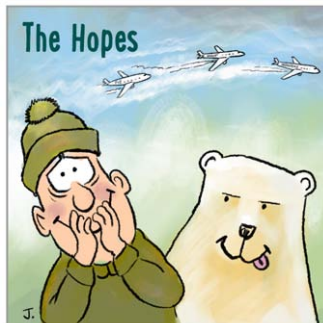
'Doha climate talks throw lifeline to Kyoto Protocol.'⁴³



'...for all the blustering commendations from politicians accompanying the 11th-hour 'Doha Climate Gateway', the outcome was disappointing.'⁴⁴

COP 19

Warsaw 2013



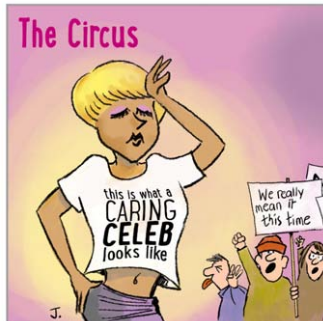
'As the Philippines lead negotiator Naderev "Yeb" Saño so poignantly requested on the opening day, let's hope the talks in Warsaw do reach a "meaningful outcome".'⁴⁵



'Is the Warsaw Climate Change Conference a last-chance summit? ...this summit could represent a turning point in the fight against global warming.'⁴⁶



'Time is running out to counter adverse impacts of climate change: Christiana Figueres.'⁴⁷



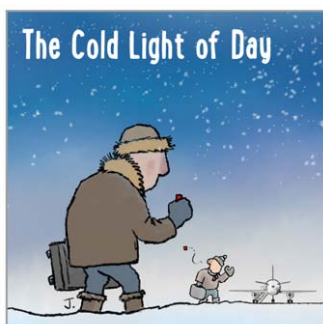
'Thousands march outside the UN climate talks in Warsaw, Poland.'⁴⁸



'Fears of deadlock at UN climate talks in Warsaw.'⁴⁹



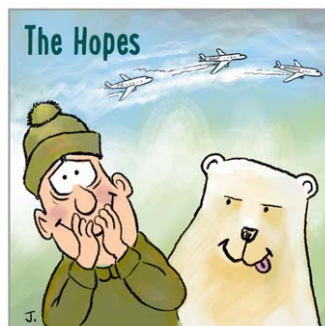
'Warsaw climate talks end with foundation for a global agreement.'⁵⁰



'Experts say the failure of November's U.N. climate change conference in Warsaw to agree on measures that would lead to a sustained market price increase for CDM credits is likely to discourage...'⁵¹

COP 20

Lima 2014



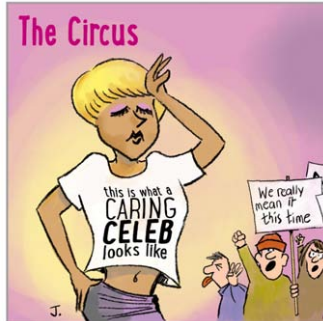
'Diplomats said they hoped that the [recent] US-China deal would provide momentum to climate negotiations.'⁵²



'Last chance: Change needed for climate negotiations in Lima 2014...A repeat performance next year would be disastrous, not just for the progress of these negotiations, but more importantly for vulnerable communities everywhere and the natural world on which we all depend...'⁵³



'Scientists warn time is running out to tackle climate change.'⁵⁴



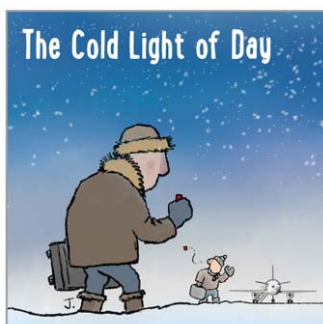
'Thousands of marchers demand just solution at UN climate talks in Lima.'⁵⁵



'UN Lima climate talks go into overtime as deadlock persists.'⁵⁶



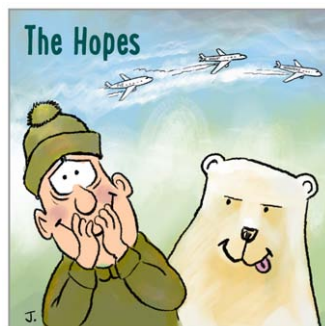
'Lima climate change talks reach global warming agreement. Deal would for first time commit all countries – including developing nations – to cutting emissions.'⁵⁷



'The Peru meeting was nothing much, it disappointed me. I think there was a lack of courage. They stopped at a certain point.'⁵⁸

COP 21

Paris 2015



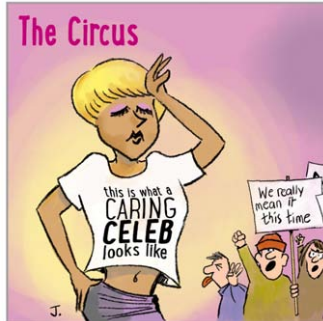
'Pope Francis has 'great hope' that Paris climate summit will succeed.'⁵⁹



'The next climate summit in Paris (COP21) may be the "last effective opportunity" to negotiate arrangements that keep human-induced warming 'to a limit safe for humanity, while protecting the poor and the vulnerable from ongoing climate change that gravely endangers their lives.'⁶⁰



'Science is telling us that time is running out': UN climate chief warns the world is 'playing with fire' unless agreement on climate change is reached at international summit.⁶¹



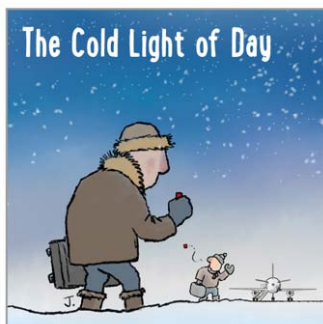
'Hollywood actor Sean Penn believes the UN climate change conference to be held in Paris in early December is the last great hope to combat climate change'⁶²



Expected 8 December 2015...



Expected 11 December 2015...



Expected January 2016...

Notes

1. BBC News, 3 December 2007
2. New Zealand Herald, 3 December 2007.
3. Nature, 15 November 2007
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60. L'Osservatore Romano, 29 April 2015.
61. Daily Mail 22 July 2015
62. Rfi.fr, 1 November 2015.



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