

In one more sign that making climate progress on the international front has become a difficult slog of late, UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer announced his surprise resignation today. NYT has the story [here](#), and the UN statement is [here](#). Speculation is that he was beaten down by the failure to reach a legally binding outcome in Copenhagen, as suggested in the NYT piece:

Those who worked with Mr. de Boer were not completely surprised by his resignation. He was known to be exhausted and frustrated by the task of trying to bring together developed and developing nations with widely divergent interests to address a global problem that he believed threatened the planet's health. But the timing was somewhat unexpected.

Mr. de Boer will be leaving his post a few months before nations meet again under United Nations auspices in Cancún, Mexico, to try to move toward an enforceable global climate treaty.

It can't be easy to try to see a way toward an enforceable agreement under the Framework Convention from the Copenhagen Accord, which has threatened to marginalize FCCC-based and Kyoto-Protocol-based negotiations in favor of a more flexible, decentralized, and less inclusive process involving major emitters going forward.

In an influential, and seemingly prescient, [piece written for the Pew Center](#) in 2004 on possible post-2012 climate approaches, Dan Bodansky asked the following question: "Should international efforts continue to focus on a single, comprehensive global regime and, if so, does the UNFCCC provide the most appropriate forum? Or should negotiations proceed in a more flexible, decentralized manner, involving multiple agreements and/or smaller groups of countries or private-sector parties? . . . If this more variable geometry is pursued, should it be in addition, or as an alternative, to the UNFCCC process?" The UNFCCC and international community will wrestle with these questions in 2010 more than ever — but without Yvo.