

## The Paris 2015 Climate Change Agreement:

### Breakdown or Breakthrough?

Environmentalists fret over the looming prospect of climate change leading to rising sea levels, more intense hurricanes and typhoons, changed rainfall patterns, intensifying flood and drought risks – not to mention global warming. The recent Paris Climate Change Conference (CoP 21) has given new momentum to the global response to climate change. But is it enough? And will the commitments made hold? Professor Esty will discuss the Paris Agreement and explain why it provides the foundation for a ramped-up global push toward a clean energy future. His talk will highlight why the Paris Agreement represents a breakthrough in global collaboration on climate change including the promise of a shift from a top-down approach focused on nation states toward more of a bottom-up strategy that draws cities, states/provinces, and companies into the global effort. As the one of the US Environmental Protection Agency's negotiators of the 1992 Framework Convention on Climate Change, Professor Esty will offer a 25-year perspective on the evolving legal and policy frameworks that have shaped the world community's response to climate change – and reflect on prospects that the CoP 21 negotiations represents an inflection point in terms of climate change action.