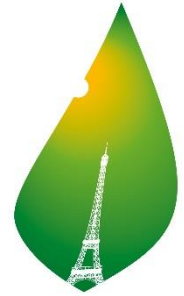




COP21

**UN Climate Change Conference
Paris, 2015**



COP21 • CMP11
PARIS 2015
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

Greetings Delegates! In anticipation for the UN Climate Change Conference that will take place November 30th to December 11th in Paris, the international community is called together in order to negotiate upon an universal and legally binding agreement that will allow us to effectively address and combat the growing concern of climate change and pave the way towards universally low-carbon societies and economies throughout the world (“COP21”). In order for us to successfully reach this goal, negotiations and agreements must be centered on mitigation and each country’s own contribution and ability to meet our goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and limiting global warming below 2 degrees Celsius (“COP21”). Moreover, delegates must be aware of the measures their countries are taking to meet this goal in order to help the international community.

Mary Robinson, president of Ireland from 1990 to 1997 and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights for 1997 to 2002, stressed how important it was that the international community meets these goals. She comments on how these issues are relevant to not only the environment, but human rights because the issues effect individual’s rights to “food and safe water, health, education, and shelter” (Robinson). LDC’s face the most risk from these environmental changes because greenhouse emission are changing the weather cycles in some of the areas, causing their food

patterns that they are reliant on to change (COP21, Robinson). Additionally, Robinson comments on how if we are going keep carbon emissions below two degrees Celsius and aim at zero carbon emissions by 2050, two thirds of fossil fuels cannot be used a resources. Not only are LDC’s livelihood affected by global warming, but their development will be affected by these changes as well. No MDC has been able to industrialize without the use of emissions and fossil fuels, which leaves are problem for countries that have not reached this stage of growth (Robinson).

In 2009,The World Bank made a list of countries at risk of arising problems caused by climate change, which include droughts, storms, floods, rising sea levels, and the changes in agriculture (“Twelve”). In the list of twelve countries at the highest risk of

these problems, the top four were LDS’s (“Twelve”). Bangladesh and Vietnam are both at risk of flooding on the list, and both can suffer tremendous losses if water levels continue to rise. Bangladesh, who is on top of the list, faces flooding problems from the increasing glacial melt from the

Himalayan range, which not only floods the coast, but also the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers and all of tributaries, causing flooding to 30-70 percent of the country every year

Six Climate Threats, and the 12 Countries Most at Risk

Low Income		Middle Income		
Drought	Flood	Storm	Coastal 1m	Agriculture
Malawi	Bangladesh	Philippines	All low-lying Island states	Sudan
Ethiopia	China	Bangladesh	Vietnam	Senegal
Zimbabwe	India	Madagascar	Egypt	Zimbabwe
India	Cambodia	Vietnam	Tunisia	Mali
Mozambique	Mozambique	Moldova	Indonesia	Zambia
Niger	Laos	Mongolia	Mauritania	Morocco
Mauritania	Pakistan	Haiti	China	Niger
Eritrea	Sri Lanka	Samoa	Mexico	India
Sudan	Thailand	Tonga	Myanmar	Malawi
Chad	Vietnam	China	Bangladesh	Algeria
Kenya	Benin	Honduras	Senegal	Ethiopia
Iran	Rwanda	Fiji	Libya	Pakistan

Source: World Bank

("Twelve"). Furthermore, Vietnam could face damage to 35 percent or more of its gross domestic product if the sea level rises above five meters according to an additional study by the World Bank ("Twelve").

Additionally, the World Bank has recorded how fourteen of the fifteen hottest years have been recorded since the year 2000 ("Climate Change"). The Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research shows that global warming is 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times, causing the Earth's atmospheric system to be locked from past from past and present greenhouse gas emissions, leaving the global community to feel the consequences ("Climate Change"). Resilience along with adaptation with the conditions we are forced to be faced with are both required in order to address these problems. Furthermore, the World Bank comments on how economic restructuring needs to be put in place in order to end fossil fuel subsidies, which currently cost \$550 billion, and how more countries should be putting a price on carbon ("Climate Change"). Forty countries have already putting a price on carbon, accounting for about twelve percent of global emissions ("Climate Change").

At the COP21, the Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition (CPL) also plans on being launch with the goal of expanding to expand the use of carbon pricing ("Climate Change"). Government partners with the CPL include Ontario, Québec, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Alberta, Belgium, British Columbia, California, Chile, Germany, France, Italy, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Netherlands, and Norway ("Leadership"). Along with private sector partners, these governments work with the CPL towards effectively expanding carbon pricing systems and policies ("Leadership").

Past Actions:

In the last 50 years, the issue of climate change has become ever more relevant to the global community. While UN does not have the authority to require countries to participate in the adoption of more “green” standards for manufacturing and their CO₂ emissions, the environment has always remained an international concern. Starting in the post-World War II world, people around the globe began to realize the impacts they could have on the environment, along with the realization and fear of radioactive pollution as the US and Russian entered the Cold War. One early example of this realization came from Rachel Carson’s book “The Silent Spring,” where she urges readers to value the environment for the overall well-being of the global human population. This ideal of protecting the environment and growing public awareness of just how fragile Earth’s ecosystem was further supported as the first images of Earth from space taken in the 1960’s and people saw their planet as a small fragile planet in the extreme vastness of space (“Global”).

In the 1972 Stockholm Conference, the UN published the “Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment,” further showing the growing support for the environmental movement on a global scale. The leaders of the conference proclaimed that “Man has the fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being, and he bears a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations. In this respect, policies promoting or perpetuating apartheid, racial segregation, discrimination, colonial and other forms of oppression and foreign domination stand condemned and must be eliminated.” and

that, “The natural resources of the earth, including the air, water, land, flora and fauna and especially representative samples of natural ecosystems, must be safeguarded for the benefit of present and future generations through careful planning or management, as appropriate.” These were the primary outcomes of the declaration along with over 20 other adopted principles to shape UN policy towards the environment (“United”).

By the 1980’s climate change was becoming more and more evident as global warming was beginning to have significant evidence to support it and the UN required a legal system to deal with climate change and forcing countries to participate in the adoption of “greener” standards (“Framework”).

In 1985, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer laid out the frame work for the protection of the Earth’s Ozone layer. In 2009, it became the first universally ratified convention of its kind (“The Vienna”). This conference also played a key role in being a ground work for the Montreal Protocols established in 1988, the year the ground work from the Vienna conference were put into action. The Montreal Protocols helped countries establish and identify chemicals and pollution that can have negative effects on the ozone layer in hopes of protecting it and to prevent any further climate change (“Framework”).

More recently, groups such as the EU, the UN General Assembly, and many other international bodies are taking further actions to protect the environment and to stall future climate change. In 2007, the EU passed legislation calling for a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from levels set in 1990, and by 2050, having full participation in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% from 1990 levels. They also call for

increased use of renewables and energy efficiency to be continuously improved with lofty goals of 80% reduction in pollution from energy, meaning an almost complete switch to green energy, while also providing incentives for countries to do so in an affordable and timely manner (“Climate Action”). In 2009, the UN General Assembly brought awareness to the issue of climate change and its possible impacts on potential security implications. In their resolution, the General Assembly called for countries to intensify their efforts in “considering and addressing climate change, including its possible security implications,” and also called for a report on what those implications might be to the 64th session of the general assembly so that countries might know what their best course of action might be on the matter of climate change and its impacts not only to their countries, but also to the world around them (“General”)

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the best way for countries to lower their greenhouse emissions?
2. How can your country help to keep global warming from going above 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels?
3. What is the most effective way to make countries agree to take action on climate change around the world?

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