

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme

Topic: The Question of Reconstructing the Paris Agreement for Global Climate Resilience Equity

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Introduction

The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, had made a massive impact on the issue of climate change, gathering 195 countries around the world to pursue a common goal: to mitigate climate change. To achieve this, The Paris Agreement noted that greenhouse gas emissions must peak before 2025 at the latest and decline 43% by 2030, eventually bringing down global warming to below 1.5 degrees Celsius. While the Agreement is still in effect, the growing urgency of the climate crisis necessitates a reconstruction of The Paris Agreement to guarantee that climate resilience is achieved fairly across the nations.

As of now, 195 countries have signed the Paris Agreement, with 193 countries having officially submitted their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). This demonstrates a global consensus on the problem of addressing climate change. There are also some renewed commitments: several countries have increased their climate ambition. The European Union, Japan, and South Korea have set goals to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, and China has pledged to do so by 2060.

It seems plausible that these commitments are constantly adopted and well operating, however, based on the policies and commitments in place, the world is currently on a path to warm by about 2.7°C by the end of the century. This is far above the 1.5°C target, and even surpasses the less stringent 2°C threshold. If no further action is taken, the climate impacts will be more severe and widespread. Moreover, related to the GHGs While some regions, particularly in the EU and North America, have

begun to reduce emissions, global emissions are still rising in several key sectors, such as transportation, agriculture, and heavy industry.

There are several specific positive effects of the agreement. Firstly, most nations (parties) involved in the convention agree that the Paris Agreement was a major symbolic success, which indicates the strengthening of global cooperation and an inclusive approach. Secondly, the agreement provides a pathway for MEDCs to assist developing nations in their climate mitigation and adaptation efforts while creating a framework for the transparent monitoring and reporting of countries' climate goals. It also emphasizes the responsibility to contribute to mitigating climate change.

The Paris Agreement clearly has its limitations, which should be addressed in the reconstruction of The Paris Agreement. Firstly, the agreement lacks the binding force of law because it only suggests the nations voluntarily set and implement greenhouse gas reduction goals, which are known as NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions). However, these kinds of commitments do not have legally binding force, which means there won't be any punishment even if some countries don't observe the rule. Secondly, the funds MEDCs should provide for LEDCs are not sufficient, which indicates that the commitment is being observed. MEDCs are capable of achieving climate goals due to the technology and abundance of resources. On the other hand, LEDCs, who didn't receive enough support, would go through struggles. Thirdly, the Carbon Leakage Problem is really severe, deepening the issue of global climate resilience equity. When certain nations strengthen their laws to restrict carbon emissions, the corporations in those countries transfer their production to regions with loose regulations. If this phenomenon (Carbon Leakage Problem) continues, domestic carbon emissions regulations will not effectively contribute to mitigating global warming.

The climate crisis has disproportionately affected the extremely lower classes in society, those who live in vulnerable conditions that expose people to danger: Food, Water, Shelter, etc. Thus, this topic will not only deal with ways to concentrate on the mitigation of climate change but also deal with the principles of equity. The nations will address a lot of elements, such as imbalance in climate resilience capacities.

Definition of Key Terms

GreenHouse gas(GHGs)

GreenHouse gas is a specific gas that increases the temperature of the Earth's surface by absorbing or reflecting infrared radiation emitted from the Earth's surface into space. In other words, it confines the heat generated from the Earth's surface, causing the phenomenon called the greenhouse effect. The typical examples of GreenHouse gases are Carbon dioxide (CO₂), Methane (CH₄), Nitrous oxide (N₂O), Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), and so forth. Without Greenhouse gases, the earth would maintain -18 degrees Celsius, which would not be appropriate for human beings. Even though it is essential for Earth, it is now one of the significant causes of global warming. Due to the ability to store and confine heat, heat could escape Earth's atmosphere, contributing to temperature rise. According to the statistics, it was about 4.25 billion metric tons of Carbon Dioxide in 1945, increasing up to 37.05 billion metric tons in 2023. Simultaneously, the average temperature of Earth has increased by about 1.2 degrees Celsius, which is mostly affected by Greenhouse gases.

Carbon credit

Carbon credit refers to the permit that allows corporations or countries to emit a certain amount of carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gases. The purpose of carbon credit trading is to alleviate climate change by creating a market with limited allowances for emissions. When a corporation buys a carbon credit, usually from the government, they gain permission to generate one ton of CO₂ emissions. With carbon credits, carbon revenue flows vertically from companies to regulators, though companies who end up with excess credits can sell them to other companies.

ETS (Emission Trading System)

The Emissions Trading System, which is also known as “Cap-and-Trade”, is one of the biggest contributions to the failure of the Paris Agreement. The mechanism that it works is to trade the carbon credits among corporations, or even among countries, which can also lead to the Carbon Leakage Problem. Initially designed to efficiently reduce greenhouse gas emissions by allowing companies to buy and sell emissions permits among themselves, it has actually become a policy that seriously undermines Global Climate Resilience Equity.

Carbon border tax

A carbon border tax is a duty on imports based on the amount of carbon emissions resulting from the production of the product in question. As a price on carbon, it discourages emissions. As a trade-related measure, it affects production and exports. The reason it is a key term in this topic is that implementation of a Carbon border tax is one of the solutions to solve the Carbon leakage problem. It imposes a tax on imported goods that reflects the carbon emissions regulations of the country where the goods are produced, which will prevent the transfer of the production from corporations.

Legal Binding Force

Legal binding force refers to the effect of laws, contracts, rules, treaties, etc., that bind free acts, which is really needed for the Paris Agreement. One of the reasons why the Paris Agreement is not effective is that it lacks its Legal binding force. There is no reason for countries, corporations, and individuals to observe the agreement if there is no binding force. It will be the simplest solution for the Paris Agreement to strengthen the Legal Binding so that it will contribute to the mitigation of climate change.

Background Information

Typical causes of climate change

There are five causes of climate change: carbon dioxide emissions from the use of fossil fuels in thermal power plants, carbon dioxide emissions from gasoline combustion in automobiles and other means of transportation, methane gas emissions from livestock farming and agriculture, desertification of tropical rainforests, and increased use of chemical fertilizers in agricultural fields.

Massive utilization of fossil fuels extremely contributes to global warming. To generate the large amount of energy needed, people burn fossil fuels and expose Greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. Not only climate change but also some air pollution would happen, affecting a myriad of people's health. As a result of an international joint research team's analysis of the causes of death around the world in 2019, it is estimated that 5.13 million people died from air pollution caused by the use of fossil fuels. Gasoline combustion is now happening all over the world, since vehicles are essential for society. However, after Industrialization, there has been an increased number of vehicle volumes, leading to an increased amount of Gasoline, which will produce carbon dioxide when it is combusted. Lastly, Greenhouse gases can be produced through livestock farming and agriculture.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF)

The Green Climate Fund, an international financial support established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is dedicated to providing financial resources to LEDCs for the purpose of implementing projects and programs aimed at mitigating and adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change. The Paris Agreement promised that MEDCs would provide climate finance to LEDCs, and the GCF is responsible for managing and distributing this finance. It has a pivotal role in the Paris Agreement as it provides climate finance. For instance, it has provided financial support for the issue of sea level rise in Bangladesh, which is at risk of flooding. Moreover, it has erected the breakwaters and flood prevention systems in order to preserve the habitat of 120 people in the seacoast region. As mentioned above, it has helped to prevent the natural disaster caused by climate change and supported the Paris Agreement to be observed.

ETS (Emission Trading System)

ETS (Emission Trading System) usually happens among corporations and also among countries. LEDCs, which do not even have the capability to approach the limits of carbon emission, sell the carbon credit to MEDCs. On account of the limitation of Carbon emission, which is appointed to each country, MEDCs have a limit to be more developed. Thus, MEDCs purchase the carbon credits from the LEDCs so that they can achieve a higher economic level. There are various aspects of ETS, both positive and negative. From the positive perspective, it promotes the effective reduction of carbon or greenhouse gas emissions, mitigating Breakwaters and flood prevention systems climate change. It would also be beneficial both environmentally and economically because countries or corporations can reduce their carbon footprint and sell their carbon credit. On the other hand, ETS could result in a poor distribution of carbon credits, potentially being exploited by rich corporations. These countries, with their vast resources, could use their wealth to monopolize carbon credits.

The effort of Civic groups

Greenpeace, who have an ultimate goal of mitigating global warming, has several specific activities: preservation of rainforest, campaign, and so forth. Rainforests play the pivotal role in reducing GHGs, inhaling about 250 tons of carbon dioxide. However, certain governments are now progressing deforestation due to a lot of purposes: finding natural resources, expanding the available territory, etc. These activities endow permanent damages not only on biodiversity but also on the climate, destroying the means to inhale GHGs. To be specific, the Amazon Rainforest is one of the biggest rainforests in the world, containing 10 percent of the fauna and flora. Reclamation of land for slash-and-burn farming has strongly contributed to deforestation of the Amazon Rainforest, usually operated by the company and government of Brazil.

To overcome this problem, Greenpeace has kept monitoring the Amazon rainforest and spread the images and video through the media, applying pressure on Brazil governments. Moreover, it is operating a Deforestation Prevention Act campaign in order to dramatically reduce deforestation and destruction. On the other hand, there are some private corporations that are endeavoring to mitigate climate change.

Climate Inequality between developed and developing countries

There are now serious controversies about the inequity and unequal distribution of responsibility in responding to climate change. It's crucial to bear in mind that MEDCs nowadays had developed and emit the GHGs historically while those developing countries nowadays were not able to be ready for

development. MEDCs have already achieved economic development through industrialization which indicates that they can afford to care about the environment in this period. On the other hand, those developing countries are now having trouble with the domestic economy and technology, which essentially require the natural resources that would generate GHGs. In the early stages of economic development, the investment for climate mitigation will strongly hinder the growth of development in the countries. How can those countries that could not guarantee their economic development have the ability to take care of climate change?

Poverty

In the Paris agreement, poverty is recognized as both a cause and consequence of climate change. Article 2 of the Agreement explicitly includes the goal of strengthening the global response to climate change "in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty." The reason why the agreement is concentrating on this point is that climate change disproportionately impacts the vulnerable communities through food insecurity and destruction of livelihood, which will be directly related to their living. On the other hand, the behavior of the vulnerable population also negatively affects climate change. For example, vulnerable populations usually rely heavily on natural resources for survival. This can lead to practices such as slash-and-burn agriculture or deforestation for firewood, which contribute to GHGs emissions and the destruction of forests which absorb the carbon dioxide. However, the Paris agreement neither eliminates the causes nor consequences.

Glasgow Climate Pact (2021)

According to the UNFCCC, at 26th conference of the parties (COP26) in Glasgow, countries agreed on the Glasgow Climate Pact, which includes key elements like phasing down coal power, increasing climate finance for adaptation, and urging countries to strengthen their NDCs by the end of 2022. This pact also highlighted the critical need for developing countries to receive greater financial and technical support to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Analogous and difference between SDGs' aim and the Paris agreement's aim

The goal of the Paris agreement is focusing on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, indicating that all sectors should reduce their emission, including food and farming. On the other hand, SDGs goal is stressing the importance of various positive aspects of the combination of human and nature. Such policies contain zero hunger, health, and water, which would be indeed slightly different from

the Paris agreement. We should extract the positive policies and goals of both agreements in order to alleviate climate change and guarantee human's life.

Possible solutions

Reinforcement of Legal Binding Force

Psychologically, people tend to ignore rules that do not have a strong legal binding force. In other words, countries and corporations will not be willing to achieve the goals that are set because there are no negative consequences even if they don't observe the commitment. Reinforcing the legally binding force for the agreement will not only oppress the corporation to endeavor to achieve the climate goal but also guarantee the reduction of GHGs. This will be the most reliable method to deal with climate change.

International monitoring of NDCs

NDCs refer to the GHGs reduction targets set by each country for 2030. While NDCs are established by a lot of developed nations, most of the MEDCs do not endeavor to achieve this goal even though they have enough resources and funds to do it. This is mainly due to the fact that monitoring of NDCs is not desirable. To overcome this, an independent international body should be established to monitor whether each country is meeting its reduction targets and to periodically report on the progress of implementation.

Guarantee of GCF and Technology transfer

The ultimate goal of this topic is to make all countries share technology, resources, and the environment fairly and help overcome environmental challenges. Thus, the guarantee of GCF, which is the supplement for LEDCs, is very essential to be addressed. In many MEDCs, people donate resources such as clothing, tools, and food to less fortunate people across the globe. Sometimes, some people even donate massive amounts of money for them. However, this might not help to solve the poverty problem in those countries. They will just repeat this situation again and again, never gaining room for thinking about the environment. On the other hand, transferring the technology for LEDCs

can solve this serious problem. When people gain the capability to earn money by themselves, poverty will not matter. If they have financial freedom, they will have more opportunities to consider climate change.

Implementation of carbon border tax

A carbon border tax imposes a tax proportional to the carbon emissions generated during the production process on products produced in areas with weak carbon emissions regulations. This will not only prevent the unfair benefits, which will be usually generated by the countries with weak carbon emissions regulations but also simultaneously overcome the problem of carbon leakage, the phenomenon of transferring production to the other countries. Corporations would be reluctant to transfer their production, considering the regulatory arbitrage.

Common but differentiated responsibility

To solve the climate inequality, which occurs mainly because of historical activities, it sets different levels of climate mitigation goals, taking into account each country's historical responsibility and economic conditions. If this comes true, developing countries will also be able to contribute to the mitigation of climate change within the scope of not hindering economic growth. Not only a differentiated goal but also financial support and technology transfer are required for developed countries. Since developing countries are developing their economy and contributing to mitigation of climate change in parallel, it's essential for developed countries to transfer Eco-technology, which is not readily available in LEDCs. This will promote the further development of Eco friendly power, which will be both beneficial to the countries and the Earth.

Major parties involved

United States of America

The USA ranks second in carbon emissions worldwide and is making great efforts to combat climate change. For several years, damage due to climate change, such as drought, heavy rain, and heat waves, has been becoming more serious in many states of the large territory. The USA has set several goals to cope with climate change: reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions 50-52% below 2005 levels in 2030, reaching 100% carbon pollution-free electricity by 2035, achieving a net-zero emissions economy by 2050, delivering 40% of the benefits from federal investments in climate and clean energy to disadvantaged communities.

People's Republic of China

China is the country with the highest carbon dioxide emissions and is making a major impact through its coal-focused energy infrastructure. Other industries are also contributing significantly to carbon dioxide emissions, such as the growing construction industry and industrial manufacturing. However, like other LEDCs, China's carbon dioxide emissions per person are significantly lower than that of the United States. China is experiencing the impacts of global warming on agriculture, forests, and water resources, and these negative impacts are speculated to continue to increase. The Chinese government is taking several steps to increase renewable energy and other carbon reduction efforts and has declared to adopt stronger policies and measures to reach the peak emissions before 2030 and achieve 'free carbon' by 2060. China's greenhouse gas emissions will likely reach a peak in 2025 and are expected to return to 2022 levels by 2030.

France

France, the host country of the Paris Agreement, is now leading the environmental revolution. It is one of the typical advanced environmental countries in the world. It is overcoming the climate crisis with the government's bold policies, active participation of civil society, and strong solidarity. France legislated carbon neutrality in 2019 and is responding to the climate crisis with systematic steps. The ultimate vision is a transition to sustainable energy and a circular economy. Efforts to reduce

greenhouse gases are large-scale. France is discussing the laws necessary to reduce greenhouse gases by approximately 9 to 10 million tons by 2050 and to promote energy restructuring.

Republic of India

India, which ranks third in carbon emissions, is now undergoing a serious climate crisis, which is really vulnerable to the working class of society. The Indian government has implemented several policy measures to encourage renewable energy. However, India's dependence on fossil fuels is still on the rise due to the widening economic gap between the rich and poor. Considering this, experts speculate that India will achieve its net-zero emissions target by 2070. By 2030, India will meet 50% of its energy requirements from renewable energy sources.

Russian Federation

Russia, the world's fourth largest carbon emitter, accounts for 4.6% of global emissions. Major Russian companies are developing their own climate strategies faster than the government but are struggling due to the lack of domestic policies. Moreover, due to the recent Russian-Ukrainian war, the number of times climate change is mentioned in Russian electronic media continues to decrease, and interest in it is considerably low. Formally, Russia has declared that it will achieve its net zero emissions target by 2060.

Republic of South Korea

South Korea is a strong supporter of global climate action, aligning with the goals of the Paris Agreement. In 2020, the country announced its 2050 Carbon Zero Strategy and increased its climate ambition by pledging to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% from 2018 levels by 2030. As a highly industrialized nation, South Korea faces significant challenges in achieving these targets, especially in its reliance on fossil fuels for energy production.

State of Japan

Japan has committed to playing an active role in global climate change efforts, particularly under the Paris Agreement. In 2023, Japan set a new climate target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 46% by 2030 compared to 2013 levels, showing its increased ambition. The country also aims to

achieve net zero emission by 2050. Japan's energy policies emphasize transitioning from coal to renewable energy, nuclear energy, and hydrogen, though it still faces challenges due to its significant reliance on fossil fuels, particularly after the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011.

Timeline Of Events

Date	Description of event
1985 22 March ~ 21 September	Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer This is the first convention to be ratified by every country in the world. The accord provides a framework to share information on the causes of ozone depletion and stop ultraviolet radiation from damaging human health and ecosystems.
1987 16 September	Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer The landmark multilateral environmental agreement regulates the production and consumption of nearly 100 human-made chemicals, referred to as ozone-depleting substances. The Montreal Protocol is one of the few UN treaties to achieve universal ratification.
1992 4~14 June 1992	Leaders sign UN Framework Convention on Climate Change The convention establishes a pathway for reducing greenhouse gas emissions before they can drastically alter the Earth's climate systems. It was extended with the Kyoto Protocol in 1997. The protocol commits industrialized countries and economies in transition to limit and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with agreed individual targets.
1994 17 June	UN Convention to Combat Desertification The treaty aims to protect and restore land degraded by drought to avert consequences such as crop failure, migration, and conflict. It is the only legally binding framework set up to address desertification and the effects of droughts, which may affect more than two-thirds of the world population by 2050.
1997	The Kyoto Protocol

11 December	<p>In short, the Kyoto Protocol operationalizes the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by committing industrialized countries and economies in transition to limit and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with agreed individual targets. The Convention itself only asks those countries to adopt policies and measures on mitigation and to report periodically.</p>
2015 12 December	<p>World leaders sign the Paris Agreement on climate change</p> <p>The UN Climate Change Conference, also known as COP21, leads to a landmark climate agreement. At the meeting in Paris, France, 195 countries adopted the world's first universal and legally binding global climate deal.</p>

UN Involvement, Resolutions, Treaties and Events

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the UN process for negotiating an agreement to limit dangerous climate change. It is an international treaty among countries to combat "dangerous human interference with the climate system." This convention subsequently provides the basic framework for the international agreement on climate change.

https://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/background_publications_htmlpdf/application/pdf/convening.pdf

Kyoto Protocol

Adopted in 1997, the Kyoto Protocol is the first international agreement administered under the UNFCCC, dealing with the legally binding force on climate change. Countries that have ratified this protocol will reduce emissions of six types of greenhouse gasses, including carbon dioxide, and will apply non-tariff barriers to countries that do not reduce their emissions.

<https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.pdf>

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals are goals that the United Nations and the international community must achieve from 2016 to 2030 to solve problems such as climate change and achieve sustainable development. 17 achievable goals, which include removal of poverty, health and well-being, gender equality, and so forth, are widely educated by students worldwide, especially emphasizing the importance of climate change.

https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/SDG%20Resource%20Document_Targets%20Overview.pdf

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