

Forum: Asia-Pacific Council

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TOPIC 3: The Question of Combating the Impacts of Climate Change.

I. Introduction

The impacts and issues of climate change have continuously been one of the United Nation's first priorities holding potential detrimental effects on an international level. After its first scientific discovery in the early 19th century, advanced technological development, and enhanced requirements for various industries, have all been leading factors to the vast cause of climate change and its current significance to society and the environment. With human activities being the main driving force, recognizable change has already occurred, with melting glaciers, increased temperature rates, and estimates within reports showing a lack of time and resources in the future.

The longing for eternal economic growth has only neglected these impacts and the changes we must make to prevent further harm and reverse the current impacts. The past decade has been the hottest period in the last 125,000 years. The United Nations estimates an increase of 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2050 with climate change taking place. These numbers are directly representing what we will have to receive and also pass on to future generations. Moreover, pre-industrial CO₂ levels were limited to only 280 parts per million. Yet today, we stand with an overwhelming amount of 420 ppm. The balance between economic development and the prevention of climate change is not being formed, and standards for companies are only going up. The resources that past generations have been taking for granted is going through further risks, and international-level support is already in place. However, even the usage of money and cooperative actions lack productivity without the formed structure and balance to correlate with economic factors. The Asian Pacific region also stands at the center of the impacts of climate change. Vietnam, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Thailand, all being included among the ten most affected by climate change, sea level rise, and glacier meltings, are all relevant to the

region. Especially due to these factors, Asian Pacific nations have been continuously increasing their attention towards required measures and providing support to the international community.

In order to tackle the current situation and identify the number of impacts, international cooperation was already established on various occasions. Starting from the annual COP (conference of parties) meetings directly focusing on climate change which formed the Paris Agreement, The Rio Summit (1992), and The Millennium Summit (2000), alongside many small to high-level conferences, have contributed to forming cooperation on reversing and preventing impacts. Moreover, these have also led to the implementation of renewable energy sources within the aforementioned economic industries. However, the remaining impacts of climate change are still the majority, requiring complete utilization of support and understanding from the various communities.

II. Definition of Key Terms

Global Warming: Long-term heating of Earth's surface, primarily because of the impacts of climate change. This term will function in acknowledging the real changes that have occurred since the pre-industrial stages to our status quo. More specifically, this term can further relate to the global temperature, alongside various other factors regarding the impacts.

Economic Growth: An increase and development in the amount and quality of goods and services provided to the population. As discussing the balance between economic growth and actions for climate change is highly important, thorough explanations and debates on the term should be made.

Carbon Dioxide: A primary greenhouse gas found in the atmosphere. With this term being a significant contributor to climate change, this term can be utilized to measure the direct impacts and changes made, especially when acknowledging the status quo.

Carbon Footprint: A measure of the amount of carbon dioxide and other carbon compounds emitted by consumption from an individual. This term can be used to directly understand the creation of impacts, especially based on individuals of certain communities and regions.

III. Key Stakeholders

UNFCCC:

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is one of the most crucial parts of the United Nations when it comes to the topic of impacts and actions for the issue of climate change. Hosting the COP (conference of parties) meetings bringing the most direct influences on current global measures, it takes part in directly stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations and the numerous actions being taken around the globe.

Various Companies (Involved in economy):

As these industries and their direct greenhouse gas emissions are one of the driving sources of climate change and the main human activity, finding a balance between this stakeholder and climate change is significant. Therefore, these stakeholders should be considered, keeping their rights and requirements while tackling the issues of the environment.

Greenpeace:

Greenpeace is the largest environmental organization in the world, with significant experience and motivation for tackling climate change. Including a membership of 3 million people and offices in over 40 countries, receiving the support and cooperation of this organization will come with various benefits for the issue.

China:

China is the most deeply intertwined nation with climate change. Not only being included in the Asian Pacific region, China is both a significant contributor but also severely affected by the adverse impacts. It will be crucial to include the nation in the long-term plan to prevent and reverse climate change.

IV. Key Issues including Background Information

Balance between Economic Growth and Climate Change:

While there are various communities and economies seeking eternal economic growth, a balance needs to be formed with climate change to tackle its impacts. With this being one of the most pressing debates of the status quo, certain sacrifices or further developments should be decided and also modified based on the described circumstances. Moreover, as these factors have not been fully addressed in past forums, the amount of support and change required should be identified.

Alternatives Matching Circumstances of the Environment:

Within the human activities taking place and acting as a driving source for the changes in climate, various alternatives should be implemented and considered to modify results. Especially with current measures of renewable energy, which have been introduced and used, the impacts should be addressed and further developed if determined so.

International Cooperation:

As the United Nations and its impacts on the implementation of solutions are required and can cause the actions to function in solidarity, this issue should be brought up and function as a primary solution through detailed measures. With past United Nations conferences focusing on the direct utilization of policies and solutions within the individual nation, direct support and effective usage of cooperation should be made.

Individual Actions:

As individual actions are a critical component to the results we are facing including carbon footprint, decisions should be made regarding specific policies or regulations that can be implemented. With consumption and the primary factors of human activities, the issue can relate to the concept of the topic and form specific solutions going in depth.

V. Timeline of Resolutions, Treaties, and Events

| Date | Description of event |
|-------------|--|
| 1972 | The United Nations Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development The first major environmental conference, which also influenced the creation of the UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) and introduced various environmental issues. |
| 1979 | The 1st World Climate Conference Cooperation of major organizations, including the WMO (World Meteorological Organization). This resulted in forming the World Climate Programme and influenced the creation of IPCC. |
| 1992 | The Rio Summit Largest gathering of world leaders at the time. Produced results including the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) and the UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification). |
| 1995 | COP 1 Focused on developing climate-change-related policies. Reviewed progress on climate change for the first time and effectively discussed future measures for prevention. Began conversations that would lead to the Kyoto Protocol. |
| 2000 | The Millenium Summit Globalized the issue of climate change through the inclusion of not only environment experts but national leaders. Led to the establishment of 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), also including environmental parts. |
| 2015 | COP 21 Primarily dealt with the Paris agreement, one of the most important documents in climate diplomacy. Directly related to the current circumstances of our environment and various international measures. |

VI. Possible Challenges & Solutions

Balance between Economic Growth and Climate Change:

A lack of climate acknowledgment in the economic sectors of our society is detrimental as an impact. Possibly providing further support in both areas but also including these economic

and environmental representatives in global-level meetings could enhance the quality and effectiveness.

Alternatives Matching Circumstances of the Environment:

The implementation of these renewable energies and newly developed technologies are difficult considering the society which has already adopted them. However, providing more incentives for individuals, households, communities, and companies to utilize these alternatives will provide real change to take place in our society.

International Cooperation:

Cooperation is currently occurring, yet progress reports and numbers can not provide all the needed changes. Providing incentives for further engagement, and even requesting further participation within individual communities will influence the population, and give the needed change.

Individual Actions:

We currently are only providing reasons why taking action on the environment is necessary. However, without solidarity and unity, this is a mere request from the government. Therefore, providing realistic solutions and reasons for participation and receiving vast engagement is crucial.

VII. Recommendations for Resolution Writing, including Research

Delegates should begin with deep research on the background information of climate change and the environmental circumstances to have a keen understanding of the issue at hand. Based on this, develop a sturdy understanding of their nation's stance on climate change and plan potential solutions and actions directly based on these stances. Especially considering the committee and region of the Asian Pacific, remember to have an understanding of the environmental issues in the communities as well. According to the priorities of the nation chosen and the environmental circumstance, build resolutions that can most effectively tackle and consider these factors.

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