**COP 28: Why is it important?**

**Introduction**

The 28th Conference of Parties (COP-28) was held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), from 30th November to 12th December 2023, where the representatives from 197 countries showcased their efforts to limit global warming and held discussions to prepare for future climate change. This was the first time when the countries formally assessed their progress under the 2015 Paris climate agreement

Before we discuss further, let us first understand what COP28 is all about

**What is a COP?**

COP stands for the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It is the supreme decision-making body of the Convention. It brings together the 198 Parties (197 nations plus the European Union) that have signed on to the Framework Convention. The UN Climate Change conferences (or COPs) take place every year, and are the world’s only multilateral decision-making forum on climate change with almost complete membership of every country in the world.

**What is the UNFCCC?**

The UNFCCC Secretariat is the United Nations entity tasked with supporting the global response to the threat of climate change. The Secretariat was established in 1992 when countries adopted the UNFCCC, and was originally based in Geneva, Switzerland before moving to Bonn in 1996. The Secretariat initially focused on facilitating intergovernmental climate change negotiations. However, today, it plays a crucial role in supporting various bodies to implement the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.

**Major progress made under previous COPs**

The first COP held in 1995 at Berlin, followed by COP2 in Geneva, Switzerland to discuss the climate related matters. Some major COPs and the decisions taken are mentioned below-

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| COP 3 | Kyoto, Japan | An absolute and legally binding limit on Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions for industrialised countries was discussed |
| COP 11 | Montreal, Canada | To phase down the consumption and production of the different ozone depleting substances in a step-wise manner |
| COP 18 | Doha, Qatar | To build climate action capacity through education and training, public awareness and public participation in climate change decision-making |
| COP 21 | Paris, France | * States have common but differentiated responsibilities, depending on respective capabilities and different national circumstances * To limit global warming to 1.5°C |
| COP 26 | Glasgow, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | To establish new funding arrangements, as well as a dedicated fund, to assist developing countries in responding to loss and damage |

**Major decisions taken at COP28**

* Transition away from fossil fuels: Fossil fuels such as oil, natural gas, coal and their derivatives, have significant contribution in pollution but dependency on them for power and other energy sources, made it difficult for phasing them out. Therefore, decision came on only transition away from fossil fuels.
* Operationalisation of Loss and damage funds: Loss and damage funds are the funds that developed nations, whose industrial growth has resulted in global warming, must pay to emerging or developing nations, whose carbon footprint is low but are facing the impact of climate change. It was set up at Sharm -el Shaikh meeting in 2022, now underwent its first capitalisation. The World Bank will oversee the loss and damage funds in the beginning.
* Tripling of global renewable capacity by 2030.
* Doubling the rate of improvement of energy efficiency
* Pledge to reduce the methane pollution to near zero by the end of the decade. Methane is the second most widespread greenhouse gas after carbon-dioxide but much more potent in causing global warming.

**India’s stand at COP-28**

* Transforming Climate Finance – making climate finance more available, accessible, and affordable to developing countries to achieve their climate ambitions and implement their Nationally determined Contributions (NDCs).
* Co-launch of the Phase II of the Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT 2.0): India and Sweden had co-launched LeadIT at UN Climate Action Summit in New York in 2019. Now, launched phase II to focus on inclusive & just industry transition, co-development and transfer of low-carbon technology, and financial support to emerging economies for industry transition.
* **India co-hosts with UAE the Global Green Credit Initiative at COP-28**

The Green Credit Initiative has been conceptualized as a mechanism to incentivize voluntary pro-planet actions, as an effective response to the challenge of climate change.

* Impacts and implications of Climate Change Vulnerability in the Himalayan Region and ways of creating ‘Climate Resilient Development in the Indian Himalayan Region by making mountain communities green and resilient were discussed

## National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) launches Global River Cities Alliance at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Dubai

* Discussion on the role of local communities, local and regional Governments in supporting sustainable lifestyles.

**India’s progress**

India has successfully reduced the emission intensity vis-à-vis its GDP by 33% between 2005 and 2019, thus achieving the initial NDC target for 2030, 11 years ahead of the scheduled time. India has also achieved 40% of electric installed capacity through non-fossil fuel sources, nine years ahead of the target for 2030. Between 2017 and 2023, India has added around 100 GW of installed electric capacity, of which around 80% is attributed to non-fossil fuel-based resources.

**Sources**

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