

**Forum:** Economic and Social Council

**Issue:** Addressing the Humanitarian Consequences of Climate Change

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## Introduction

“The world is reaching the tipping point beyond which climate change may become irreversible. If this happens, we risk denying present and future generations the right to a healthy and sustainable planet – humanity stands to lose.” - Kofi Annan.

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in global temperatures and climate patterns, such as rising air and ocean temperatures and sea levels. Other examples include flooding, decreasing amounts of ice sheets, extreme changes in the duration, intensity, and frequency of rainfall conditions, and other extreme weather events. Climate change is mainly caused by numerous human activities leading to the greenhouse effect; however, a minor contributor comes from Earth’s natural phenomena. The generation of electricity and heat that involves burning fossil fuels and coal releases immense amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. These hazardous events have become the “*top* driver of humanitarian need and human suffering, particularly for the poorest countries,” according to the United Nations. The detrimental impacts have worsened the living conditions of already vulnerable populations.

Even though explicitly pinpointing the start of climate change is vague, the late 19th century, more specifically the industrial era, seems to be the turning point when human activities started impacting the climate, as CO<sub>2</sub> levels began rising in the atmosphere. Ocean temperatures started to rise, melting glaciers, bleaching coral reefs, and worsening hurricanes. These changes began to degrade our quality of life. 2024 marked the hottest year in history for approximately 3.3 billion people in 104 countries, the highest since 1970 when global warming consistently began increasing. However, in 2023 and 2024, global temperatures rose even faster than they had previously. Since 1880, the average rise in global temperature has been about 1 degree Celsius. This trend poses a significant threat to human health and safety.

The effects of global warming, such as intense droughts and floods, have caused losses or even destruction of agricultural production in many countries. This has resulted in malnutrition and famine, further exacerbating the global hunger crisis. The inability to meet basic health requirements has led to increased levels of diseases and

deaths. Unstable food production also disrupts markets, causing price volatility and supply shortages, which affect economies worldwide. Climate change harms agricultural environments and increases economic inequalities, resulting in heightened poverty rates. As the risks of displacement due to extreme weather events have significantly increased, researchers predict climate change will become the leading cause of displacement or migration in the coming decades. According to the 2024 Global Report on Internal Displacement, more than 6.6 million people worldwide were displaced by extreme weather events. It is further predicted that 1.2 billion people could be globally displaced by 2050 due to such disasters.

The impacts of climate change do not end here. It has even been linked to worsening mental health and increasing crime rates. Frequent disasters contribute to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), adjustment disorders, depression, and acculturation stress as displacement occurs. According to the World Health Organization, one in eight people worldwide suffered from mental disorders in 2024, a number that continues to rise.

According to the UN, 90 percent of the world's disasters result from climate change. In the past few decades, the number of natural disasters has doubled. These droughts, floods, unexpected storms, and heat waves have forced populations to migrate for safety. Several groups have faced mass displacements after such events. For example, after the monsoon floods in Pakistan in 2022, 10 million people were displaced, while 1,540,000 acres of farmland were swept away. This phenomenon is known as climate displacement. The consequences of climate change are destructive, affecting the environment and human society.

## Definition of Key Terms

### *Climate change -*

Climate change refers to the long-term shifts in the Earth's average temperatures and weather conditions. Greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, agriculture, industrial activities, and urbanization cause it. While climate change can also result from natural phenomena such as volcanic eruptions, variations in Earth's orbit, and solar radiation, it has been predominantly driven by human activities since the Industrial Revolution. These activities have led to intense environmental disasters, including global warming, hurricanes, droughts, floods, heat waves, rising sea levels, and desertification. As a result, humanity faces significant challenges, such as food and water shortages, which lead to malnutrition and increased vulnerability to diseases, particularly in developing regions where resources are already scarce. Displacement caused by rising sea levels and extreme weather events forces millions to become climate refugees, losing their homes and cultural identities.

### *Greenhouse gases -*

Greenhouse gases are atmospheric gases that trap heat and increase the Earth's surface temperature, driving climate change through phenomena like heat waves and floods. They are the direct cause of the **greenhouse effect**. The primary greenhouse gases include methane, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), nitrous oxide, and water vapor, which are also released through natural processes. Since the Industrial Revolution, human activities, such as burning fossil fuels and deforestation, have made CO<sub>2</sub> the leading contributor to global warming. Water vapor, though abundant naturally, amplifies the greenhouse effect by retaining heat. These gases also have direct health implications, affecting the human respiratory system and leading to significant issues such as asthma and bronchitis.

### *Climate Refugees -*

Climate refugees are individuals temporarily or permanently displaced due to climate change-related events such as rising sea levels, prolonged droughts, floods, and desertification. Often referred to as “climate migrants” or “environmental migrants,” they are forced to leave their communities and face struggles with resettlement. As of 2023, significant numbers of climate refugees have been reported in countries like Afghanistan (1.5 million), Bangladesh (1.8 million), Somalia (2 million), the Philippines (2.6 million), and Turkey (4.1 million). Unfortunately, these numbers are expected to increase as natural disasters become more widespread and frequent.

### *Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 -*

SDG 13, one of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, calls for universal action to combat climate change and its impacts. The goal aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by **43%** by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. It outlines five key targets, including implementing the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*, an international treaty established in 1992 among 154 countries. The UNFCCC aims to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations and prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, supporting the broader objectives of SDG 13.

### *Paris Agreement -*

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change that came into force on November 4, 2016. Its primary objective is to **limit the global temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels**, with an upper target of keeping it below 2°C. Adopted in 2015 at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, the treaty successfully engaged numerous countries and companies in establishing carbon neutrality targets. It also provides financial support to developing countries particularly vulnerable to climate change. The

Paris Agreement involves 196 countries and emphasizes **long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies (LT-LEDS)** to maintain global temperature rise within pre-industrial levels.

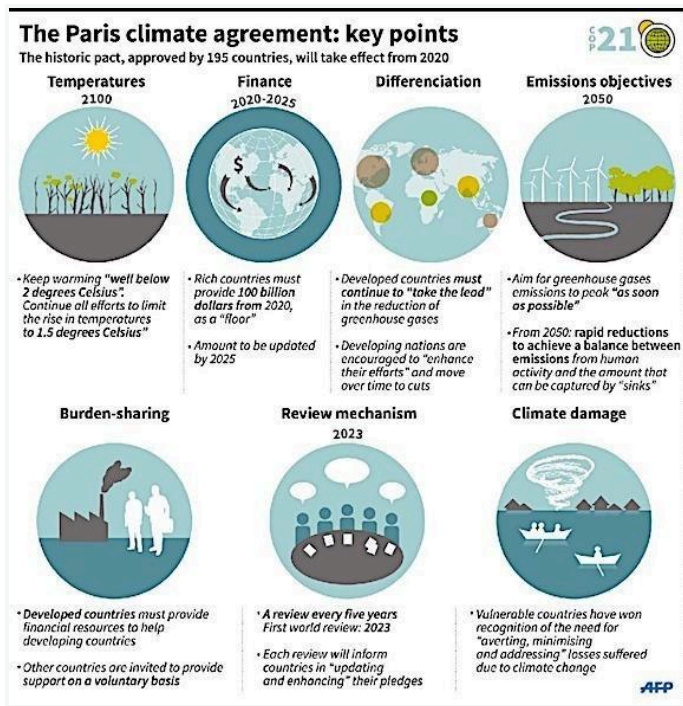


Figure 1: Key Point of the Paris Climate Agreement

**Scarcity -**

Scarcity refers to a situation where the demand for a resource exceeds its available supply. When water becomes scarce, civilians struggle to obtain it due to inadequate infrastructure, leading to humanitarian crises where basic needs are unmet. Resource scarcity, such as insufficient food or water, results in hunger and starvation, severely impacting vulnerable populations.

**Poverty -**

Poverty is a condition in which individuals cannot meet the necessities of life, including food, clothing, shelter, and education. It is prevalent in many countries worldwide. As of 2025, South Sudan has the highest poverty rates, followed by Somalia and Nigeria. Poverty is driven by factors such as political instability, economic inequality, and inadequate infrastructure, with climate change emerging as a leading cause. It exacerbates fragility and limits access to vital resources, further deepening its impact.

**Internal Displacement -**

Internal displacement occurs when individuals are forced to leave their homes due to natural disasters, conflicts, or violence but remain within their country's borders. **Internally displaced persons (IDPs)** are among the most vulnerable populations, as they often face ongoing risks even after evacuation. Unlike refugees, IDPs do not cross internationally recognized borders and remain under the responsibility of their national government. If an IDP crosses a border to seek safety, they become refugees, who are then entitled to protections under international law.

### *Malnutrition -*

Malnutrition occurs when there is a *lack of adequate nourishment* due to insufficient food supplies or an improper balance of nutrients such as vitamins or minerals. It may also result from the body's inability to absorb nutrients from food. This condition leads to physical weaknesses, a compromised immune system, stunted growth, infections, and digestive issues. Children, people living in poverty, and those with chronic illnesses are particularly at risk of malnutrition.

## History

### *Causes and Intensifications of Climate Change: the Industrial Revolution and World Wars -*

The **Industrial Revolution**, which spanned from the mid-18th century to around 1830, was a period of technological advancements that dramatically shifted global dynamics. Initially, this economic development was largely confined to Britain; however, many other parts of the world caught up with the process by the mid-19th century and into the early 20th century. The Industrial Revolution marked an era of expanding technologies and saw the onset of massive carbon dioxide emissions entering the atmosphere. Global climates began to change as more countries became reliant on fossil fuels, coal, and oil. CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations rapidly increased, creating the greenhouse effect. This period is considered the beginning of significant human interaction with global warming. Later, during *World War I (1914-1918)* and *World War II (1939-1945)*, the environmental impact of chemical warfare and industrial activities became pronounced. While the World Wars didn't directly cause long-term shifts in global climate patterns, the industrial activity and emissions related to the wars contributed to pollution and intensified atmospheric conditions. The production of weapons, the mass burning of fossil fuels for transport and machinery, and the smoke from bombed cities all led to localized air pollution, which may have had temporary global climate effects, such as cooling from large-scale soot emissions in the atmosphere (a phenomenon sometimes referred to as "nuclear winter" or "wartime winter").

## The "Discovery" of the Greenhouse Effect -

Over two centuries ago, in 1824, French mathematician and physicist **Joseph Fourier** published "*Remarques générales sur les températures du globe terrestre et des espaces planétaires*" (*General Remarks on the Temperature of the Terrestrial Globe and the Planetary Spaces*), making him the first person to study Earth's temperature from a mathematical perspective. His paper described how gases released into the atmosphere could increase temperatures on Earth, which we now understand as the greenhouse effect. He explained that the sun warms the planet through its rays; however, if the sun were the only source of heat, the Earth would be much colder than it is. He proposed that certain atmospheric gases (mainly carbon dioxide and water vapor) provide further insulation, absorbing the heat that the land and ocean emit as infrared radiation after the sun's energy passes through the atmosphere.

In 1896, Swedish scientist and engineer **Svante Arrhenius** first linked human activity to the greenhouse effect, specifically through the combustion of fossil fuels, which contributes to climate change. He proposed that increasing carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere were correlated with rising temperatures and predicted that *doubling* the CO<sub>2</sub> concentration would result in a 5°C temperature increase. This groundbreaking discovery has been instrumental in advancing our understanding of climate change and informing efforts to mitigate its environmental impact.

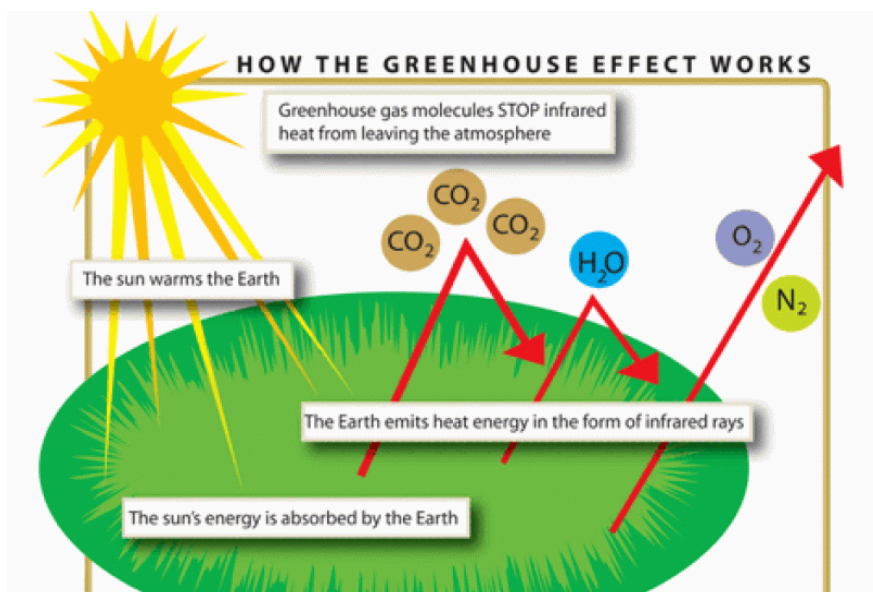


Figure 2: Greenhouse Gas Effect Diagram

## The Rise of the Rio Earth Summit and other Frameworks -

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, known as the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 was a significant milestone in global environmental governance. At this summit, world leaders

gathered to address urgent environmental issues, including climate change. The Earth Summit resulted in several key agreements, most notably adopting the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This treaty established a framework for international cooperation to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere.

The Rio Earth Summit laid the groundwork for subsequent international climate negotiations and agreements. It introduced the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, recognizing that nations have varying historical contributions to greenhouse gas emissions and different capacities to address climate impacts. The summit elevated climate change to a prominent position on the global political agenda, fostering more comprehensive mitigation, adaptation, and sustainable development strategies. The *UNFCCC*, along with its annual Conference of the Parties (*COP*) meetings, continues to serve as a crucial forum for negotiating and implementing global climate policies.

## Key Issues

### *Health Impacts -*

The health impacts of climate change are one of the most pressing humanitarian concerns, affecting vulnerable populations, especially those in low-income countries and urban slums. Climate change worsens existing health issues, including respiratory diseases, heat-related illnesses, and vector-borne diseases (illnesses that are transmitted through the bite of infected insects). Rising temperatures, air pollution, and extreme weather events such as floods and storms directly and indirectly affect public health, increasing the burden on already strained healthcare systems. These impacts are most severe in regions where healthcare infrastructure is inadequate and where populations are highly exposed to climate hazards.

For instance, heat waves have become more frequent and intense due to climate change, leading to a rise in heat-related illnesses such as heatstroke, dehydration, and cardiovascular problems. The elderly, children and those with preexisting conditions are at higher risk. In addition, climate change is contributing to the spread of infectious diseases. Changes in temperature and rainfall patterns have extended the range of vector-borne diseases like malaria and dengue. For example, warmer temperatures allow mosquitoes that carry diseases to spread to new areas, increasing the risk of outbreaks in regions previously unaffected. Moreover, severe storms and flooding contaminate water sources, leading to waterborne diseases such as cholera. This issue intersects with several SDGs, including **SDG 3** (Good Health and Well-Being), **SDG 10** (Reduced Inequalities,) and **SDG 13** (Climate Action). It requires immediate attention to reduce climate change's direct and indirect health risks.

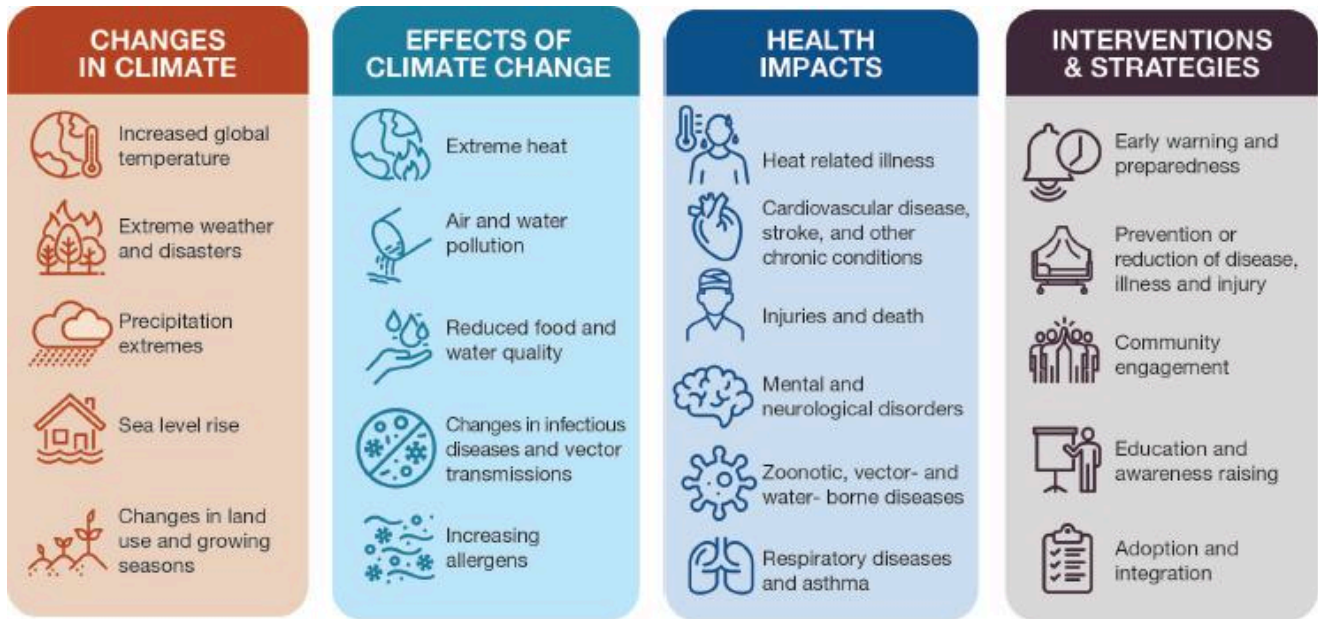


Figure 3: Climate Change Information

### Water Scarcity -

Water scarcity is a critical aspect of climate-related humanitarian challenges. According to an SDG report in 2022, about **two billion** people worldwide cannot access clean, safe drinking water. Even more, approximately *half* of the world's population experiences severe water scarcity for at least a part of the year. These numbers are estimated to increase in the coming years, worsened by climate change. Prolonged droughts, disrupted water cycles, and rising sea levels that can contaminate freshwater with salt weather add to the existing water stress in many regions. For decades, disputes over transboundary water resources - such as the Nile River and the Aral Sea - have been intensified by climate change. Communities dependent on agriculture and fishing suffer the most, leading to internal displacement or cross-border tensions. The humanitarian consequences also affect health crises, as limited access to clean water increases the risk of waterborne diseases.

### Malnutrition and Famine -

Malnutrition and famine are among the dire consequences of climate-induced disruptions to agriculture. Climate change disrupts traditional farming systems through unpredictable weather patterns, prolonged droughts, and soil degradation. Historical events like the Ethiopian famine of the 1980s illustrate how environmental factors, worsened by socio-political instability, can result in widespread starvation. In recent years, nations such as Somalia and Madagascar have experienced severe food shortages directly linked to climate change, emphasizing the urgent need for sustainable agricultural practices. By 2050, the world could face a potential *20 percent* increase in hunger and malnutrition if immediate actions are not implemented to mitigate and prevent the effects of climate change. Undernutrition is expected to be the leading factor in child deaths linked to these environmental changes.



Moreover, agricultural yields in vulnerable regions could decline by up to 30%, intensifying reliance on international aid and worsening food insecurity in fragile economies.

*Displacement and Migration -*

The climate crisis amplifies displacement and migration, forcing individuals to move and disrupting communities. Rising sea levels threaten the existence of small island nations such as the *Maldives* and *Kiribati*, while coastal communities face increasing risks of flooding. Inhabitants of these areas are often forced to migrate, creating “climate refugees.” This term emphasizes significant gaps in existing international frameworks, such as the **1951 Refugee Convention**, which does not account for environmental displacement. Regions that experience desertification and loss of arable land also see significant migration, further straining urban resources and social systems. Most refugees and internally displaced people come from climate-vulnerable countries where worsening weather conditions make it difficult to return. Without the help of recovery, withstand, and prepare for upcoming climate-related issues; they face increased vulnerability from being displaced again.

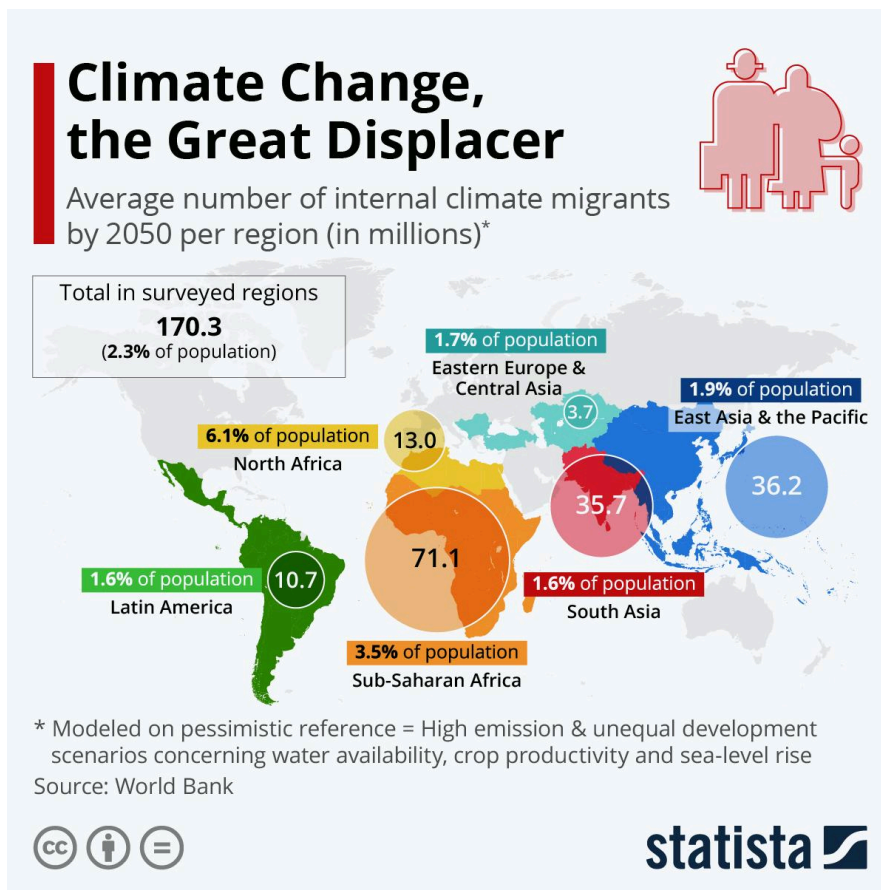


Figure 4: Climate Migrant Data

*Urbanization -*

Urbanization has drastically magnified the humanitarian consequences of climate change. According to

the UN Environment Programme, estimates suggest that urban areas are responsible for **70 percent** of global carbon emissions. Transport and buildings in urban areas are the most significant contributors to these emissions. Due to industrial growth and economic opportunities, rural-to-urban migration has surged throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. However, rapid urban expansion in developing nations often occurs without proper planning. This leads to informal settlements that lack basic infrastructure and are highly vulnerable to floods, hurricanes, and other climate-induced disasters. For instance, cities in *South Asia* and *Sub-Saharan Africa* frequently witness severe flooding affecting low-income communities in high-risk areas.

## Major Parties Involved and Their Views

### *The European Union (EU) -*

The European Union is committed to achieving *net-zero greenhouse gas emissions* by **2050**, which is mandated by the European Climate Law and its commitment to the Paris Agreement. It aims to cut emissions by **55%** by 2030 compared to 1990. Tools like the Emissions Trading System (ETS) and Effort Sharing Regulation (ESR) significantly help these efforts. By 2023, emissions were 37% below 1990 levels, but challenges remain for coal-reliant states like Poland. Other nations, such as the UK, banned single-use utensils in October 2023, minimizing the impact of greenhouse gases emitted from plastic. Even more, the UK Climate Change Act became the world's first long-term legally binding framework for tackling climate change in 2008, which committed the UK to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels. This target became even more ambitious when the UK became the first major economy to commit to a 'net zero' target in 2019. Internationally, the EU plays a crucial role in climate diplomacy, promoting ambitious targets at COP28 and allocating **€79.5 billion** for climate resilience in vulnerable regions.

### *The United States -*

As the world's *second-largest* emitter of greenhouse gases, the United States plays a pivotal role in global climate efforts. Shortly after taking office, President Biden urged world leaders to commit to limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, a central goal of the Paris Agreement, which the U.S. rejoined in 2021. The **U.S. Nationally Determined Contribution** (NDC) aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by **50-52%** below 2005 levels by 2030. Meeting this target involves engaging multiple sectors, including electricity, transportation, buildings, and land use. President Biden has also pledged to quadruple U.S. support for developing countries and enhance adaptation finance six-fold by 2024, aiming to provide **\$11.4 billion** annually for international climate finance. Through these efforts and commitments announced at the Leaders Summit on Climate, countries representing 65% of global GDP are now aligned with limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The U.S. also collaborates with the **UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** to address climate-induced displacement.

Despite these commitments, domestic political divisions and state-level resistance in conservative regions are challenges to consistent action. However, federal agencies are still trying to advance adaptation and mitigation initiatives, showing how the U.S.'s leadership in the fight against climate change.

### *Chad -*

Chad faces severe humanitarian challenges that are caused mainly by climate change, including recurring floods that displace thousands annually and destroy critical infrastructure. In 2022, flooding during the rainy season forcibly displaced more than one million people, with water levels remaining higher than usual for months. More than **465,000 hectares** of farmland were destroyed, worsening food insecurity. These environmental crises increase resource competition, intensifying military confrontations in regions already plagued by instability. Widespread famine and food insecurity remain critical issues, and agricultural yields drop significantly due to erratic rainfall and desertification. Chad advocates for *increased* international assistance, particularly in climate adaptation funding. It also calls for urgent action to reduce global emissions of greenhouse gases, emphasizing how vulnerable nations like itself are disproportionately affected by climate crises.

### *Somalia -*

Somalia is among the countries hit hardest by climate change. It faces catastrophic droughts that add to its longstanding political instability. The **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** reports that an estimated *8.3 million* people will need humanitarian assistance, and 1.3 million more were displaced this year due to the compounding effects of widespread conflict and climatic shocks, including droughts and floods. With weakened governance and limited infrastructure, Somalia struggles to address the displacement of millions due to water and food scarcity. The Somali government emphasizes the need for international partnerships to build resilience through sustainable agriculture, water resource management, and conflict mitigation efforts, underscoring the importance of addressing climate-induced migration.

### *Small Island Developing States (SIDS) -*

SIDS, including nations such as Tuvalu, the Maldives, and Fiji, face existential threats from rising sea levels and extreme weather events. Tuvalu, for example, is projected to become uninhabitable within decades due to flooding. These nations have taken the lead in advocating for international forums like COP conferences. They consistently call for implementing the Loss and Damage Fund, a financial mechanism agreed upon at COP27 to compensate vulnerable nations for irreversible climate impacts. Despite their advocacy, SIDS often lacks the political power to influence the significant emitters of greenhouse gases. **The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** demands legally binding commitments for emission reductions and accelerated financial assistance.

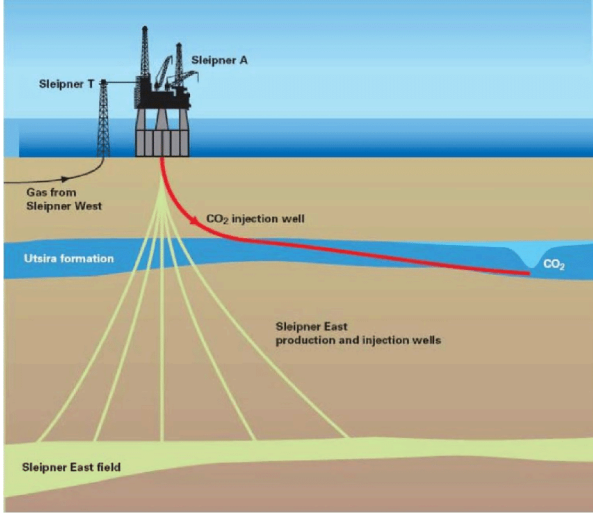
## Bangladesh -

Bangladesh faces severe humanitarian consequences from cyclones, floods, and salinity intrusion, as well as the incorporation of saltwater into freshwater habitats caused by increased sea levels. An estimated 13.3 million people are projected to become climate migrants by 2050. Bangladesh has taken proactive steps, such as investing in flood-resilient housing and implementing the world's most extensive climate adaptation program. In 2002, it was the first country to ban plastic bags nationwide. It advocates for stronger global climate finance mechanisms to adapt to these disasters. However, international funding pledges have still not been fulfilled, limiting its ability to scale up these initiatives. Bangladesh's actions align with its stance, but it faces challenges in addressing the systemic causes of vulnerability, such as overpopulation and poverty.

## Timeline of Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

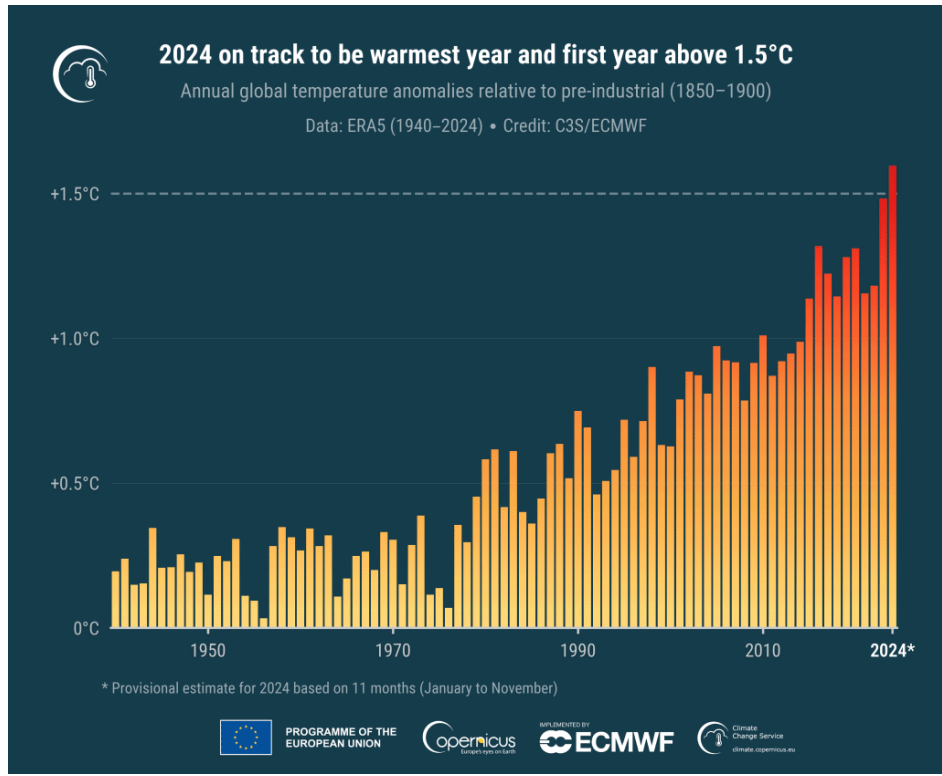
Date	Event
1760-1840	<b>Industrial Revolution</b> -This period from the mid-18th century to the early 19th century transformed the agricultural landscape into large-scale manufacturing industries that relied heavily on burning fossil fuels and coal. With the expansion of human activities during this period, a significant increase of carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels was produced into the air, shifting the global atmospheric dynamics.
May 1, 1967	<b>Earth's climate model</b> - The first groundbreaking computer model of Earth's climate, voted as the most crucial science paper by the Nobel Prize for Physics committee, was created by researchers Syukuro Manabe and Richard Wetherald of the US <i>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)</i> . It allowed researchers to see the effect of CO2 levels on global temperatures with a simulation and predicted that doubling the CO2 concentration could raise global temperatures by 2°C.
May 16, 1985	<b>Ozone hole discovery</b> - The ozone layer that protects us from harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays was discovered to have dropped below 220 Dobson Units (DU) over Antarctica due to <i>chlorofluorocarbons (CFC)</i> chemicals commonly found in aerosols, refrigerants, and air conditioning. (The standard ozone measure is about 300 DU.) This discovery was made by British Antarctic Survey's Joe Farman, Brian Gardiner, and Jonathan Shanklin and announced in the journal <i>Nature</i> in May 1985, drawing attention to the impact of human activity on the environment.

	<p><b>Ozone Layer Depletion</b></p> <p>1 Ultra-Violet rays split a chlorine atom away from the CFC (Chlorofluorocarbon) Molecule.</p> <p>2 The Chlorine atom breaks up an Ozone molecule, making a hole in the ozone layer.</p> <p>3 The molecules left behind are chlorine monoxide and oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>)</p> <p><b>Ozone-Depleting Chemicals</b>          CFCs (Aerosols, Refrigerants, Solvents)          HCFCs (aerosols, Refrigerants, Solvents)          Halons (Fire Extinguishers)          Methyl Bromide (Pesticides)</p>
<p>1986</p>	<p><b>The first commercial lithium-ion battery-</b> Akira Yoshino’s invention of <i>lithium-ion battery</i> allowed the storage of electrical energy in batteries. It provided an alternative method for fossil fuel reliance. However, producing these batteries results in more significant CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than gasoline-powered cars, resulting in substantial environmental impacts, including resource extraction and water depletion.</p>
<p>September 16, 1987</p>	<p><b>Montreal Protocol-</b> The Montreal Protocol is an international treaty to eradicate ozone-depleting substances and protect the ozone layer, which shields the Earth from the sun’s harmful ultraviolet radiation. It was signed by a record number of countries in 1987 and has helped slow the ozone hole's growth in Antarctica.</p>
<p>March 21, 1994</p>	<p><b>UNFCCC Entered Into Force-</b> 197 countries begin to be part of a framework for international cooperation aimed at stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations to prevent further anthropogenic interference with the climate system. This convention began to be a joint effort for parties to undertake efforts in combating the threat of climate change.</p>
<p>1996</p>	<p><b>The Sleipner Carbon Capture and Storage project launched-</b> This was the first commercial <i>carbon capture and storage (CCS)</i> project operation in the Sleipner North Sea gas field (offshore platform) for CO<sub>2</sub> storage. It is a crucial technique for reducing carbon emissions released into the air by storing it underground, preventing global warming. This project has collected about 1 million tons, equivalent to emissions from 10 million cars, of CO<sub>2</sub> every year.</p>

	
<p>December 11, 1997</p>	<p><b>Adoption of the Kyoto Protocol</b> - The Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement in Kyoto, Japan, under the <i>UNFCCC</i>, and it aims to legally bind industrialized countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by specific targets, primarily to combat climate change. According to the UNFCCC, the participating developed countries “achieved an average annual emissions reduction of 22% compared to 1990 levels from 2013-2020, marking a significant step forward in the fight against climate change.”</p>
<p>1998</p>	<p><b>Establishment of The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)</b> - The IPCC is a United Nations body that provides scientific information on climate change to governments. Its establishment aims to help governments develop policies to address climate change, urging the world to shift away from burning fossil fuels.</p>
<p>April 22, 2016</p>	<p><b>Signing of the Paris Agreement</b> - The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change that established an enhanced transparency framework (ETF) for countries to report actions taken for climate change mitigation. It was adopted at the COP21 in Paris, France, on December 12th, 2015, and only entered into force on November 4, 2016. The central aim of the Paris Agreement was for all countries to reduce their emissions and work together to adapt to the impacts of climate change; however, after the Paris Agreement was signed, global emissions continued to rise rather than fall.</p>
<p>2021</p>	<p><b>Pledge to phase out coal power-</b> The COP26 in Glasgow concluded with an agreement with more than 40 countries to discontinue the use of coal power. This pact included 23 nations that made a public commitment to halting the use of new coal plants for the first time. Although significant emitters like the US and China declined to commit, this pledge marked a significant step in eliminating coal power all around the world</p>
<p>2024</p>	<p><b>Global emissions reach record high-</b> According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the total CO2 emissions reached a record high of 41.6 billion tonnes without any sign of reaching its peak in 2024. Most (37.4 billion) of the emissions resulted from fossil fuels, and the rest from deforestation. This amount of fossil fuel carbon emissions has risen by 0.8% since 2023 (Global Carbon Budget), influencing the global temperature.</p>

2024

**Global temperatures reach record high-** WMO confirmed that global temperatures reached 1.55°C above pre-industrial level, boosted by El Niño, in 2024, making it the warmest year yet and threatening the long-term goal of the Paris Agreement. The ocean heat had also risen alongside glacier loss acceleration, devastating communities and economies across the globe.



## Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

### Paris Agreement, 2015

The Paris Agreement was a multilateral effort to combat climate change and its effects. It established the goal of limiting global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The Paris Agreement adopted a more inclusive approach. All signatory nations - developed and developing - must submit **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** outlining their commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate impacts.

However, the implementation of the Paris Agreement has faced many challenges. Many countries have failed to deliver on their commitments and financing for adaptation, particularly in the least developed countries (LDCs). This has resulted in *worsening* humanitarian crises linked to climate change, including displacement due to rising sea levels, increased food insecurity caused by droughts, and more frequent and severe natural disasters.

Despite these limitations, the Agreement created a foundation for future cooperative efforts, including frameworks like the Green Climate Fund to assist vulnerable countries in building climate resilience.

### *Kyoto Protocol, 1997*

The Kyoto Protocol was adopted under the **UNFCCC** and marked a significant milestone in addressing global climate change. It committed industrialized nations and economies in transition to legally binding targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, recognizing that these countries were historically the most significant contributors to climate change. However, the Protocol excluded developing nations from binding targets and failed to include substantial emitters such as the *United States*, which withdrew due to concerns over economic impacts and the lack of obligations for developing countries like China and India.

While the Kyoto Protocol created the basis for international cooperation and mechanisms like carbon trading, its impact on reducing emissions was **limited**. Furthermore, the absence of provisions directly addressing the humanitarian consequences of climate change, such as displacement, food insecurity, and public health crises, meant that it did little to alleviate the growing burden on vulnerable communities. Instead, the focus was more on emission reductions than adaptation or resilience-building in regions affected by climate change.

### *UNFCCC and IPCC Reports*

The UNFCCC, established in 1992, serves as an international treaty for addressing climate change. It emphasizes the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities,” acknowledging nations’ varying capacities and historical responsibilities. While the UNFCCC has fostered global dialogue and cooperation, its non-binding nature has hindered enforcement and accountability.

The IPCC, created by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the WMO, has played a critical role in providing scientific assessments on climate change. Its reports have highlighted the urgency of addressing the humanitarian consequences of climate change, such as the displacement of vulnerable populations, the rise in climate-induced poverty, and the health impacts of changing ecosystems. However, converting these warnings into actionable policies within the framework of the UNFCCC has been slow, with limited progress in addressing the root causes or adequate funding adaptation efforts.

## **Possible Solutions**

In ECOSOC, resolutions typically require a simple majority (more than half of the members present and voting) to pass. ECOSOC resolutions are not legally binding and do not carry “hard legal power.” Instead, they serve as recommendations to member states and other UN bodies, focusing on economic, social, and humanitarian issues.



While they lack enforcement mechanisms, they hold significant “soft” power by shaping global policies and encouraging international cooperation.

As delegates began to address the humanitarian consequences of climate change in ECOSOC, it is essential to recognize the multifaceted nature of the crisis. How can the committee ensure that efforts to mitigate climate change will consider the most vulnerable populations, particularly those in developing nations or island states at risk from rising sea levels and extreme weather events?

- What are the responsibilities of both developed and developing countries in combating climate change?
- Given nations' varying economic infrastructural capacities, what role should financial aid and technology transfer play in helping less developed nations adapt to climate change?
- How might the ECOSOC's current initiatives be expanded or adapted to better support these nations in mitigating climate impacts?
- What other short-term goals would be feasible in leading countries globally toward a more positive direction in addressing the humanitarian crisis of climate change, mainly through collaborative and practical methods?

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## Appendix or Appendices

- I. Useful resource for Climate Crisis:  
<https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/the-climate-crisis-is-a-humanitarian-crisis>
- II. Causes and Effects of Climate Change:  
<https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/causes-effects-climate-change>
- III. Useful resource on UNFCCC:  
<https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/what-is-the-united-nations-framework-convention-on-climate-change>
- IV. Role of the global goals on climate crisis: <https://www.globalgoals.org/goals/13-climate-action/>
- V. Understanding the Paris Agreement: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement>
- VI. Climate Change is a Humanitarian Crisis:  
<https://humanitarianaction.info/article/climate-crisis-humanitarian-crisis>
- VII. Causes of Climate Change: <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-causes-climate-change>
- VIII. Important information on climate refugees:  
<https://www.concern.net/news/climate-refugees-explained>
- IX. Statistics and news reports on climate displacements:  
<https://www.migrationdataportal.org/climate-mobility-spotlight>
- X. All you need to know about Internal Displacement:  
<https://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2024/>