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# Environment

## 1. COP 26 - UNFCCC GLASGOW - SCOTLAND

### Introduction

- The COP 26 UN Climate Change Conference, **hosted by the UK in partnership with Italy**, will take place from 31 October to 12 November 2021 in Glasgow, UK.
- In light of the worldwide effects of COVID-19, the COP Bureau of the UNFCCC, with the UK and its Italian partners, **had decided to re-schedule the conference initially slated for November 2020.**
- **Italy partnered with the UK in leading COP26.**
- For the most part, their role was in **preparatory work** such as the hosting of a pre-COP session and an event for young people called **Youth4Climate 2020: Driving Ambition.**
- These events took place between 28 September and 2 October 2020 in Milan.

### Formation of COP

- The Conference of Parties comes under the **United Nations Climate Change Framework Convention (UNFCCC) which was formed in 1994.**
- The UNFCCC was established to work towards **“stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere.”**
- It laid out a **list of responsibilities** for the member states which included:
  - ✓ Formulating measures to mitigate climate change
  - ✓ Cooperating in preparing for adaptation to the impact of climate change
  - ✓ Promoting education, training and public awareness related to climate change

### COP 1 TO COP 25

- COP members have been meeting every year since 1995.
- The UNFCCC has 198 parties including India, China and the USA.
- The **first conference (COP1)** was held in 1995 in Berlin.
- At COP3 held in Kyoto, Japan, in 1997, the famous **Kyoto Protocol was adopted.**
- It commits the member states to **pursue limitation or reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.**
- It entered into force on 16 February 2005 and there are 192 Parties in the Kyoto Protocol.
- India hosted the eighth COP from October 23 to November 1, 2002 in New Delhi.

- ✓ The conference laid out seven measures including, 'strengthening of technology transfer... in all relevant sectors, including energy, transport...and the promotion of technological advances through research and development...and the strengthening of institutions for sustainable development.'
- One of the most important conferences, **COP21 took place from November 30 to December 11, 2015, in Paris, France.**
  - ✓ Member countries agreed to work together to 'limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre- industrial levels.'
  - ✓ COP 26 is also the third meeting of the parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA3).

## Ratchet Mechanism

- Under the Paris Agreement, countries submitted pledges called **nationally determined contributions**, to limit their greenhouse gas emissions.
- Under the framework of the Paris Agreement, each country is expected to **submit enhanced nationally determined contributions every five years**, to ratchet up ambition to mitigate climate change.
- When the Paris Agreement was signed at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, **the conference of 2020 was set to be the first iteration of the ratchet mechanism.**
- Even though the 2020 conference was postponed to 2021 due to pandemic, dozens of countries still had not updated their pledges by early October 2021.
- Future iterations will also take into account the "**global stocktake**", the first of which is in 2023.

## COP 26 Goals

- According to the UNFCCC, COP26 will work towards four goals
  - ✓ Secure global net-zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach
    - ❖ UK has already committed to bringing 78% emission reductions by 2035 and is on the road to net-zero by 2050.
    - ❖ India has also taken important steps with its 450 gigaWatt renewables target and national hydrogen mission.
    - ❖ Different countries will have different pathways, and we recognise the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.
    - ❖ The UNFCCC recommends that countries 'accelerate the phase-out of coal, curtail deforestation, speed up the switch to electric vehicles and encourage investment in renewables' to meet this goal.
  - ✓ At the National Conference on COP26 Charter of Actions, India announced what it could do to reach its targets:

- ✓ It is time for India to update its Nationally Determined Contributions or NDCs. (NDCs detail the various efforts taken by each country to reduce the national emissions)
- ✓ Sector by sector plans are needed to bring about development. There is need to decarbonise the electricity, transport sector and start looking at carbon per passenger mile.
- ✓ Aggressively figure out how to transition our coal sector.
- **Adapt to protect communities and natural habitats**
  - ✓ Countries will work together to ‘protect and restore ecosystems and build defences, warning systems and resilient infrastructure and agriculture to avoid loss of homes, livelihoods and even lives.’
- ✓ **Mobilise finance**
  - ❖ To deliver on our first two goals, developed countries must make good on their promise to mobilise at least \$100bn in climate finance per year by 2020.
  - ❖ With the impacts of COVID-19, there is a need to **scale up finance from all sources and improve its access.**
  - ❖ There is a need to push for all countries to have National Adaptation Plans in place and to produce Adaptation Communications sharing best practices to help turn ambition into action.
- **Work together to deliver**
  - ✓ Another important task at the COP26 is to **‘finalise the Paris Rulebook’.**
  - ✓ Leaders will work together to frame a list of detailed rules that will help fulfil the Paris Agreement.