

# COP 26

## [UPSC Notes]

### What is COP26?

COP 26, or the 26th meeting of the Conference of Parties, is the assembly held by the UNFCCC. Originally, this session was scheduled to be held from November 9th, 2020 to November 19th, 2020 but was rescheduled to be held between October 31st, 2021, and October 12th, 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

COP26 was held in Glasgow, with the United Kingdom presiding over the conference. COP26 is significant because it informed member countries about the alarming situation of the Earth's rising temperature and the risks associated with this rise.

- COP26, or Conference of Parties, is held by the UNFCCC, which is an entity of the United Nations that came into effect on March 21st, 1994. Ever since its creation, the UNFCCC has been tirelessly working on preventing the excessive involvement of human interference in the environment and nature.
- The focus of COP26 has been to draw the attention of member countries and the entire world to the alarming situation of global temperature rise and its consequences.
- The summit was based on the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) submitted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2021.

### COP26 Goals

COP26 Glasgow had set four goals ahead of the summit.

1. By the middle of the century, achieve a global net-zero and maintain 1.5 degrees within reach.
2. Protect communities and natural environments by adapting.
3. Make financial resources available.
4. Collaborate to deliver clear rules that will help achieve the Paris agreement.

### COP26 Outcomes

COP 26, or the COP26 Glasgow summit, has concluded with some major announcements and initiatives. Some of them are-

1) One of the major initiatives taken by the member nations was to reduce deforestation and completely stop it by the end of 2030 so that the change in climate could be slowed down.

- The initiative will be supported by a corpus of 19.9 billion dollars in order to stop deforestation and the plantation of trees. Also, a few developing nations will be supported by these funds in restoring the degraded land and in afforestation.

2) The next and one of the most important areas of focus at the summit was the reduction of greenhouse gases. The member nations have taken the pledge to cut down on the emissions of methane and carbon dioxide gases.

3) The IRIS (Infrastructure for the Resilient Island States) initiative has been launched with the combined efforts of India, the U.K., and Australia. Under this initiative, the infrastructure of small island countries will be developed, which is under existential threat because of climate change.

- IRIS is an entity of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) program, which is supported by multiple governments, UN agencies, financial institutions, and development banks. The program focuses on the development of new and existing infrastructure for the most vulnerable area to climate change and disaster-prone areas.

4) A new initiative known as the Green Grid Initiative (GGI) has been launched at COP 26. GGI is part of the One Sun, One World, One Grid program started by the International Solar Alliance. About 80 countries have stated their commitment to this initiative, under which the electricity will be produced by tapping solar energy and will be supplied across the borders.

- Apart from energy production, this initiative will also prove to be beneficial in maintaining peace and harmony across borders as the nations will be cooperating with each other for the sustainable development of the countries and their inclusive growth.

## COP26 India

COP 26 India Panchamrit was announced to highlight the climate commitments of the country along with a target to reach net-zero carbon emission by 2070.

**COP 26 India Panchamrit:** At COP 26 held in Glasgow, India has set a great example for various developing countries which are only focused on economic development but have a very casual approach towards their responsibilities regarding the environment. India has announced a set of declarations and initiatives as its contribution to environmental protection. The set of these declarations has been named 'Panchamrit', which is a sacred mixture of 'Five' ingredients offered to the almighty according to the

Indian culture. Citing the environment as Mother Nature the 5 initiatives taken by India have been named 'Panchamrit'.

## COP26 India's 5 Commitments

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made the world recognize the leadership initiative-building ability of India by introducing the 'Panchamrit' scheme at the COP 26 held. The Panchamrit scheme is actually a strategy that India will follow towards keeping the temperature of the world well below 1.5 degrees celsius. The key features of Panchamrit are-

1. India is committed to achieving the production of clean and non-fossil energy supply of up to 500 gigawatts by the end of 2030.
2. India is determined to achieve the 50 % of its energy demand by renewable energy by the end of 2030.
3. India has committed to cutting down the emission of carbon up to 1 billion tonnes by the year 2030.
4. India will push to cut the intensity of carbon in its economy by at least 45 % up to the year 2030.
5. India is set to acquire net-zero emissions up to the year 2070.

## Importance of COP 26

- The Glasgow summit, or COP 26, is of extreme significance as it has initiated extensive programs for countering the situation of climate change.
- The summit held in Glasgow has focused on cutting down on emissions of hazardous elements and restoring the forests.
- The summit has also prompted the members to make extra efforts with regard to achieving the targets before 2030.
- The summit urged nations to cut down their emissions to net-zero so as to maintain the overall global temperature well below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

## Setbacks of COP 26

Although COP 26 has emphasized the reduction of the global carbon budget, it is not going to be easy to successfully achieve the targets that were set during the summit for the following reasons:

- The inability of many member nations to provide proper information regarding their plan of action in the process of zero carbon emissions.
- There is neither a fine nor a penalty in case any member country fails to achieve the target, which will result in the ignorant behavior of the members towards their targets.

- Some of the targets described in the summit are conditional in nature, meaning that the members have to achieve them on the availability of financial support.
- The summit was not able to commit the developed nations to the required funds. The summit could only urge the developed members to increase their financial support.

