

Paris Agreement

[UPSC Notes]

What is Paris Agreement?

The Paris Agreement, or COP 21, is a gathering held between November 30th, 2015, and December 12th, 2015. This is one of the most important agreements endorsed by the members of the UNFCCC, as it talks about the rapidly increasing temperature of the earth. Certain initiatives and programs were started at this summit to maintain the global temperature under control.

- The Paris agreement is also commonly known as the Paris Climate Accord, and it was the first occasion when nearly all the countries not only identified the alarming situation of global warming but also unanimously accepted the measures to tackle this situation.
- The treaty signed at this summit is legally binding on all 196 member nations, and it is their responsibility to embrace the conditions listed in the agreement.

Aim of Paris Agreement

The Paris agreement is a consensus that talks about various factors responsible for global warming, such as carbon budget, emission of greenhouse gases, increasing global temperature, pollution, deforestation, etc.

- The summit also reveals the reasons and impacts of other environment-related problems such as pollution, rising sea levels, ozone depletion, water contamination, degraded air quality, etc.
- The main agenda of the Paris agreement was to adopt measures to restrict the temperature of the planet to below 2 degrees Celsius by the end of the century and try to restrict it to below 1.5 degrees by the middle of the century.

Announcements of the Paris Agreement

Some of the most significant announcements in the field of environmental protection were made in the Paris climate agreement. The major outcomes of the conference are explained below.

- To enforce the member countries to adopt checks and measures to limit the global temperature by 2 degrees Celsius by the end of the 21st century and also to push in some extra efforts to keep the temperature below 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2050.

- to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20% because carbon dioxide is the primary contributory greenhouse gas responsible for global warming.
- to focus on increasing clean, pollution-free, and renewable energy production by 20%.
- To reduce reliance on traditional energy production methods, aim for a 20% increase in energy efficiency.
- support and develop the infrastructure for the countries that are more vulnerable to climate change.
- assignment of responsibility to the developed nations to provide financial and technical aid to the developing nations.
- The rich and developed countries have been asked to maintain annual funding of at least 100 billion dollars after 2020 to assist with environmental programs.

India's Stand on Paris Agreement

India's assertion in this conference was regarding the required growth for the survival of a population of about 1.25 billion, of which more than 300 million people are deficient in energy access.

- Despite having very high energy requirements, India has chosen to reduce the intensity of greenhouse emissions per unit GDP by 33-35 percent from 2005 levels.
- India has committed to promoting the use of non-fossil fuels for at least 40% of installed capacity.
- India has pledged to achieve the production of at least 175 Giga Watts of renewable energy by the end of 2022.
- India has targeted increasing the large-scale forestation process so as to achieve a forest cover that would be able to absorb at least 2.5 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide.

Challenges in Achieving Goals of the Paris Agreement

Though the Paris climate agreement is full of significant declarations and advancements regarding climate change, it has not been able to produce the desired results due to the following reasons:

- The lack of sanctions or any other strict action on a member state in the case of violating the declarations of the agreement.
- Lack of financial stability weakens this campaign as huge funds are needed to implement the checks and measures and also to assist the underdeveloped members.
- The ignorant behavior of some members keeps their personal interests at top priority instead of agreement.