

Paris Agreement (COP 21)

The Paris Agreement was adopted by 196 countries at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP 21) in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. The agreement intends to reduce and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

Before COP 21 in Paris, countries were asked to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC's). There was a marked shift in the commitments from various countries. India was clubbed in the group of emerging economies and India lived up to its billing as a responsible nation in tackling climate change. In 2017, the US President announced his intention to withdraw from the agreement.

Paris Agreement COP 21 – Latest Update

1. The Climate Ambition Summit to mark the 5th Anniversary of the Paris Agreement started on 12th December 2020 at Glasgow, Scotland. It aimed to provide a platform for government and non-governmental leaders to demonstrate their commitment to Paris Agreement and the multilateral process.
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a virtual speech at the Climate Ambition Summit that India has reduced its global emissions by 21 per cent compared to 2005 and is on its way to do more, details are discussed below.

The article will in detail talk about COP 21 as it would be of importance in the [IAS Exam](#) for both Prelims and Mains.

The topic, 'Paris Agreement', is an important segment of the Environment and Ecology syllabus of [UPSC Mains GS III](#). Aspirants can prepare similar important environment topics by referring to the links below:

- [Rotterdam Convention](#)
- [Bonn Convention](#)
- [Basel Convention](#)
- [Stockholm Convention](#)
- [Vienna Convention](#)
- [Ramsar Convention](#)
- [CITES](#)
- [Kyoto Protocol](#)
- [Cartagena Protocol](#)
- [Nagoya Protocol](#)
- [Minamata Convention](#)

Key Facts about Paris Agreement – COP 21

What is the Paris Agreement?

It is a multilateral agreement within the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#); signed to reduce, mitigate greenhouse-gas-emissions.

Official site – <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

When was the Paris Agreement signed?

An agreement was signed on 22 April 2016.

How many countries signed the Paris Agreement?

Currently, 195 UNFCCC members have signed it. However, US President Donald Trump has announced his intention to withdraw from the agreement by November 2020.

The goal of the Paris Agreement

1. To curtail the rise of global temperature this century below 2-degree Celsius, above pre-industrial levels; and also pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.
2. Develop mechanisms to help and support countries that are very vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. An example would be countries like the Maldives facing threat due to sea-level rise.
3. Confirms the obligation that developed countries have towards developing countries, by providing them financial and technological support.

The agreement talks about 20/20/20 targets, i.e.

1. Carbon Dioxide emissions reductions by 20%,
2. Work on increasing the renewable energy market share by 20%
3. Target to increase energy efficiency by 20%

What is Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)?

1. It means the contributions that need to be done by each country to achieve the overall global goal.
2. The contributions need to be reported every 5 years to UNFCCC.
3. The contributions are not legally binding.
4. The goal is to make sure that all countries have access to technical expertise and financial capability to meet the climate challenges.

Climate Ambition Summit 2020

1. The United Nations, France, United Kingdom in partnership with Italy and Chile hosted the Climate Ambition Summit 2020 in Glasgow Scotland to mark the 5th Anniversary of the Paris Agreement.

2. The Summit provided a meaningful platform for businesses, cities and other non-state actors who are rallying together and collaborating to support governments and accelerate the systemic change required to reduce emissions and build resilience.
3. The objective of the Climate Ambition Summit was to set out new and ambitious commitments under the three pillars of the Paris Agreement that are mitigation, adaptation and finance commitments.

Status of Global Emission After 5 years of the Paris Agreement

All the states have submitted their national contributions to mitigate and adapt to climate change after 5 years of the agreement –

- China has the highest GHG emissions (30%) while the US contributes 13.5% and the EU 8.7%. Earlier the emission status was like (China at 13% while, the US had the highest emissions at 25%, followed by EU at 22%).
- Besides India, only Bhutan, the Philippines, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Morocco, and Gambia complied with the Paris Climate Accord.

Paris Climate Accord

- It is a legally binding international treaty on climate change that was adopted by 196 countries at the Conference of the Parties COP 21 in Paris in December 2015.
- The objective of the Paris Climate Accord was to achieve the long-term temperature goal. Countries aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to achieve a climate-neutral world by mid-century.
- The main goal of the Paris Climate Accord is to limit global warming to well below 2° Celsius and preferably limit it to 1.5° Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.

- The contributions are radically insufficient to reach the well below the 2° Celsius limit and are even further from the 1.5° Celsius limit given in the Paris Agreement.

India's Status of Current Emissions –

- A [United Nations](#) report released earlier this year stated that India's per capita emissions are actually 60% lower than the global average.

The [list of Reports published by International Organizations](#) can be checked on the link provided here.

- The emissions in the country grew 1.4% in 2019, much lower than its average of 3.3% per year over the last decade.
- Some of the Measures taken by India to Control Emissions:
 - [National Solar Mission](#): It is a major initiative of the Government of India and State Governments to promote ecologically sustainable growth while addressing India's energy

security challenge.

- [Bharat Stage \(BS\) VI norms](#): These are emission control standards put in place by the government to keep a check on air pollution.
- [National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy 2018](#): The main objective of the policy is to provide a framework for the promotion of large grid-connected wind-solar photovoltaic (PV) hybrid systems for optimal and efficient utilization of wind and solar resources, transmission infrastructure and land.
- All these and many other initiatives helped India in cutting CO2 emissions by 164 million kg.

The major difference between the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement

In the Paris agreement, there is no difference between developing and developed countries. In the [Kyoto Protocol](#), there was a differentiation between developed and developing countries by clubbing them as Annex 1 countries and non-Annex 1 countries.

International transfer of Mitigation outcomes

As per the Paris agreement, Parties have the right to include the reduction of emissions in any other country as their NDC, as per the system of carbon trading and accounting.

Financial Support pledged during the Paris 2015 Agreement

1. Developed countries have committed \$ 100 Billion a year.
2. Finance would be balanced between mitigation and adaptation.
3. G7 countries announced the US \$ 420 Million for Climate Risk Insurance and the launching of the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) initiative.
4. \$ 3 Billion commitment for Green Climate Fund.

What is Article 6 of the Paris Agreement?

1. Help Governments establish and implement Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)
2. Help establish a global price of carbon
3. The use of establishing a global price in Carbon is that if countries exceed their NDC, those countries will have to bear the cost of global warming.

India at COP 21

1. India put out a statement that we need to grow rapidly to meet the aspiration of 1.25 Billion population, and out of this 300 Million people are without access to energy.
2. Yet despite the growing demands, India has pledged to reduce emissions intensity per unit GDP by 33-35% of 2005 levels
3. Aiming to reach 40% of installed capacity from non-fossil fuels.

4. Targeting 175 GW of renewable energy generation by 2022.
5. Planning to enlarge forest cover to absorb 2.5 Billion tonnes worth of carbon dioxide.
6. Reducing dependence on fossil fuels through levies and reduction in subsidies.
7. India exhorted on the principles of equity and differentiated responsibilities
8. As per India, equity means national commitments that must be consistent with the carbon space nations occupy.
9. India expects developed countries to mobilize 100 billion US dollars annually by 2020 for mitigation and adaptation in developing countries.

