

FAQs

Glasgow Climate Pact analysis

Q What is the context?

A The Glasgow Climate Pact was adopted recently and, as was to be expected, it is a mixed bag of modest achievements and disappointed expectations.

Q What is stand of Fossil Fuel?

A Transition away from fossil fuel

- The Pact is the first clear recognition of the need to transition away from fossil fuels, though the focus was on giving up coal-based power altogether.
- India introduced an amendment at the last moment to replace this phrase with “phase down” and this played negatively with both the advanced as well as a large constituency of developing countries.
- This amendment reportedly came as a result of consultations among India, China, the UK and the US.
- As the largest producer and consumer of coal and coal-based thermal power, it is understandable that China would prefer a gradual reduction rather than total elimination.
- India may have had similar concerns.

Q How was Recognition of Adaptation?

A

- There is a welcome recognition of the importance of Adaptation and there is a commitment to double the current finance available for this to developing countries.
- Since this amount is currently only \$15 billion, doubling will mean \$ 30 billion.
- This remains grossly inadequate.
- According to UNEP, adaptation costs for developing countries are currently estimated at \$70 billion annually and will rise to an estimated \$130-300 billion annually by 2030.
- A start is being made in formulating an adaptation plan and this puts the issue firmly on the Climate agenda, balancing the overwhelming focus hitherto on mitigation.

FAQs

Q What was the disappointment on the issue of finance?

A

- The Paris Agreement target of \$100 billion per annum between 2005-2020 was never met with the shortfall being more than half, according to some calculations.
- There is now a renewed commitment to delivering on this pledge in the 2020-2025 period and there is a promise of an enhanced flow thereafter.
- But in a post-pandemic global economic slowdown, it is unlikely these promises will be met.
- In any event, it is unlikely that India will get even a small slice of the pie.
- The same applies to the issue of compensation for loss and damage for developing countries who have suffered as a result of climate change for which they have not been responsible.

Q What has been Initiatives on methane and deforestation?

A

- Two important plurilateral outcomes could potentially develop into more substantial measures.
- The most important is an agreement among 100 countries to cut methane emissions by 30 per cent by 2030. India is not a part of this group.
- Cutting methane emissions, which is generated mainly by livestock, is certainly useful but there is a much bigger methane emergency around the corner as the earth's permafrost areas in Siberia, Greenland and the Arctic littoral begin to melt due to global warming that has already taken place and will continue to take place in the coming years.
- Another group of 100 countries has agreed to begin to reverse deforestation by 2030.
- India did not join the group due to concerns over a clause on possible trade measures related to forest products.

Q What are Implications of US-China Joint Declaration on Climate Change for India?

A

- Declaration was a departure for China, which had held that bilateral cooperation on climate change could not be insulated from other aspects of their relations.
- The declaration implies a shift in China's hardline position.
- It appears both countries are moving towards a less confrontational, more cooperative relationship overall.

FAQs

- This will have geopolitical implications, including for India, which may find its room for manoeuvre shrinking.

Q What can be way forward?

A As in the past, the can has been kicked down the road, except that the climate road is fast approaching a dead-end. What provides a glimmer of light is the incredible and passionate advocacy of urgent action by young people across the world. This is putting enormous pressure on governments and leaders and if sustained, may become irresistible.

SRIRAM'S IAS[®]