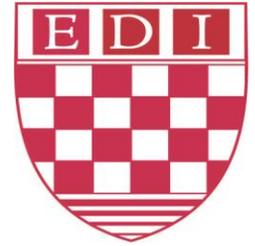




INSP
Institut national
du service public



Seminar Report

International Climate Negotiations.

The Executive Development Institute (EDI), National School of Public Policy (NSPP) held a One Day Seminar on International Climate Negotiations on January 27, 2023.

Speaker:

Mr. Jourdain Vaillant (French Expert).

Mr. Jourdain gave a historical overview of climate change and explained its scientific relevance. He then discussed climate governance within the context of UN conventions and frameworks followed by a discourse on climate negotiations.

A Historical Overview of Climate Change

Mr. Jourdain explained that during the late 1900s people started to raise concerns regarding changes in climate. The need to understand climate science for the stabilization of climate started in 1988, with an inter-governmental panel to monitor impact of various activities on climate. Then in 1992, the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) made a distinction between climate change which was attributable to human activities and climate variability, as attributable to natural causes. According to this Convention, “Climate Change” was defined to mean a change in climate, which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere. Then natural climate variability started to be observed over comparable periods and subsequently, various international conventions and frameworks were established as it became evident that climate change was a real and global phenomenon. The international community tried to build a resolve through these frameworks, but was not as successful due to massive gaps between targets and achievements. However, UNCCC did play a crucial role in defining climate change and raising awareness for climate action. Thereafter subsequent events in the Paris Agreement of 2015, followed by COPs indicate the rising international concern for setting targets and tracking achievements in climate negotiations and diplomacy.

The Reality of Climate Change

It is evident that climatic variations and their consequences are apparent. Therefore getting an easy or early exit from this situation is very challenging keeping the high concentration of Greenhouse Gas(GHGs) emissions in view. These are infact increasing by virtue of advancement of technology and human activities which are responsible for releasing GHGs in to the atmosphere GHG comprises of the 'Big-3 Gases' which are major drivers of climate change and include Carbon Dioxide (CO₂), Methane (CH₄) and Nitrous oxide (N₂O). Carbon dioxide is measured by part per million (ppm), Methane is measured by parts per billion (ppb) and Nitrous oxide is measured by parts per billion (ppb). The concentration of these three gases first rose to 150% then 262%, from preindustrial levels to date. Such high concentration in the atmosphere is responsible for a rise in global temperature. The urgent need to take steps for mitigating effects of global warming are beyond doubt the foremost concern that climate governance needs to target for reducing such consequences.

Climate Governance

Increasing global warming needs climate actions for reducing gas emissions to reinforce resilient capacities in our societies and to enforce enabling policies to tackle climate nationally and internationally. There is a regime complex for dealing with climate change, which includes bilateral initiatives, clubs (G20, G7), subnational actions, and multilateral developments etc. UN legal regimes are more vocal among all, which include Climate COPs, UN Conference on Environment and Development, or 'Rio Earth Summit', 1992, Convention on the Biological Diversity (CBD), UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Out of these complex regimes, three more regimes emerge, the first is COP (Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC-1992 while the second is CMP (Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol-1997). As the Kyoto Protocol was binding, the USA and Canada withdrew from this Protocol. The third is CMA (Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement - 2015).

The IPCC under the UN Framework has played a crucial role in tackling climate governance with an objective for promoting governance, politics, and observation of the phenomenon of climate change. The IPCC publishes climate assessment reports after every 5 years. In 2022, climate has been acknowledged as a sensitive subject, therefore now the reports on climate are being evaluated on technical and scientific grounds. The finding of reports is being based on a mix of authors belonging to different regions of the world i.e. from the developed and developing countries to

ensure that reports are neither biased nor unrepresentative. Currently, Pakistan is being represented by experts from Ministry of Climate Change, Global Change Impact Studies Centre, Peshawar, and LUMS (Lahore University of Management Science).

In the recent report titled 'AR6' published in 2021, it is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, oceans and land. Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, oceans, cryosphere, and biosphere have occurred. It is no secret that the West is somewhat responsible for climatic changes which started appearing in the middle of the 19th century during the Industrial Revolution with the high use of fossil fuels and coal. The United States, China, Russia, Brazil, Indonesia, Germany, India, United Kingdom, Japan and Canada have high cumulative emissions. Besides, fossil fuels and industry, agricultural land, land use changes, and deforestation have been major actors behind these changes. Resultantly, these climatic variations do not seem to be controlled as they are accelerating to cause more changes in climate and posing massive difficulty in tackling the root cause which is deeply immersed in our systems.

Climate Negotiations

In the context of international negotiations, Robert PUTNAM¹ gave a theory of Two-Level Game Model, which explains that before getting into any sort of negotiations, the international negotiator should understand two important aspects. The foremost part is to understand national commitments, first in terms of rules and regulations and the ability to sign a declaration in the domestic context. The second step is to explore the possibility of aligning those commitments internationally. Regarding the financing of fossil fuel exploration and the case of France, no agreement was signed as France displayed its responsible understanding of its impact on the climate.

Regarding international negotiations, the Paris Agreement in 2015 has been a remarkable initiative for providing a roadmap on climate governance, politics, and negotiations. It has also provided grounds for diplomacy to promote a climate agenda on international forums. It has three pillars for negotiations i.e. i) Mitigation, ii) Adaptation, iii) Financing.

Mitigation: May be understood *a human intervention to reduce emission or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases.*² Mitigation is crucial for controlling the impact of climate change and the scientific community has helped in providing a framework for climate negotiations, which resulted in the Paris Agreement of 2015. It provides a framework for mitigations as it helps in registering nationally determined contributions and promoting agreed commitments, which aim to reach Net Zero Emissions by the second half of this century. Despite having a well-defined framework, global GHG emissions and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) announced prior to

¹ Robert PUTNAM, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games." *International Organization*, vol. 42, 1988

² IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)

COP26 make it likely that global warming will exceed 1.5° C. It appears harder after 2030 to limit warming to below 2° C. By 2050, the target of limiting temperature to 1.5° C may be achieved, if policies are implemented in true spirit. This seems ambitious but possible if certain measures are taken such as generating energy from renewable sources, shifting to electric cars, controlling sales of fossil fuel boilers and heavy trucks etc. Additionally, NDCs may be revised after every five years and submitted to the UN to oversee monitoring. According to COP27 the energy sector accounts for 75-80% of greenhouse gases. This underscores the need to rapidly transform energy systems to be more secure, reliable, and resilient and by accelerating a clean and just transition to renewable energy resources during this critical decade of action.

Adaptation: May be understood as *increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and fostering climate resilience and lowering greenhouse gas emissions, in a manner that does not threaten food production*³. This is equally important for both human and natural systems to evolve towards a process of adjustment to actual or expected climate change and its effects, in order to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. There are two kinds of adaptation: *incremental*, which maintains the essence and integrity of a system *transformational*, which changes the fundamental attributes of a socio-ecological system in anticipation of climate change and its impacts.

Adaptation is a challenging phenomenon as simultaneous extreme events compound risks which are difficult to manage, such as increasing heat and drought, heat stress among farm workers which reduce productivity and lead to low household income and resultant poverty. Adaptation is an underrated phenomenon due to international funding gaps, insufficient adaptation planning, and high regional discrepancies.

Financing: May be understood as *finance can be received from local public sources, national sources of private sectors and through transnational alternative sources*. Under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, there is an adaptation fund within the financial mechanism of Green Climate Fund, and Global Environmental Facility for Least Developed Countries. In this context the Copenhagen Accord of 18 December 2009 has pledge USD 100 billion for mitigation actions and transparency on implementation. Developed countries have the potential to commit to a goal of mobilizing funds jointly to address the needs of developing countries. However, the USA, Canada, and Australia are contributing less climate finance than their share of historical emissions.

Finally, it is important to improve conditions that affect the feasibility of adaptation and mitigation options, and which can accelerate and scale-up systemic transitions that limit temperature increase to 1.5° C and enhance capacities of systems and societies to adapt to the associated climate change, while achieving sustainable development, eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities. Enabling

³ Paris Agreement-2015 Article-2

conditions include finance, technological innovation, strengthening policy instruments, institutional capacity, multi-level governance, and changes in human behavior and lifestyles. They also include inclusive processes, attention to power asymmetries and unequal opportunities for development and reconsideration of values.