

Forum: Special Conference on Shaping Tomorrow (SPECON)

Issue: Strengthening Global Strategies to Combat Climate Change in Accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals



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Personal Introduction

Dear delegates,

First of all, I would like to welcome you to the 9th ACGMUN Conference. My name is Melina Kanellopoulou, I have been an active member of the MUN community for the past 3 years, and I am a 10th grade student at Ursulines. It is an utmost honor for me to serve as one of the Deputy Presidents at this year's ACGMUN Special Conference.

This year's agenda, 'Shaping Tomorrow', allows delegates to learn, discuss and tackle topics that affect nations worldwide. In particular, climate change will shape our future. Therefore, it is crucial that we understand its impacts and how we can reduce them.

I sincerely hope you find this study guide helpful and enjoy preparing for this conference as much as I enjoyed writing this study guide. Aside from reviewing the study guide, I strongly suggest you also conduct your own personal research, particularly on the policies of the country you have been assigned. This will help you participate more effectively in the debate. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at melokanello@gmail.com.

Kind regards,

Melina Kanellopoulou.

Topic introduction

Climate change has become one of the most important global challenges of this century, threatening wildlife, the environment and therefore all humans. Scientists estimate that increasingly rising greenhouse gas emissions caused by the excessive use of fossil fuels, the destruction of

ecosystems and the unsustainable industrial methods, will raise global temperature to shattering levels. Although some progress has been made, for instance the Paris Agreement, an international treaty aiming at combating climate change through limiting global warming to below 2°C¹, it remains insufficient, due to lack of enforcement and funding, as well as the vagueness of each country's goals.

The effects of apathy are profound, with sea levels and temperature rising, polar ice melting and forced migration caused by environmental factors becoming a phenomenon, endangering species and destroying vital ecosystems. Strengthening global strategies to combat climate change is consequently critical not only for the prevention of irreversible environmental damage but also to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) which acknowledge every type of climate action as fundamental to global peace, resistance and solidarity.

This topic is directly connected to the theme, "Shaping Tomorrow", as climate change is already shaping the world we live in, affecting societies economically as well as politically. In addition to that, climate change contributes significantly to innovation, given that it pushes societies to create and develop new technologies and solutions to combat this issue.

Definition of Key Terms

Climate Change

"Climate change is the significant variation of weather conditions becoming, for example, warmer, wetter, or drier-over several decades or longer"². Nowadays, climate change is considered to be a product of human activities.

Global Warming

"A gradual increase in world temperatures caused by gases such as carbon dioxide that are collecting in the air around the earth and stopping heat escaping into space"³.

Greenhouse Effect

¹UNFCCC. "The Paris Agreement." *United Nations Climate Change*, 2025, unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement.

²" Explore Country and Subnational Data | Climate Change Knowledge Portal." *Climate Change Knowledge Portal*, 2025, climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/explore

³"GLOBAL WARMING | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary." *Dictionary.cambridge.org*, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/global-warming

“ An increase in the amount of carbon dioxide and other gases in the atmosphere, that is believed to be the cause of a gradual warming of the surface of the earth”⁴.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

“The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global objectives established by the United Nations in 2015 to guide development and promote a more sustainable, just and resilient future. These goals are designed to address the urgent global challenges of poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice”⁵.

Background Information

History and development of Climate change

Although the climate on Earth has cycled through eight ice ages over the past eight hundred thousand years, humanity is currently causing excessive warming at levels ten times faster than ever again. Ancient evidence, which can be found in tree rings, ocean sediments, coral reefs, and layers of sedimentary rocks, reveal that current warming is occurring roughly 10 times faster than the average rate of warming after an ice age⁶. Consequently, the year of 2024 was the warmest year on record with reaching 1.46°C above pre-industrial averages and therefore record on ocean heat was reached. To tackle this, humanity has led many efforts. To begin with, the 1987 Montreal Protocol was signed, aiming at repairing the ozone layer, which is actually to be recovered by 2066. In addition to that, Brazil reduced deforestation on Amazon by 50% and the United Kingdom banned using coal in 2024. In conclusion, in spite of the progress made through the Paris Agreement, global temperatures are forecast to rise 2.9°C by 2100, unless countries act in a coordinated manner, in order to eliminate emissions and consequently pollution. The shift toward current climate change was firstly ignited by the Industrial Revolution’s transition to the utilization of machines, increasing emissions of carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide through excessive fossil fuel consumption and widespread deforestation.

⁴“GLOBAL WARMING | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” *Dictionary.cambridge.org*, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/global-warming

⁵Giulia. “Definition of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).” *La Plateforme de Réemploi Qu’il Vous Faut ! | La Plateforme de Réemploi Qu’il Vous Faut !*, 4 Dec. 2023, circularplace.fr/definition-of-the-17-sustainable-development-goals-sdgs/

⁶NASA. “Evidence.” *Science.nasa.gov*, NASA, 23 Oct. 2024, science.nasa.gov/climate-change/evidence/

Current situation

According to information and statistics from major scientific organizations, such as NASA and Copernicus, climate change has reached new vital levels. In fact, 2024 was ranked the warmest year in 175 years, with the average global surface temperature being 1.55 ± 0.13 °C above the pre-industrial average, marking the first calendar year to exceed the 1.5°C⁷. Furthermore, 2025 was the third hottest year with temperature at 1.47°C above pre-industrial levels, which is exactly the same as in the year 2023. Therefore, the Earth has just experienced, for the first time, a three-year period (2023-2025) where the average temperatures remained higher than the 1.5°C limit, signaling that the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement are in grave danger. Not only that but climate change has also contributed significantly to both frequency and intensity of extreme weather conditions. Due to the increasingly rising temperature and the continuously shifting atmosphere, excessive warming has been caused, leading to catastrophic floods, powerful hurricanes and dangerous wildfires. These natural disasters are not just climatic hazards but are being aggravated by anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions that cause irreplaceable material damage and numerous deaths.

Effects on society and wildlife

The impact that climate change leaves on the wildlife and society is often irreplaceable. Regarding the social aspect, climate change causes more frequent extreme weather conditions such as droughts and floods, that lead to the destruction of households and infrastructures. In fact, total disaster costs are now exceeding 2.3 trillion dollars annually when indirect and ecosystems impact is included. In addition to that, the health impacts of this phenomenon are extremely harmful with air pollution causing 7 million deaths per year. Not only that, but future generations will also inherit a world transformed by the actions of previous generations. As a result, they will have to deal with vital environmental problems they did not cause, indeed several studies indicate that children born today will experience 2 to 7 times more extreme climate events compared to those born in 1960, even under lower-emission scenarios. As for wildlife, global warming is likely to be the main cause of species extinctions this century, bearing in mind that 1.6% of species are already extinct due to a 1.3°C increase, rising to 29.7% at 5.4°C warming. Furthermore, the continuously rising sea levels, the droughts and the floods are leading to excessive habitat loss for the animals. According to a study,

⁷WMO. "State of the Global Climate 2024." *World Meteorological Organization*, 19 Mar. 2025, [wmo.int/publication-series/state-of-global-climate-2024](https://www.wmo.int/publication-series/state-of-global-climate-2024)

2,001 species have at least 25% of their habitat in areas experiencing high impact from hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis.

Challenges regarding climate change

Climate change is now universally recognized as a planetary menace. For this reason, the complexity of making sound decisions is increasing rapidly. Moreover, creating strong policies and organizing action plans and campaigns to combat climate change and mitigate its effects, consists of a challenge. Not to mention the continuous efforts of each government to adapt to this phenomenon due to the lack of resources and means. Furthermore, climate change constitutes a severe threat to global stability. Currently, 3.6 billion people live in highly vulnerable areas to social, health, political, economic and environmental challenges. Not to mention that according to the World Health Organization (WHO), 99% of people globally nowadays breathe air that exceeds the quality limits, turning the transition to clean air a critical health issue.

Rate of deaths and missing persons due to natural disasters, 2024

The annual number of deaths and missing persons due to all forms of natural disaster per 100,000 people.

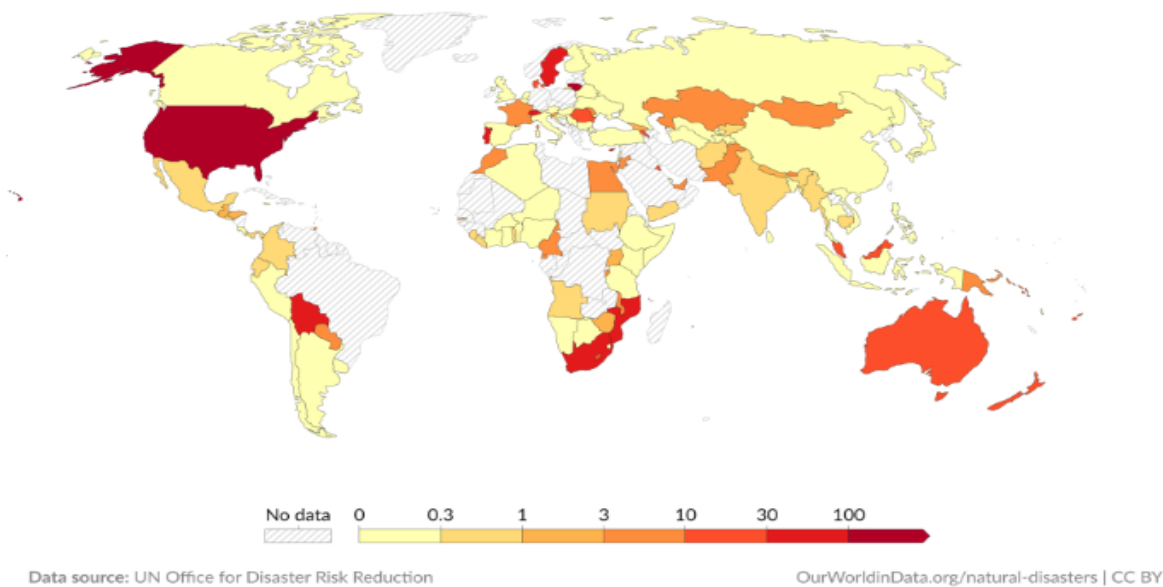


Figure 1: picture representing the number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population in the UN SDG framework.⁸

⁸ “Rate of Deaths and Missing Persons due to Natural Disasters.” *Our World in Data*, 2024, ourworldindata.org/grapher/deaths-and-missing-persons-due-to-natural-disasters?mapSelect=~AND . Accessed 10 Feb. 2026

Majors Countries and Organizations Involved

Chile

Chile is entering into force the 2022 Framework Law on Climate Change, as it is known for confronting extreme weather conditions, such as droughts, in recent years. This law not only establishes a national objective of carbon neutrality by 2050, but it also obliges the monitor of the progress approximately every 5 years. Currently, the law has contributed significantly in establishing a legally binding structure for climate change. Furthermore, the Chilean government aims to shut down all coal power plants by 2035 and replace them with renewable energy sources. Last but not least, according to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Chile is a globally recognized leader in the SDGs, ranking 36th globally for its commitment.

Denmark

Denmark adopted a five-goal strategic plan in order to reduce global warming and maintain it to a level below 1.5°C⁹. These plans include actions such as intensifying global ambition to confront the climate crisis, eliminating emissions that cause the greenhouse effect, and joining forces with private segments. Moreover, they promote green technologies and the use of renewable energy sources, reinforcing developing countries to face climate change more efficiently. Additionally, the Danish government aims to produce clean energy for millions of households by 2033 to minimize the reliance on fossil fuels by creating offshore wind turbines located in the North and Baltic Seas within the framework of an initiative called 'Energy Islands'. This project will contribute to the provision of being completely renewable. Regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Denmark is a global pioneer in this framework, successfully ranking among the top countries in the world.

France

France, since joining the Climate and Clean Air Coalition in 2012, has become a leading country in combating climate change and its effects. In particular, France has created a 100 billion recovery plan, in order to reach carbon neutrality by 2050. In fact, France's greenhouse emissions have been limited fundamentally, approximately 5.5% compared to 2022. The money is spent in green investments, such as green buses, electric vehicles and wind turbines. Internationally, France has promoted the use of environmentally friendly cooling technology, instead of air-conditions, aiming at

⁹Jansen, Christiana. "3 Leading Countries in Climate Policy." *Earth.org*, 1 Mar. 2023, earth.org/countries-climate-policy/

limiting the toxic gases and has provided financial help to Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) in order to help them tackle the effects of climate change. Not only that, but France has also banned diesel cars in Paris and passed laws to reduce food waste. Indeed, there have been significant drops in air pollution, with nitrogen dioxide levels decreasing by roughly 50% over two decades.

Sweden

Sweden adopted a strong strategy framework in order to combat climate change that consists of three main parts. Firstly, the country has set objectives namely to decrease fossil fuels emissions by 2030-2040 and to achieve net-zero emissions via carbon sequestration technologies by 2045 which will eliminate the remaining ones. Secondly, there is the Climate Act that obliges local authorities to base all policies on climate goals and send annual reports regarding their progress. In particular, the Climate Act was firstly activated on January 2018 and it indicates that the government's climate policy must be based on the climate targets¹⁰. Last but not least, Sweden has adopted the institution of the Climate Policy Council that rates the countries' action and ensures the commitment with durable objectives. Consequently, Sweden has experienced measurable decreases in emissions in the last few years. In addition to that, the country's national carbon tax currently is one of the highest in the world. Lastly, Sweden actively applies and integrates, into national policies, action plans and environmental objectives, the Sustainable Development Goals.

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom was the first country to pass a legal binding Climate Act in 2008 aiming at reaching net zero emissions by 2050. The country has made some huge environmental steps, such as creating some of the biggest wind farms in the world in order to produce clean energy. Additionally, the United Kingdom has eliminated the use of coal power plants. Worldwide, the country contributes significantly to organizations of international meetings, such as the COP26 summit, and has committed to limit state funding for fossil fuels projects abroad.

The European Union

¹⁰ Natur Vards Verket. "Sweden's Climate Act and Climate Policy Framework." *Www.naturvardsverket.se*, 2017, www.naturvardsverket.se/en/topics/climate-transition/sveriges-klimatarbete/swedens-climate-act-and-climate-policy-framework/

On 28 November 2019 the European Parliament, under the European Union, recognized the environmental crisis by stating a climate emergency, with the aim of the Commission to confirm that every proposal is brought to line in order to mitigate global warming.

Greenpeace

Greenpeace is a global, non-governmental organization, founded in 1971, that via peaceful manifestations and strategic communication, highlights environmental issues and promotes solutions. Nowadays, in more than 50 countries, Greenpeace works to mitigate deforestation, ensure the protection of ocean health, halt nuclear testing, and more. More specifically, they have contributed fundamentally to tackling climate change through raising awareness and mobilizing public action. Through solutions rooted in social justice, their goal is to help communities which are excessively impacted by climate change.

Blocks Expected

Alliance 1: Aspirational Climate Leaders

The first alliance will consist of countries that want strong emission reductions and immediate results. This alliance should consist of countries such as Germany, France, Denmark, Sweden, Netherlands, Canada, New Zealand, Japan, and Costa Rica.

Alliance 2: Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs)

The second alliance will consist of Developing Countries that need financial and material aid, but they also are the largest negotiating alliance in the United Nations. In this alliance will participate countries, such as: India, Brazil, South Africa, Indonesia, Egypt, Argentina, and Pakistan.

Timeline of events

Date	Description of event
1979	The First World Climate Conference is held declaring the climate change as a global political issue

1997	The Kyoto Protocol, which is the world's first greenhouse gas emissions reduction agreement, is adopted.
4 November 2016	Paris Agreement is being enacted
28 November 2019	The European Parliament declares a climate emergency in order for the Commission to ensure that all relevant legislative and budgetary proposals are fully aligned with the objective of limiting global warming to less than 1.5°C.
December 2019	COP25 was held in Madrid, focusing on the progression of the Paris Agreement
November 2024	COP29 takes place where all countries decide to triple the previous objective.

Relevant UN Resolutions, Treaties & Events

Sustainable Development Goals:

17 Global Goals were adopted by all countries of the United Nations as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The agenda contains a plan with the duration of 15 years, aiming at achieving all the objectives. The 17 Goals apply to all countries, and need to be carried out by every government, stakeholder, school and individual. Additionally, they are interdependent, as if one goal is achieved the others are directly affected¹¹.

Sustainable Public Procurement and Ecolabelling (SPPEL):

¹¹UNDP. "Sustainable Development Goals | United Nations Development Programme." *UNDP*, 2023, www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals/climate-action

The Sustainable Public Procurement and Ecolabelling (SPELL) is a project conducted with the aim of using sustainable public procurement and green labelling simultaneously, in order for local authorities and industries to supply more ecological products. This project contributed to the organization of meetings and online seminars, on a regional level. Nationally, 12 Member States received financial aid to ameliorate their Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) systems. Overall, this initiative served to form organizations that guided countries towards more environmentally sustainable practices.

29th Conference of the Parties

The COP29, which took place in November 2024, was an intergovernmental treaty that aimed to set a New Collective Quantified Goal on climate finance of at least \$300 billion annually by 2035, tripling the previously implemented budget. Additionally, they secured efforts of all public and private entities to scale up finance to developing countries to \$1.3 trillion per year by 2035.

[The Paris Agreement \(COP21\), 12th of December 2015 \(A/RES/75/300\):](#)

The Paris Agreement is a global treaty on climate change. It was adopted by a large majority of Member States with 195 countries voting in favor at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) which was held in Paris, on 12 December 2015. Its principal aim is to maintain “the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels”. To achieve this objective, most governments have adopted plans and strategies. For instance, they have started trying to achieve carbon-neutral goals and adopt eco-friendly technologies. For the first time, a strong agreement was made that units of all member states in order to mitigate climate change and adapt to its impact¹².

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

NATO Climate Change and Security Action Plan

The NATO Climate Change and Security Action Plan was adopted on 14 June 2021 in Brussels. NATO entered this plan into force as it has recognized climate change as a security challenge for many years. In addition to that, it has presented several advantages. For instance, this plan has contributed to the establishment of the Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence (CCASCOE), which is

¹² UNFCCC. “The Paris Agreement.” *United Nations Climate Change*, 2025, unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement

located in Montreal, by providing the central political instruction. The plan did not yield the desired results because nations lacked commitment.

The European Commission (EU) Carbon Tax (1992)

In 1992, the European Commission presented a plan aiming at keeping total annual carbon dioxide emissions in the year 2000 at the same level as in 1990. This plan was based mainly on two tools: organizing programs in order to enhance energy efficiency and implementing a 'Carbon Tax' that would raise the price of fossil fuels. Nevertheless, this project did not succeed, due to a conditionality clause mandated that the tax would be implemented only if other powerful competitors, such as the United States of America (USA), enacted similar policies or laws. The competitors did not agree and consequently, the tax was never established.

Arab Centre for Climate Change (ESCWA)

The Arab Centre of Climate Change (ESCWA) aims at addressing the effect that climate change has on sustainable development in the Arab region. More specifically, through forging strong partnerships the center supports Member States in spreading awareness via workshops on climate change. Mobilizing the public is crucial in tracking environmental issues as it involves political pressure, which contributes to the government's immediate action. This initiative was unsuccessful due to the nations' heavy dependence on fossil fuels. Particularly, many Arab regions rely on oil and therefore the policies significantly threaten the economy.

Possible Solutions

Promote international cooperation to enhance funding for environmental action

More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) can support both financially and materially, the developing countries to reach their climate objectives. For instance, they could provide green buses that use natural gas instead of fossil fuels. In order to make them more appealing to the public, it would be extremely beneficial to lower the prices of green products, such as electric vehicles, in order to promote them. Additionally, it is recommended that MEDCs provide Genetically Modified crops that require less water and energy, aiming at protecting the food system. This can be monitored by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as it is the legally recognized global framework for climate governance.

Promote the adoption of greener technologies

Another possible solution would be to promote the use of renewable energy sources and sustainable agriculture as they can significantly decrease pollution. In order to achieve these, it is urged that all nations start establishing wind turbines and encourage solar panels in every household. These projects could be financed by United Nations Agencies such as UNDP. The adoption of green technologies is an essential commitment to replacing outdated practices that harm the environment.

Encourage the adoption of circular economy

A Circular economy is an economic system based on the reuse and regeneration of materials or products, especially as a means of continuing production in a sustainable or environmentally friendly way¹³. It is a highly recommended economic system. Particularly, the circular economy contributes significantly to the reduction of waste as materials never end up being waste and by this way, people will be encouraged to recycle, reuse, and repair. Additionally, by extending the life cycle of products we reduce the level of greenhouse emissions per year. Lastly, circular economy can be implemented via the establishment of national policy standards for recycled materials and via the creation of advanced recycling centers.

Encourage the decarbonization of urban infrastructures

Decarbonizing urban infrastructures is vital in combating climate change. For this reason, in order to achieve net-zero, policies that target this kind of energy must be implemented. These include shifting to a circular "urban metabolism" where embodied carbon is reduced through the use of bio-based construction materials, and wasted energy is reclaimed via modern district heating systems that capture excess heat from data centers and factories¹⁴. In conclusion, decarbonization will contribute significantly to the economic growth of the city, will improve the public health and mainly will reduce the pollution.

Recommending action for the protection of oceans

Ocean protection is a vital but undervalued strategy to tackle climate change. In addition to that, it is widely known that marine ecosystems are extremely effective in absorbing carbon as they store CO₂ at levels up to five times greater than tropical forests. But in spite of that, such systems are currently in danger, due to industrial overfishing, deep-sea mining and plastic pollution. In order to

¹³"Oxford Languages." *Oxford Languages*, Oxford University Press, 2025, languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/

¹⁴"Decarbonising Buildings in Cities and Regions." *OECD*, www.oecd.org/en/about/programmes/decarbonising-buildings-in-cities-and-regions.html

achieve oceans' protection, raising awareness campaigns and fundraising events are crucial. Moreover, hold governments accountable to their commitment to protect and conserve.

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