



Climate Reparation

For Prelims: Climate reparations, Polluter Pays Principle, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Efforts (UNOCHA), The Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM).

For Mains: Climate Reparation, Climate Change.

Why in News?

Recently, Pakistan is witnessing the **worst flooding disaster in its history**, therefore it has begun **demanding reparations, or compensation**, from the rich countries that are mainly responsible for causing climate change.

What is Climate Reparation?

- Climate reparations refer to a **call for money to be paid by the developed countries to the developing countries** as a means of addressing the historical contributions that the Developed countries have made (and continue to make) toward climate change.

Who is Responsible for Climate Change?

- **Historical Emissions:** Historical **responsibility of the Western nations** is important because carbon dioxide remains in the atmosphere for hundreds of years, and it is the **cumulative accumulation of this carbon dioxide that causes global warming**.
- **Polluter Pays Principle:** The concept of the **Polluter Pays principle** makes the polluter **liable for paying** not just for the cost of remedial action, but also for compensating the victims of environmental damage caused by their actions.
 - The **United States and the European Union**, including the UK, account for **over 50% of all emissions** during the present time.
 - If **Russia, Canada, Japan, and Australia** too are included, the combined contribution goes past **65% or almost two-thirds of all emissions**.
 - Further, a country like India, currently the **third largest emitter, accounts for only 3% of historical emissions**. Whereas, China, which is the world's **biggest emitter for over 15 years now, has contributed about 11% to total emissions since 1850**.
- **Global Impact:** The impacts of climate change are **much more severe on the poorer nations** because of their geographical locations and weaker capacity to cope.
 - This is what is giving rise to demands for loss and damage compensation, countries that have had **negligible contributions to historical emissions and have severe limitations of resources** are the ones that face the most devastating impacts of climate change.
- **Impact on India:** The economic loss from **cyclone Amphan** in India and Bangladesh in 2020 has been assessed at **USD 15 billion**.

What did the International Conventions say about Climate Responsibility?

- **Admission of Responsibility:** The **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**, the 1994 international agreement that **lays down the broad principles of the global effort** to fight climate change, explicitly acknowledges this **differentiated responsibility of nations**.
 - It makes it very clear that **rich countries must provide both finance and technology** to developing nations to help them tackle climate change.
 - The rich countries agreed to provide USD 100 billion to the developing world every year as a result of this mandate.
 - **Present Status:** The promise of USD 100 billion in assistance to developing countries is yet to be completed.
 - According to a recent report by the **UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Efforts (UNOCHA)**, prepared for the **UN General Assembly**, annual funding requests related to **climate-linked disasters averaged USD 15.5 billion in the three-year period between 2019 and 2021**.
 - The United States alone is estimated to have “inflicted more than USD 1.9 trillion in damages to other countries” due to its emissions.
 - **Non-Economic Losses:** There are non-economic losses, including **loss of lives, displacement and migration, health impacts, and damage to cultural heritage**.
 - **Economic Losses:** The unavoidable annual economic losses from climate change were projected to reach somewhere between USD 290 billion to USD 580 billion by the year 2030.
- **Initiatives:** The **developing countries and NGOs** managed to establish a separate channel for loss and damages at international climate change negotiations.
 - Therefore, **the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damages**, set up in 2013, was the first formal acknowledgment of the need to compensate developing countries struck by climate disasters.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Which of the following statements regarding ‘Green Climate Fund’ is/are correct? (2015)

1. It is intended to assist the developing countries in adaptation and mitigation practices to counter climate change.
2. It is founded under the aegis of UNEP, OECD, Asian Development Bank and World Bank.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (a)

Exp:

- **Green Climate Fund (GCF) was established to support the developing countries in their efforts to challenge** climate change by aiding them in shifting to low-emission and climate-resilient development regime. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- GCF is designed as an operating entity of the UNFCCC’s financial mechanism and is headquartered in Incheon, Republic of Korea.
- In 2010, the 194 member countries or Conference of Parties (COP) of the UNFCCC in its 16th session agreed to create a Green Climate Fund (GCF). **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- The GCF aims to deliver equal amounts of funding for mitigation and adaptation, while being guided by the Convention’s principles and provisions.
- The GCF was given an important role in serving the Paris Agreement and supporting the goal of

keeping climate change well below 2°C. **Therefore, option (a) is the correct answer.**

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