

## Paris Climate Agreement

As per United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), climate change is that alters the composition of the global atmosphere attributed directly or indirectly to human activity and that is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods. Climate change is a complex problem, which, although environmental in nature, has consequences for all spheres of existence on our planet. Geographical studies indicate that a mere 2 degree rise in temperature can trigger catastrophic and unpredictable events across the world. Climate change, by its nature, cannot be dealt in isolation by any single nation. It requires collective effort from all the nations.

In an effort to foster global consensus and cooperation, a multilateral political framework called United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was brokered at the Rio summit in 1992. On the basis of this framework, annual summits called Conference of Parties (COPs) are held to reformulate measures and assess the impact of previous COPs.

The latest edition of COP at Paris (COP21) has been hailed as a watershed in climate negotiations. The Paris edition saw one of the most complex negotiations till date as nations try to accommodate national interests while stretching to meet global climate goals.

The agreement's main aim is to keep the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degree Celsius and to drive efforts to limit the temperature increase even further down to 1.5 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels. One of the defining features of the Paris outcome has

been ending the strict differentiation between developed and developing nations. With this clarification, the sticking issue of 'Common but differentiated Responsibility' (CBDR) has been partially ironed out. CBDR imposes binding emission targets on developed countries while developing countries are excluded.

The straitjacket 'top-down' approach in allocating binding targets have given way to a more pragmatic 'bottom-up' approach in the form of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC). The INDCs give parties more latitude in curtailing domestic carbon emissions based on their capacities and circumstances. For the first time, the nations have committed to report regularly on emissions and progress made in implementing and achieving their NDCs and to undergo international review. The first global stock- take will take place in 2023 to assess the collective progress made in achieving the long term goals.

The Paris agreement with respect to mitigation strategy of global emissions is two-folded. First it expects countries to reach peak emission levels and then to achieve the goal of 'net greenhouse gas neutrality'. The 'net greenhouse gas neutrality' refers to striking balance between carbon emission of human origin and carbon capture through forest cover. The core mitigation commitments are common to all but the expectations are differentiated. The developed nations are legally bound to undertake economy-wide targets whereas developing nations are encouraged to do so over time.

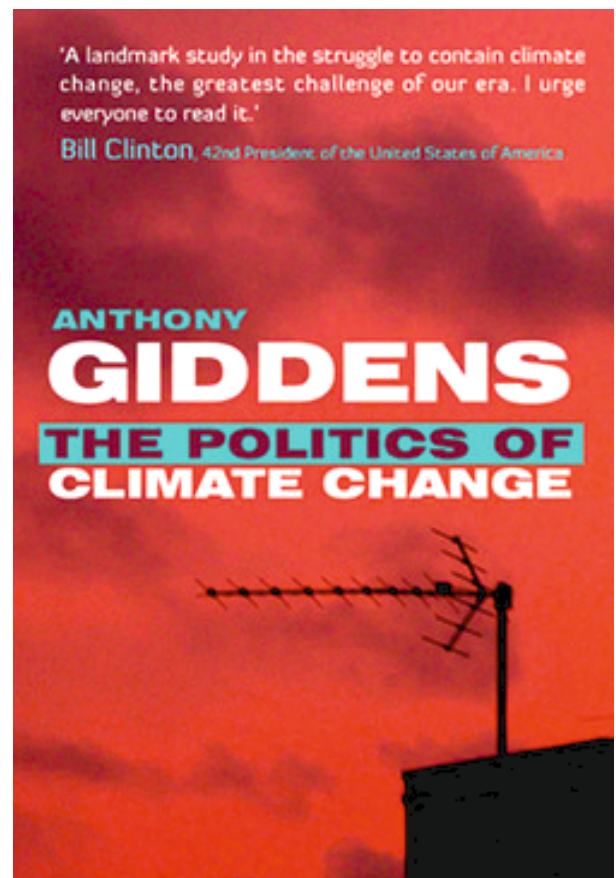
The finance for mitigation and adaptation has been a major stumbling block in Paris treaty. While developing nation sought stronger assurances that finances will be scaled up from developed nations, the latter tried to push wealthier developing nations to contribute as well. The final treaty provides for voluntary contributions from developing nations too.

India has been crusading for climate justice on the central plank of CBDR. It has committed to improve its emissions intensity per unit GDP from 33 to 35 percent by 2030 and to creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tons of carbon dioxide through additional tree cover. India formulated a holistic climate policy with precedence on clean energy, especially renewable energy, enhancement of energy efficiency, development of less carbon intensive and resilient urban centres, promotion of waste to wealth, safe, smart and sustainable green transportation network and abatement of pollution. India has put forward a well-balanced climate plan that will generate transformational changes. India's INDC are ambitious and forward looking. However it is to be seen how the implementation challenges are going to be tackled.

## Book Scan

**Politics of Climate Change**  
by Anthony Giddens

“The Politics of Climate Change presents a 'realist' perspective on the political issues posed by climate change – that is, it treats global warming as a political, rather than a scientific or economic problem, examining various aspects of climate change politics and importance of the green



movement and the geopolitics of climate change to international negotiations and domestic policies, technologies and taxes.

Political action and intervention, on local, national and international levels, is going to have a decisive effect on whether or not we can limit global warming, as well as how we adapt to that already occurring. At the moment, however, Anthony Giddens argues that we do not have a systematic politics of climate change. Politics—as-usual won't allow us to deal with the problems we face, while the main challenge to orthodox politics, the green movement, are flawed at source. Giddens introduces a range of new concepts and proposals to fill in the gap, and examines in depth the connections between climate change and energy security.”

## Climate Negotiations timeline

- 1979 The first World Climate Conference takes place.
- 1988 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is set up.
- 1990 The IPCC and the second World Climate Conference call for a global treaty on climate change. The United Nations General Assembly negotiations on a framework convention begin.
- 1991 First meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee takes place.
- 1992 At the Earth Summit in Rio, the UNFCCC is opened for signature along with its sister Rio Conventions, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification.
- 1994 The UNFCCC entered into force.
- 1995 The first Conference of the Parties (COP 1) takes place in Berlin.
- 1996 The UNFCCC Secretariat is set up to support action under the Convention.
- 1997 The Kyoto Protocol is formally adopted in December at COP3.
- 2001 The Marrakesh Accords are adopted at COP7, detailing the rules for implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, setting up new funding and planning instruments for adaptation, and establishing a technology transfer framework.
- 2005 Entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol. The first Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (MOP 1) takes place in Montreal. In accordance with Kyoto Protocol requirements, Parties launched negotiations on the next phase of the KP
- 2007 The IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report is released. Climate science entered into popular consciousness. At COP13, Parties agreed on the Bali Road Map, which charted the way towards a post-2012 outcome.
- 2009 Copenhagen Accord drafted at COP15 in Copenhagen. Countries later submitted emissions reductions pledges or mitigation action pledges, all non-binding.
- 2010 Cancun Agreements drafted and largely accepted by the COP, at COP16. Through the Agreements, countries made their emission reduction pledges official, in what was the largest collective effort the world has ever seen to reduce emissions in a mutually accountable way.
- 2011 The Durban Platform for Enhanced Action drafted and accepted by the COP, at COP17. In Durban, governments clearly recognized the need to draw up the blueprint for a fresh universal, legal agreement to deal with climate change beyond 2020, where all will play their part to the best of their ability and all will be able to reap the benefits of success together.
- 2012 The Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol is adopted by the CMP at CMP8. The amendment includes: new commitments for Annex I Parties to the Kyoto Protocol who agreed to take on commitments in a second commitment period from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2020; a revised list of greenhouse gases to be reported on by Parties in the second commitment period; and amendments to several articles of the Kyoto Protocol pertaining to the first commitment period and which needed to be updated for the second commitment period.
- 2013 Key decisions adopted at COP19/CMP9 include decisions on further advancing the Durban Platform, the Green Climate Fund and Long Term Finance, the Warsaw Framework for REDD Plus and the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage.
- 2014 COP20 was held in Lima, Peru as precursor to Paris climate agreement, setting up ground rules to be followed.
- 2015 Paris agreement was signed in COP21 or CMP11.



## ISDG Updates

### Seminar on Sustainable Development | 19-12-2015

ISDG in collaboration with Nehru Darshan organised public seminar on the topic - **"Sustainable Development in Kerala - Perspectives and Issues"** in Kozhikode chambers of Commerce, Kozhikode. The seminar saw wide participation from students community, academic, media and the local community. The session was moderated by Shri. John Samuel (President, ISDG) and taken forward by Dr. Joe Thomas (Executive Director - Partners in Population & Development). The seminar highlighted the prospects and challenges for sustainable development in Kerala.



### Pre-budget Consultation | 29-01-2016

A pre-budget consultation was held at the Secretariat on 29th Jan 2016. ISDG was invited to represent the Civil Society and the NGO community. Multiple stakeholders from travel industry, Gold traders, Government agencies etc presented their viewpoints and opinion. This is an annual affair by the Government of Kerala before the budget presentation which was initiated and institutionalized by ISDG.



### Lecture on Development Cooperation of India 05-02-2016

ISDG in association with iLearn Academy organized a lecture on Development cooperation of India. It dealt with history, evolution and the various dimensions of foreign aid. The civil service aspirants took the opportunity to learn and understand international relations in the light of emerging economies. The lecture was delivered by Shri John Samuel (President, ISDG).



Forthcoming Event:

- 1) Public hearing on Urban Governance
- 2) Consultative meeting on Development Cooperation



**Institute for Sustainable Development & Governance**

TC No 5/2555 (2), Palm Dale, Golf Links, Kowdiar P.O 695003, Thiruvananthapuram.

Phone: 0471-2433358

Email: [isdg@ccds.in](mailto:isdg@ccds.in)

Website: [www.isdg.in](http://www.isdg.in)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/isdgindia](https://www.facebook.com/isdgindia)

Editorial Team: Deepak John, Dr. Abraham George

Design & Layout: D'Bright Advertising, Trivandrum

