**Climate change: The only constant**

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Global-scale altering of climate has been a dream for humans since the ancient Greeks started believing they could change temperatures and influence rainfall. Since 1824 when a French mathematician and physicist Joseph Fourier described what we now know as the greenhouse effect until the recently concluded Conference of Parties (COP26), a purely scientific set of questions have quietly transformed into a politicised tug of war. Is the debate on Climate Change all about saving respective economic interests of influential countries in the name of saving the planet? Yes, but there are certain honourable exceptions. Magdalena Andersson made headlines on November 25 when she resigned hours after her appointment as Sweden’s next Prime Minister. One of the pressing factors that forced her to take such a drastic step was the planned tax cut on petrol, a step that would lead to higher emissions.

Greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide or methane play a vital role in absorbing multiple wavelengths of sunlight. Estimates indicate that if only CO2 levels are halved, the global temperatures could decrease by five degrees Celsius. Similarly, if CO2 levels are doubled, the global temperatures would increase by five degrees Celsius. The inhabitants of planet Earth might enjoy a favourable climate if the percentages of CO2 in the atmosphere could be influenced and made to behave. Thus, both global warming and global cooling are matters of concern. On the other hand, melting of massive glaciers at the poles has threatened to raise the sea-level disproportionately, causing additional concerns particularly for cities along the east coast of the United States.

[Ankle injury sidelines PSG superstar Neymar for 6-8 weeks](https://nation.com.pk/30-Nov-2021/ankle-injury-sidelines-psg-superstar-neymar-for-6-8-weeks)

Observing a sharp increase in global temperatures particularly in 1988 rightly placed global warming in the spotlight resulting in the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) under the United Nations to provide a scientific view of climate change and its political and economic impact.

Scientists in favour of taking action in the realm of Climate Change believe that if the critical limit of two degrees Celsius of warming is surpassed, a dreadful scenario would emerge involving droughts, storms, rising global temperatures and sea-levels. Others doubt it and find some vested interests in enhancing the agenda of influential countries.

The Kyoto Protocol of 1997 was the first global agreement to reduce greenhouse gases. However, as it would hurt the US economy, and was ‘fatally flawed in fundamental ways’, Washington did not ratify it. The Paris Climate Agreement of 2015 saw 196 countries of the world pledging to set targets for their own greenhouse gas cuts while preventing global temperatures rise to two degrees Celsius. Next year, citing the ‘onerous restrictions’ imposed by the Protocol, Washington, ‘in good conscience’, refused to take this ‘punishment’. Soon, in order to avert dire and irreversible consequences for the planet, an ambitious IPCC’s report recommended rapid actions to cap global warming at 1.5 Celsius.

[Commissioners directed to enforce one-dish restriction in wedding ceremonies](https://nation.com.pk/30-Nov-2021/commissioners-directed-to-enforce-one-dish-restriction-in-wedding-ceremonies)

The Glasgow Climate Pact that came out of the recently concluded COP26 is yet another document for the archives of pledges and ideas. For obvious reasons, India and China, being the biggest emitters of greenhouses gases, were seen on the other side of the table expressing familiar concerns over coal-fired and fossil fuels. One of the anticipated outcomes relating to ‘adaptation, loss & damage’ and climate finance was missing too. The ambiance of mistrust was obvious as the delegates from the developing world including those from Pakistan failed to get even a plausible explanation on the non-compliance of the voluntary pledge worth $100 billion annually by 2020. Indeed, the developing world did not have any option but to concur to what the influential countries had envisaged for the moot.

Instead of presenting a ‘done’ list of previous commitments and promises, the Conference saw the participating countries agreeing on distant future timelines with regard to net-zero CO2 or emissions from other greenhouse gases. These commitments will be honored in 2050, 2060 and 2070 by the US/EU, China and India respectively. Clearly, when the time comes, various countries would justify ‘non-compliance’ on solid political, social and economic reasons but might not hesitate on making future pledges or promises.

[NEPRA to increase electricity prices by Rs4.75 per unit: CPPA](https://nation.com.pk/29-Nov-2021/nepra-to-increase-electricity-prices-by-rs4-75-per-unit-cppa)

Luckily, Pakistan is responsible for less than one per cent of global emissions. It is widely believed that Islamabad should focus more on increasing the adaptation capacity and inculcate resilience particularly amongst the most vulnerable local communities rather than banking all its actions on the promised funding. Instead of complaining, Islamabad may focus on mitigating the present and future needs through a solid mechanism for disaster management and emergency response. Long term policies need to be envisioned to cater for the emerging needs of 220 million people with regard to environmental hazards and the detrimental effects of Climate Change. Meanwhile, Pakistan need not worry about its targets of NDCs or presenting a compliance report in COP 27 next year. In all likelihood, it would be business as usual as every pledge or promise made here is voluntary.

It seems the smart countries are aware of the farcical nature of controlling greenhouse gases as no one has either the required technology or the will to invest in such a project. They know that such ‘controls’ over greenhouse gases are neither possible at least for the foreseeable future nor would these be sustainable. They are mindful of the fact that some of these greenhouse gases have the sustainability level of thousands of years. They are also aware that sucking out carbon of the sky is just a supposition, and no one knows how to go about it.

[PM Imran Khan gives directive to continue legal action against illegal profiteering, hoarding](https://nation.com.pk/29-Nov-2021/pm-imran-khan-gives-directive-to-continue-legal-action-against-illegal-profiteering-hoarding)

It took nearly a century of research to convince the majority of scientists that climate could be altered through human activity. It might take another century to come up with a plan to actually translate the dream into reality. Indeed, controlling the planet’s temperatures will be the greatest news for the human race. However, no serious thought is being accorded to the sheer inability of the human race to come up with a doable and practical plan of action to save the Planet for future generations.