

COP29 – Global Climate Change and Economic Policy

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a detailed analysis of the COP29 Conference held in Baku, Azerbaijan, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It examines the major outcomes, challenges, and shortcomings of COP29, focusing on the financial, political, and environmental dimensions of global climate action. The study also evaluates India's position, the implications for developing nations, and the broader impact on climate justice and sustainability.

Keywords: COP29, Climate Finance, UNFCCC, Climate Justice, Global Warming, Sustainability

Introduction

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the supreme decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). COP29, hosted in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 11 to 22 November, brought together world leaders, experts, and activists to deliberate on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and finance. The conference, dubbed the 'Finance COP,' emphasized the importance of economic commitments to support global climate action. Despite high expectations, the summit faced criticism for its lack of concrete outcomes and financial clarity.

Background and Objectives

The UNFCCC, established in 1992, aims to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations and limit global temperature rise. Over the decades, COP meetings have served as platforms to negotiate policies addressing climate change. COP29 was expected to strengthen global commitments toward clean energy, climate finance, and adaptation mechanisms for vulnerable nations.

Key Issues and Failures of COP29

The final proposal at COP29 was criticized for being full of hollow promises. The central concern was the absence of a concrete climate finance mechanism to prevent large-scale

disasters. Developing nations expressed deep disappointment as funding for the repayment of the Global North's 'climate debt' was missing. Civil protests calling for justice and peace

were suppressed. Moreover, without ending wars worldwide, including in Palestine, achieving true climate justice remains elusive. Global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reached record highs, reinforcing the perception that COP29's current framework is structurally incapable of ensuring justice.

Highlights and Achievements

Despite the criticism, COP29 saw some progress in climate finance and carbon market regulation. The New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) was introduced to replace the \$100 billion annual finance target, aiming for \$300 billion annually by 2035. Discussions also advanced on the operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund (LDF), established at COP27 to aid developing nations in recovering from climate-related losses. Furthermore, countries agreed on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, creating a carbon crediting mechanism to ensure transparency and accountability in carbon trading.

India's Role and Position

As the third-largest emitter and fifth-largest economy, India faced scrutiny due to its dependence on coal-based energy. Nearly 80% of India's electricity comes from coal plants. At COP29, India led the developing nations, advocating for

an increase in climate finance to \$1.3 trillion annually. When negotiations capped at \$300 billion, India's representative, Ms. Chandni Raina, condemned the agreement as 'nothing more than an illusion' and withdrew from the talks. This highlighted the growing divide between developed and developing nations in global climate governance.

Discussion and Analysis

The choice of Azerbaijan, a major fossil fuel producer, as the host nation raised serious concerns about conflicts of interest. The statement by COP29 President Mukhtar Babayev—referring to oil and gas reserves as 'a gift from God'—was widely criticized. Furthermore, misunderstandings persist about the host selection process, which is not conducted by the UN but through regional nomination based on logistical and financial capacity.

Conclusion

Climate change poses a severe threat to humanity and ecosystems. According to the UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2024, emissions must be reduced by 42% by 2030 to limit warming to 1.5°C. Failure to do so will lead to a 2.6–3.1°C rise, with devastating consequences [1-4].

Although COP29 fell short of expectations, the dialogues and minor advancements in finance and carbon markets represent incremental steps toward collective climate responsibility. It is imperative that nations act beyond political boundaries to ensure sustainable and equitable climate solutions for future generations.

References

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