



UNEP

CENMUN  
NAGPUR

UNITED NATIONS  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME  
BACKGROUND GUIDE

**Agenda : Implementing environmental ethics for future survival**



**CENMUN**  
One World One Nation

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## Letter from the Executive Board

Respected delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Environment Program committee of CENMUN 2018. It gives us immense pleasure to have you as a part of this committee. Since there is so much to be said to all of you we shall skip the formal letter that was supposed to fill this page and give you an introductory remark that will familiarize you with exactly what we are looking at then we discuss this agenda and how we expect you to prepare for the committee.

Firstly, you may use this background guide to help you start your research and give direction to the committee leading to fruitful debate. Please do note that the points mentioned in this guide are all encompassing and extremely important for debate in committee. However, at no point in time can any of the content of this guide be used as substantial proof in the committee and kindly do not limit your research to the contents of this guide.

**Our agenda is discussing the impacts of environment ie climate change for future survival ie global security wrt the need of environmental ethics and in order to perform well you all must have adequate knowledge on all the subjects and the aspects relating to our agenda.**

Secondly, we urge you to research on the following in a chronological order, i.e. first about your country. Then, a detailed research on related aspects and provisions and then look for solutions to the various problems related to the issue. Please feel free to contact me(Chairperson) or the vice-Chairperson at any timeregarding any doubts you may have.

We expect for you to debate, discuss, and negotiate and to make the best out of this experience of MUNing. We once again welcome you to this committee and hope to see two days of brilliant debate.

All the very best.

Regards,

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(CHAIRPERSON)

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## **ABOUT THE COMMITTEE**

### **United Nations Environment Programme:**

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is a United Nations (UN) agency, with the special focus on environmental problems since 1972 and therefore acts as a “catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator to promote the wise use and sustainable development of the global environment.” UNEP was established with the mission of providing the leadership for the environment for empowering and enlightening the nations for an environmental action. The mission of UNEP is “to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and people to improve the quality of life without compromising that of future generations.”

UNEP was used to be referred as a think globally and act locally organization which was under serious criticisms. The former UNEP structure was making the decision-making organ, governing council, consist of 58 members selected from the UN-

GA, however in June 23, 2014 UNEP Governing Council convened with a universal representation under the name of United Nations Environmental Assembly. UNEP came to life by world demands of leaders in Rio 20+ summit. These demands were made concerning the strength and universal effect of UNEP decisions. Consequently in the UNEP General Council drafted a decision recommending United Nations General Assembly to designate the name of UNEP-

Governing Council to United Nations Environment Programme and change the 58 member representative to universal membership. UNEP's Deputy Director Jamil Ahmed, stated his view on why UNEP is a historic moment as “International Community realized they need a single authority in UN Family to handle this important aspect of sustainable development.”

## **ACCEPTED EVIDENCES AND PROOFS IN COMMITTEE**

### **1. News Sources:**

- A. Reuters: Reuters articles, which clearly makes mention of the fact or contradict the fact being stated by a delegate in council. (Also please note, that Reuters may not be accepted by other member nations)
- B. State operated News Agencies: These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any Country as such but in that situation, they can be denied by any other country in the council. Some examples are: RIA Novosti (Russia), IRNA (Iran), BBC (United Kingdom), etc.

### **2. Government Reports:**

These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country. However, a nuance is that a report that is being denied by a certain country can still be accepted by the Executive Board as credible information. Examples are,

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- A. Government Websites like the State Department of the United States of America
  - B. The Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation
  - C. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of various nations
  - D. Permanent Representatives to the United Nations
  - E. Multilateral Organizations like the NATO, ASEAN, OPEC, etc.

### **3. UN Reports:**

All UN Reports are considered are credible information or evidence for the Executive Board of the UNEP.

**Under no circumstances will sources like Wikipedia, Human Rights Watch or newspapers like the Guardian, Times of India, etc., be accepted as proof, but may be used to gather general information or for clarity on certain topics.**

### **Introduction to the Agenda :**

Climate change is one of the most pervasive global environment threats to peace and security in the twenty-first century. However, how many people would list this as a key factor in international relations and domestic welfare? In reality, climate change touches all areas of security, peace building, and development. The impacts of climate change are already adversely affecting vulnerable communities, as well as stretching the capacities of societies and governments. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stated a temperature increase above 2°C is likely to trigger a number of tipping points that would lead to accelerated, irreversible and largely unpredictable climate changes. Such changes may lead to unprecedented security scenarios. And for the deterrence of the same the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Commission to the European Council demanded that investment in mitigation to avoid such scenarios, as well as ways to adapt to the unavoidable should go hand in hand with addressing the international security threats created by climate change.

Taking this into account, the most important factors that climate change can influence are:

#### **1. Local resource competition:**

Competition for access to essential natural resources such as water and arable land, which will be constrained in some regions due to climate change, can lead to instability and even violent conflict. Particularly regions dependent on a narrow resource base, with a history of conflict, or home to marginalized groups are likely to have disruptive competition for resources.

#### **2. Livelihood insecurity and migration:**

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The increased insecurity of people who rely on natural resources for their livelihood is likely to induce climate related migration. Climate change will reduce grazing land, dry up water sources, and threaten jobs connected to climate-sensitive economic sectors, which could also push people to turn to illegal sources of income.

### **3. Extreme weather events and disasters:**

Climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as heat waves, flooding, droughts and storms. Extreme weather events and disasters will exacerbate fragility challenges and can increase people's vulnerability and grievances, especially in conflict-affected situations.

### **4. Trans-boundary water management:**

Competition over water use is likely to increase the pressure on governance structure where the management of water supplies is shared. Several trans-boundary water basins are located in regions with a history of armed conflict and significant interstate tensions.

### **5. Unintended effects of climate policies:**

Unintended consequences from climate adaptation and mitigation policies may occur if they are implemented without enough cross-sectorial coordination or due to the lack of conflict-sensitive implementation. Possible unintended consequences include increased insecurity of land tenure, marginalization of minority groups, increased environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity.

### **Mandate:**

There being no explicit mentioning in the UN charter for environmental threats, however inclusion of environmental objectives can be derived from a broader interpretation of the provisions of the Charter. Article 1.1 states as one purpose of the UN the maintenance of international peace and security and calls for taking effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace, and Article 1.3 requires international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character. The High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change assessed 'new' threats to international security which identified environmental degradation as one of the major threats; the report was approved by the former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in 2004. Furthermore the UN has a commitment to the promotion of universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Article 55(c) as per the charter. The direct and indirect effects of climate change can affect International human rights including the right to life, the right to residence and movement, the right to inviolability of the home, the right to preservation of health and to well-being, the rights to benefits of culture, and the right to work.

Breach of International law

Moreover, customary international law also clearly prohibits states from knowingly allowing their territory to be used to cause harm to other states. In environmental law, this obligation has been translated into the obligation to not cause harm to the environment of other states and to areas beyond any jurisdiction.<sup>48</sup> While the early formulation of this rule focused on avoiding trans-boundary pollution between neighboring states, the no-harm rule now extends to relations between all states, however distant, and has also extended its scope to areas beyond a state's

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jurisdiction. The International Court of Justice in *Nuclear Weapons and Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros* confirmed the ‘general obligation of States to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction and control respect the environment of other States or of areas beyond national control is now part of the corpus of international law relating to the environment’, due to the problem of establishing a breach of this obligation, it has been suggested that this customary legal rule is interpreted as ‘prohibiting cross-border environmental harm, recognizing the long-term threat posed to all states by irresponsible use of national territory resulting in excessive greenhouse gas emissions’. Excessive emissions of greenhouse gases from a state’s territory could therefore amount to a breach of the customary no-harm rule, which is a legal obligation of essential international importance and could — as such — comprise a threat to international peace

#### 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference-

The 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 21 or CMP 11 was held in Paris, France, from 30 November to 12 December 2015. It was the 21st yearly session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 11th session of the Conference of the Parties (CMP) to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.

The conference negotiated the Paris Agreement, a global agreement on the reduction of climate change, the text of which represented a consensus of the representatives of the 196 parties attending it.

#### Purpose of the Mandate-

The overarching goal of the Convention is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to limit the global temperature increase. Since COP 17 this increase is set at 2 °C (3.6 °F) above pre-industrial levels. During previous climate negotiations, countries agreed to outline actions they intended to take within a global agreement, by 1 October 2015. These commitments are known as Intended Nationally Determined Contributions or INDCs. Together, the INDCs would reduce global warming from an estimated 4–5 °C (by 2100) to 2.7 °C, and reduce emissions per capita by 9% by 2030, while providing hope in the eyes of the conference organizers for further reductions in the future that would allow meeting a 2 °C target.

Think-tanks such as the World Pensions Council (WPC) argued that the keys to success lay in convincing officials in the US and China, by far the two largest national emitters: "As long as policy makers in Washington and Beijing didn't put all their political capital behind the adoption of ambitious carbon-emission capping targets, the laudable efforts of other G20 governments often remained in the realm of pious wishes. Things changed for the better on 12 November 2014 when President Obama and General Secretary Xi Jinping agreed to limit greenhouse gases emissions."

#### Paris Agreement:

The Paris Agreement builds upon the Convention and for the first time brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. As such, it charts a new course in the global climate effort.

The Paris Agreement’s central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above

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pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Additionally, the agreement aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change. To reach these ambitious goals, appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity building framework will be put in place, thus supporting action by developing countries and the most vulnerable countries, in line with their own national objectives. The Agreement also provides for enhanced transparency of action and support through a more robust transparency framework.

The Paris Agreement requires all Parties to put forward their best efforts through “nationally determined contributions” (NDCs) and to strengthen these efforts in the years ahead. This includes requirements that all Parties report regularly on their emissions and on their implementation efforts.

In 2018, Parties will take stock of the collective efforts in relation to progress towards the goal set in the Paris Agreement and to inform the preparation of NDCs.

There will also be a global stock take every 5 years to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement and to inform further individual actions by Parties.

#### Challenges faced-

The Paris Agreement institutionalizes a new paradigm within the climate governance regime by setting up a flexible nationally driven bottom-up approach. As such, the success of the Paris Agreement will depend on how countries carry forward their aspirational goals, targets, binding obligations of conduct in relation to mitigation and so on. For some countries, this will mean putting significantly more climate protection measures in place, such as investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy. However, the Paris Agreement only creates a basic structure for the new climate change regime — the cycle of NDCs, reporting, review, stocktaking, and updating.

Now, countries must elaborate more detailed rules for how the Paris Agreement will work in practice to secure its effective implementation. It is necessary to effectively design detailed rules, procedures, and frameworks for implementing the Paris Agreement: Including special guidance for NDCs; rules for the transparency framework; guidelines for the functioning of global stock take, specifically its review mechanism; and procedures for a pre-2020 progress review (the “facilitative dialogue”) and so on.

However, the entry into force of the Paris agreement triggers the launch of the Agreement’s governing body, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the parties to the Paris Agreement or CMA. The first session of the CMA is going to be held in Marrakech (from 15-18 November 2016) in conjunction with Conference of the Parties (COP) 22, and Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties). In CMA-1, parties will decide on setting up a basic framework so that countries can determine their contributions, timelines, and accountability in meeting the agreement’s commitment.

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## **US Exit's from Paris Agreement & its impact on the World:**

The US withdrawal from the agreement is a huge setback from the progress made in Paris and cast uncertainty on the multilateral collaboration ahead. It has sparked intense debates on whether it will encourage other member countries to slacken their efforts in meeting current commitments or raising future targets, while on the other hand, the withdrawal is projected to open opportunities to make the accord more robust. Addressing climate change is one of the urgent global challenges as the world had already experienced 1.2°C of warming above the pre-industrial levels. With a remaining carbon budget of 940 gigaton, at the current global annual emission rate of 40 gigaton, global temperature is projected to rise above the 2°C target in less than two decades. The Paris Agreement aims to limit global warming to well below 2°C (and pursue to achieve 1.5°C), however, at the current level of NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions), Climate Interactive estimates global temperature to rise above 3.3°C by the end of the century.

In the short-run, the adverse impact of US withdrawal has been manifested in President Trump's revocation of regulations promoting clean energy, emission standards and commitment to Climate Fund. The effect on long-term investment environment in clean technology is yet to be seen, as the formal exit from the Paris Agreement will not take place until November 2020. Though the withdrawal is a serious setback, on a positive note, the US outside the agreement is likely to do less harm than slowing the process from within; had it stayed within the agreement and reneged on its commitment. The withdrawal has also led to a resurgence of bottom-up climate stewardship by federal states, cities and industry leaders. It offers a good opportunity to start a transparent and reasoned national conversation and political debate on climate change in the country.

For the international community, the exit of the US opens an opportunity to galvanized climate leadership from other member states. Historically, the US, along with the EU, has so far played a major role in pushing the climate agenda forward from Rio to Paris. However, given the projected rapid increase in carbon emission from developing countries, climate leadership and action from these countries will be crucial in limiting global emission rate. Encouraging signs are seen from the two highest populated and greenhouse gas emitting countries—China and India. They are currently on track to overachieve their NDC pledges and further increase their targets. In the last few years, China has managed to transform its image from grudging bargainer to silent torchbearer in climate action. It has the highest installed capacity in wind and solar power, introduced the world's largest carbon trading scheme and made credible commitments to strive for ecological civilization. India, on the other hand, is on its way to overshoot its NDC target of 40% renewable energy capacity addition by 2022 and projected to reach 57% by 2027. It has initiated the International Solar Alliance (ISA) of more than 120 countries for harnessing solar energy and is projected to play a key role in global climate governance in the coming years. China is expected and has the potential to play a leading role, however, for sustained effective international action, EU and the BASIC countries (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) will need to work closely and lead the way forward.

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## UNFCCC-

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was the key outcome of the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. The aim of the Convention is to stabilize the concentration of heat-trapping greenhouse gases at a level that prevents dangerous interference with the climate system

The ultimate objective of the Convention is to achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilization of greenhouse gas emissions at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow Eco-systems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner". Which was supported in 1997, by the Kyoto Protocol, where developed countries took legally binding obligations to cut their emissions by 5.2% below 1990 levels by 2008-2012 in aggregate as a first step towards larger emission cuts in the future, and having its first commitment period officially elapse in 2012 the Doha Amendment to the protocol was introduced, to introduce a second commitment period from 2013-2020, requiring 144 party members to ratify it out of which only 31 members ratified the amendment.

The main problem regarding the UNFCCC is, being a framework convention, inspired by creating broad consensus rather than establishing concrete, quantifiable emission reduction obligations, it has the downside of missing legal concreteness and, as a consequence, enforceability. A breach of the legal obligation will meet significant procedural and substantial obstacles if claimed in an international court.

Can climate really affect global security?

The answer to this question is a loud resounding yes; climate can affect global security. In fact, there are several places all over the world that are already feeling these effects as a result of drastic changes in climate.

A study and report made by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2007 sought to explain this puzzling relationship. Concisely, the humanitarian crisis as a result of climate change was traced back to the inevitable large-scale loss of life and livelihood in the affected regions. In the event of such tragedies, humans are expected and have been shown to respond negatively, with crime and vices that threaten human security being on the rise. The study also isolated 6 major security threats related to climate change and below is a bit more information on each of them.

### 1. Local and internal conflict

It goes without saying that the first places to suffer the security deterioration would be those where the climate change hit the hardest and the fastest. This would result in internal conflicts

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fueled by differences including race, ethnicity, and even social class. This might be experienced in different ways including a surge in crime both serious and petty. It may also result in serious violence with subsequent effects on political and governmental frameworks.

## 2. International conflict

International conflict as a result of climate change is mainly a result of border conflicts. More often than not, there is mass migration in search of everything from food and water to employment and shelter after devastating climate changes. If this should happen on a large scale involving countries not adequately equipped to handle the immigrants, then conflict is inevitable. The increased competition for the scarce resources may further aggravate the situation worsening the conflicts.

## 3. Terrorism and war

Another potential security threat isolated and associated with climate change is that of terrorism. With the subsequent compromise in food security, economic stability, and political setups, there is a very high chance of extremist groups cropping up and wreaking havoc both locally and internationally. War is also a major risk with things like biological, nuclear, and chemical weapons potentially being used during major international conflicts.

## 4. Transnational organized crime

This could be in the form of gangs, smuggling rings, and even human trafficking cartels. If the humanitarian crisis is not addressed and dealt with, promptly and effectively, these groups would have the freedom to basically do as they please and like terrorists wreak their own kind of havoc all over the world.

## 5. Economic threats

Climate change also poses a threat to human security by affecting the economy. This would mainly be through inadequate employment, secondary to overpopulation after people migrate in large numbers from affected areas. In this case, crimes including theft, fraud and actual violence would become the norm as people struggle to make ends meet. This is already evident in many countries around the world where climate changes and associated natural disasters have pushed people into already overcrowded urban dwellings.

## 6. Social threats

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Finally, climate and security are linked through social resources including food, health, and social amenities. With climate changes, issues like starvation, health epidemics and local wars for resources are never too far behind. As with economic threats, this could manifest as petty crimes including burglary or more serious crimes like murder and other forms of violent attacks.

### **High-risk areas in the global community**

All these factors considered, there is no denying the fact that climate change has the potential of causing humanitarian crisis through compromised security. The hardest hit areas are those where social, political, and economic systems are not sufficiently prepared to deal with the associated challenges. Several studies have isolated Africa, Asia, and Europe as the top three most affected by this crisis and most likely to be affected in the future.

However, this does not in any way mean that developed countries get away unharmed. They actually involve as much risk of being affected as the rest. In fact, large fully developed and economically sound countries are already experiencing the effects of climate change on security with both social and economic threats. For instance, China the producer of the 20 percent of corn, 30 percent of rice and 17 percent of wheat for the world, is experiencing a temperature rising, which is affecting the agriculture and the economic status of the country, thus resulting in a possible food insecurity during the next coming years. Also, due to the fact that the 40 percent of the Chinese population is occupied in the agricultural industry, the effects of an employment crisis will have tremendous consequences on the country's security and the stability of the region.

Whether developed or developing, there is no denying the chance that adequate preparation is not something that we can afford to compromise on.

### **Bottom line**

In conclusion, the relationship between climate change and global security is very hard to ignore. The best that we can do as a human race is to try as much as possible to stop or at the very least slow down the changes. It is also important for countries to make united and deliberate efforts to prepare for these changes in order to minimize the casualties of this inevitable phenomenon.

### **Important Case Studies:**

#### **Middle East Drought with special emphasis on Syria:**

The devastating civil war that began in Syria in March 2011 is the result of complex interrelated factors. The focus of the conflict is regime change, but the triggers include a broad set of religious and sociopolitical factors, the erosion of the economic health of the country, a wave of political reforms sweeping over the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Levant region, and challenges associated with climate variability and

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change and the availability and use of freshwater. As described here, water and climatic conditions have played a direct role in the deterioration of Syria's economic conditions. There is a long history of conflicts over water in these regions because of the natural water scarcity, the early development of irrigated agriculture, and complex religious and ethnic diversity. In recent years, there has been an increase in incidences of water-related violence around the world at the subnational level attributable to the role that water plays in development disputes and economic activities. Because conflicts are rarely, if ever, attributable to single causes, conflict analysis and concomitant efforts at reducing the risks of conflict must consider a multitude of complex relationships and contributing factors. This paper assesses the complicated connections between water and conflict in Syria, looks more broadly at future climate-related risks for water systems, and offers some water management strategies for reducing those risks.

### **Heatwaves in Australia:**

Part of Australia's south and east has sweltered through 40-degree-plus temperatures today, as severe heatwave conditions continue to develop. The Bureau of Meteorology says a severe heatwave is moving through the southern parts of South Australia and much of Victoria, while spreading further east into New South Wales' coastal regions and southwest Queensland. Temperatures were tipped to soar to 44 degrees Celsius in northern Victoria, which is anticipating several days of extreme heat. Mildura and Swan Hill both reached 44C about lunchtime today, prompting fire bans and heat health warnings for the Mallee and Wimmera regions. There is also a total fire ban in the Central region and heat warnings for East Gippsland. Heatwaves are becoming hotter, lasting longer and occurring more often putting them in danger.

Delegates may also study other case studies except the two listed above. This background guide's mere purpose is to provide you with a medium to start your research with and by no means should your research only be restricted to the topics mentioned here. There are important aspects to the agenda that haven't been mentioned in the background guide to ensure that delegates research beyond what has been mentioned in the guide already.

### **Core Axioms of Effective Environmental Governance:**

“**Effective Laws** Environmental law should be clear, evenhanded, implementable and enforceable.”

“**Disclosure** Environmental information should be collected, assessed, and disclosed to the public.”

“**Participation** Stakeholders should be afforded opportunities to participate in environmental decision-making.”

“**Accountability** Environmental decisionmakers, both public and private, should be accountable for their decisions.”

“**Authority** Roles and lines of authority for environmental protection should be clear, coordinated, and designed to produce efficient and non-duplicative program delivery.”

“**Dispute Resolution** Stakeholders should have access to fair and responsive dispute resolution procedures.”

“**Public integrity** in environmental program delivery is essential to achieving environmental protection.”