

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Net Zero is not the Real Zero.

The phrase "Net zero is not the real zero" was associated with discussions and debates during the COP26 (Conference of the parties) summit held in Glasgow, Scotland in 2021. The COP26 summit aimed to accelerate international efforts to combat climate change and reach agreements on emission reduction targets. During the summit, different viewpoints were expressed regarding the effectiveness and ambition of net zero goals in truly addressing climate change.

Net zero emissions, or reaching a state of carbon neutrality, means balancing the amount of greenhouse gases emitted with the amount removed

from the atmosphere. This can be achieved through various means, such as reducing emissions, implementing renewable energy sources and utilizing carbon capture technologies.

Critics argue that the concept of net zero allows for the continued release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere as long as they are offset by removal or reduction elsewhere. They claim that this approach does not address the urgency of the climate crisis, as it does not eliminate emissions completely.

It is important to note that while critics raise valid concerns about the limitations of net zero targets, the concept itself has gained significant support as a stepping stone towards decarbonization and a means to

transition to a sustainable energy system. Achieving net zero emissions is seen as a critical milestone in the global efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change, even if it may not represent a "real zero" in terms of eliminating all emissions from human activities.

LOSS AND DAMAGES FUND:

Introduction:

The establishment of a loss and damage fund was the main highlight of the United Nations Climate Conference (COP27) held in Egypt after the culmination of decades of pressure from climate vulnerable developing countries. Creating a specific fund for loss and damage makes an important point of progress,

with the issue added to the official agenda and adopted for the first time at COP27.

Turning point: The hard won deal is a turning point in acknowledging the vast inequalities of the climate crisis. For the first time in 30 years of climate talks, developed countries will provide finance towards recovery and rebuilding of poorer countries stricken by climate-related disasters.

Fundings: Government representatives at the summit took the ground-breaking decision to establish new funding arrangements, as well as dedicated fund, to assist developing countries in responding to loss and damage.

Policies of Pakistan

(i). Plantation:

Pakistan has implemented several policies and initiatives to promote tree plantation and address deforestation.

Some of the noticable policies related to tree plantation in Pakistan includes:

1. Billion Tree Tsunami:

The Billion Tree Tsunami was a tree plantation drive launched in 2014, by the government of KPK, in response to the challenge of global warming.

Pakistan's Billion Tree Tsunami restores 350,000 hectares of forests and degraded land to surpass its Bonn challenge commitment.

2. Ten Billion Tree Tsunami:

It is a four year (2019-2022) project by Government of Pakistan with the total cost of 125.1843 billion.

The project is being implemented

across Pakistan by the Ministry of Climate Change along with Provincial and territorial forests and Wildlife departments. The Prime Minister of Pakistan inaugurated this programme on 2nd September during "Plant for Pakistan Day".

3. Clean and Green Pakistan:

Clean and Green Pakistan campaign was launched on 13 October 2018 by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan. It includes various activities such as tree planting, waste management, and cleanliness drives to encourage public participation.

4. Billion Tree Honey Initiative:

This was launched by the former Prime Minister, Imran Khan to promote tree plantation and honey production in the country. Under Ten Billion Tree

Tsunami Programme.

5. Forest Stewardship Council

Certification:-

The Government of Pakistan encourages forest certification through the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) to promote sustainable forest management policies. Forest Stewardship Council certification assures buyers that timber has come from a forest which has been evaluated and certified as being managed to the correct social, economic and environmental standards.

(ii). Clean Energy Projects:

Among several policies and initiatives to promote clean energy projects and address environmental concerns, here are some notable policies and initiatives in Pakistan:

1. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC):

Under the CPEC framework, Pakistan and China have collaborated on various clean energy projects, including the development of wind farms and solar power plants. The vision and mission of this programme is to enhance Pakistan's connectivity, accelerate its economic progress and ensure sustainable development by modernizing its road, rail, air, energy and special economic zones.

2. Green Energy Fund:-

Green energy fund supports a broad mix of projects promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. It emphasizes deployment of proven technologies including small hydro, biomass and on-shore wind.

3. National Energy Policy 2013:-

The "National Energy Policy

2013" was approved by the CCI to address the key challenges of the power sector and to achieve the long term vision of the power sector. It aimed to increase the share of renewable energy to 5% by 2015 and 10% by 2025 in the total power generation mix.

4. Alternative Energy Development Board (AEDB):

AEDB is the sole representing agency of the Federal Government that was established in May 2003 with the main objective to facilitate, promote and encourage development of Renewable Energy in Pakistan and with a mission of introducing Alternative and Renewable Energies at an accelerated rate.

5. Commercialisation of Wind Power Potential in Pakistan:

This projects aims to

identify the existing impediments to the use of renewable energy sources in Pakistan.

(iii). The foreign climate change policy of Pakistan is driven by financial support for Pakistan.

At COP27 held in 2022, negotiations led by Pakistan as chair of G77, produced an accord to set up a fund for loss and damage - a controversial issue which had never been on a formal agenda at a COP summit until this year.

The Prime Minister of Pakistan highlighted the post disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation needs after the devastating floods in Pakistan and level by funding required for rehabilitation.

The PM emphasized that use of advanced technology and early warning

will improve the four elements of disaster risk due to which Pakistan will be saved from glacier melting, outburst floods caused by prolonged heat waves in the country in summer (2022).

PM said that climate finance needs is a transparent and simpler way for developing countries. Pakistan is promised having equal balance in adaptation and mitigation finance.

Pakistan's 2030 ambition in NDC's are already higher than other countries aiming of zero (net target by 2050)