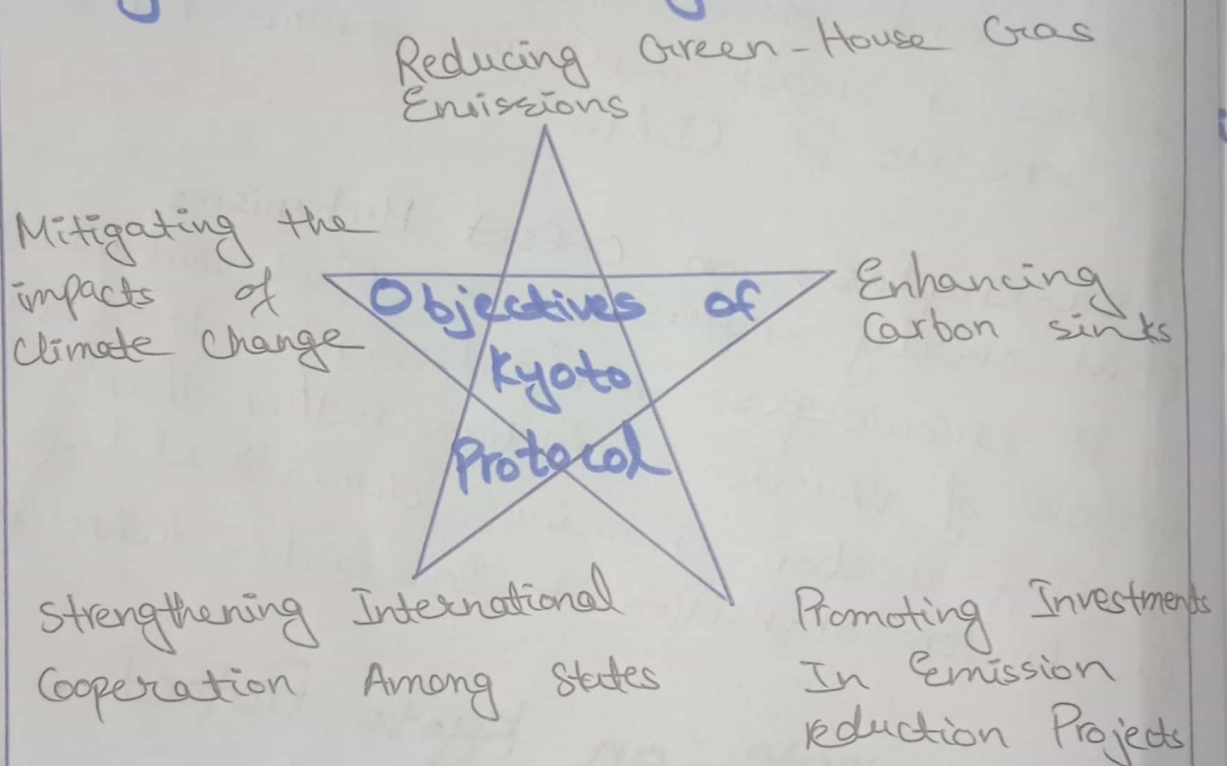


Q: Write a note on Kyoto Protocol.

Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement, associated with United Nations (UN) and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which was signed on December 11, 1997 and came into force on February 16, 2005 to reduce green-house gas emissions by 5.2% compared to the

levels of 1990 till 2012. According to this protocol, the world countries were divided into two groups i.e. Annex-I (developed countries) and Annex-II (developing countries). This protocol places binding obligations on developed countries while exempting developing countries leading to ineffectiveness of Kyoto Protocol.

1- Objectives of Kyoto Protocol



i- Reducing Green House Gas Emissions

For achieving this objective of Kyoto Protocol various efforts have been made. This protocol emphasized on cutting down emissions of CO_2 , CH_4 , N_2O , HFCs, SF_6 etc. The efforts made by states in this contemporary era for reducing GHG emissions also

reflect climate agenda of this protocol. For instance, Iceland and US are introducing EVs whose efficiency is 85-90% compared to that of gasoline vehicle having efficiency of 13-21%. (The New York Times, Sustainable Transports in Developed Countries, Dec 2023). These efforts for reducing GHG emissions reflect Kyoto Protocol.

i. Enhancing Carbon Sinks

Enhancing carbon sinks like forests require combination of social, ecological and economic measures. For instance, Brazil is catalyzing the reforestation of Amazon by utilizing its potential to use carbon prices exceeding \$20 per ton of CO₂ (BBC, Brazil's efforts for reforestation, Jan 2024). These efforts of Brazil also encapsulate climate agenda set into motion by Kyoto Protocol in 2003.

ii. Mitigating the Impacts of Climate Change

All efforts made by contemporary international organizations and states to mitigate the impacts of climate change also reflect Kyoto Protocol of 2005. For instance, China is investing \$50 million on sponge cities to mitigate Urban Heat Island Effect since 2015 (The Guardian, Sponge Cities of China,

Oct 2018). These efforts of China to mitigate the impacts of climate change also reflect Kyoto Protocol.

iv- Strengthening International Cooperation Among States

Kyoto Protocol emphasizes on strengthening international cooperation among states for environmental resilience. BRICS consortium serves here as a paramount. For instance, BRICS platform is being utilized by KSA to form alliance with Brazil for achieving the target of 500,000 ^{Electric} vehicles (EVs) till 2030 for environmental conservation (Foreign Policy, BRICS and Environmental Conservation, April 2024). These steps of BRICS also reflect climate agenda promulgated by Kyoto Protocol.

v- Encouraging Investments in Renewable Energy Projects

Kyoto Protocol emphasizes on encouraging investments in renewable energy projects. This protocol introduced the concepts of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and carbon trading for encouraging developed countries to achieve their emission reduction targets by carbon trading. Revenues generated

from carbon trading was encouraged to fund development projects in developing countries like renewable energy projects. All the efforts made by states in this modern era to promote investments in renewable energy projects also reflect the same objective of Kyoto Protocol. For instance, Iceland is promoting 100% electricity generation from renewable energy thereby aligning with the principle of Kyoto Protocol.

2. Phases Of Kyoto Protocol

i- First Commitment Period (2008 to 2012)

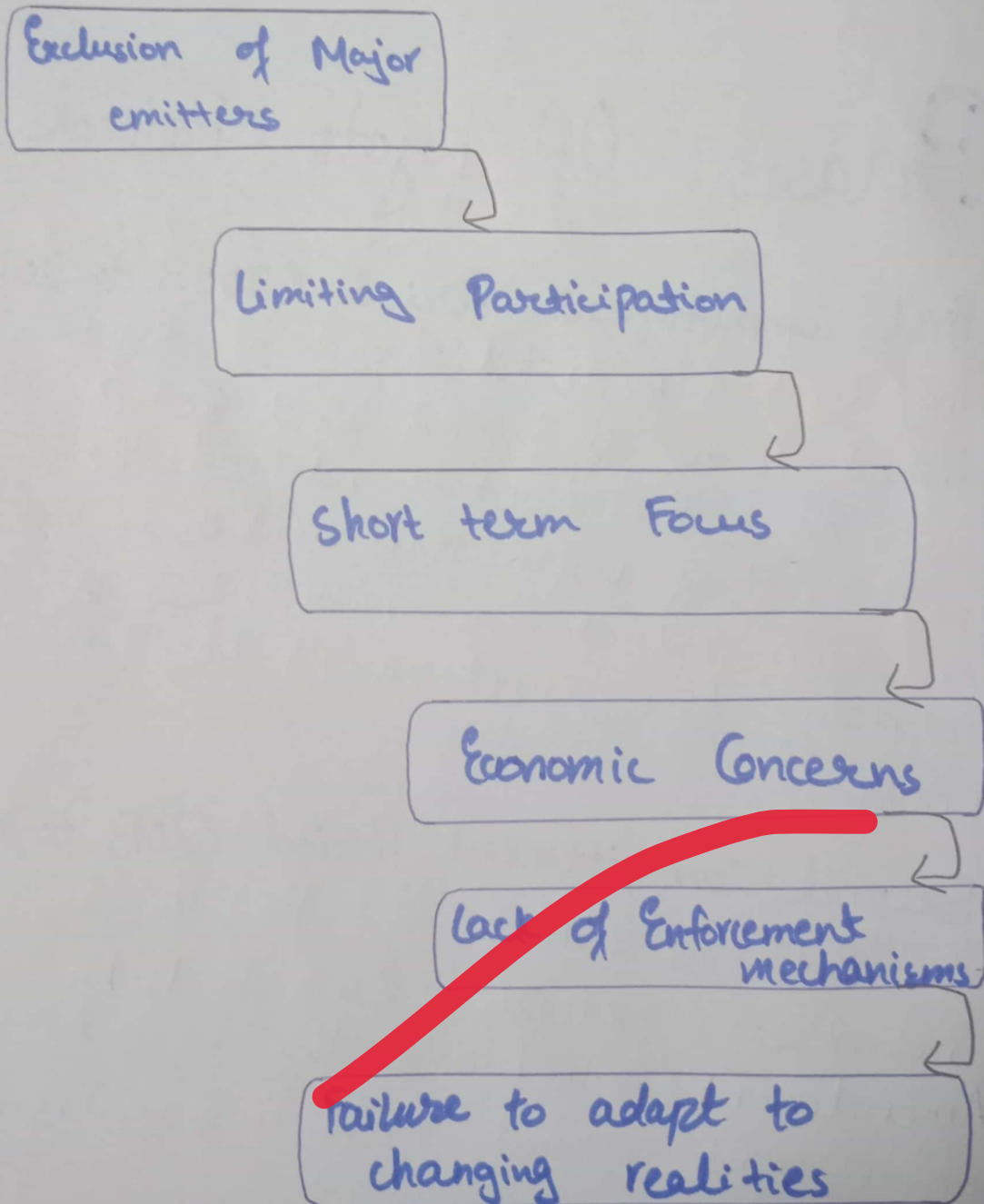
The first commitment period of Kyoto Protocol began in 2008 and lasted in 2012. When the countries ratified this protocol, they began implementation of emission reduction commitments by adopting Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

ii- Second Commitment Period (2013 to 2020)

In 2012, at COP-18 in Doha, the Kyoto Protocol was extended through Doha Amendment, introducing the second commitment period (2013 to 2020). Doha

amendment increased emission reduction targets by 18% below than the levels of 1990. However, major emitters like Japan, Canada and Russia were excluded thereby reducing effectiveness of Doha amendment. In 2015, Doha Amendment was replaced by Paris agreement.

3. Weakness Of Kyoto Protocol



i- Exclusion of Major Emitters

Kyoto Protocol placed binding obligations only on developed countries while exempting developing countries. US withdrew from the protocol in 2001, citing unfairness in exclusion of major emitters like China and India.

i- Limiting Participation

Most of the developed countries either withdrew from the protocol or did not ratify it. For instance, US never ratified it, Canada withdrew from protocol in 2011 and Japan, Russia did not participate in second commitment period, thereby reducing effectiveness of this protocol.

ii- Economic Concerns

The ^{imposition of} rigid binding obligations only on developed countries raised economic concerns for them as they feared adopting this protocol would harm their industries than that of their competitors like China and India, Brazil.

iii- Short-term Focus

Kyoto Protocol is also criticized for its short-term focus. Its sole emphasis on

achieving \vee emission reduction targets failed to address ^{short-term} long-term strategic plan for addressing climate change.

v- Lack of Enforcement Mechanisms

Although Kyoto Protocol included penalties like more harsh emission reduction targets for future, but they were largely symbolic and difficult to ~~impose~~ enforce. This lack of enforcement mechanisms reduced effectiveness of Kyoto Protocol.

vi- Failure to adapt to changing of Realities

Kyoto protocol failed to adapt to changing realities because the global landscape of emissions changed dramatically between 1990 and implementation phase. In 2006, China became the largest emitter of globe but Kyoto Protocol could not cater these changes.

Conclusion

Kyoto Protocol is a milestone in the history of environmental commitments because it primarily focussed on reducing green-house gas emissions and Clean Development mechanism. It became a historical commitment

because it failed to address the changes in global landscape of emissions. And in 2015 it was replaced by Paris Agreement; however its significance in environmental conservation efforts can not be diminished.

Good

You have got potential

Focus on your presentation

Use black and blue pens for main and subheadings