

NAME:

AWAIS SHAIKH

ESSAY

TOPIC: The Environment Has
Gone Beyond The Tipping Point

SUBMITTED TO:

Sir. Shazeb Khalid

DATE & TIME

23rd february 2024
at 7:30 am

The Environment Has Gone

Beyond The Tipping Point. Now

Outline

1

Introduction

Thesis Statement :

Doubtless, undeniable signs of environmental damage indicate that the planet has reached a tipping point. Urgent and comprehensive actions are vital to mitigate consequences and secure a sustainable future.

2

Current Status of the Environment Beyond the Tipping point; A Bird's Eye View

3

How the Environment has Gone Beyond the Tipping Point

3.1

Excessive Greenhouse Gas Emissions

3.2

Improper Disposal of Waste Polluting
Land, water, and Air.

3.3

Unsustainable Agriculture Practices

3.4

Lack of Environmental Policies.

4

Consequences Faced by People Due to Environmental Surpassing the Critical Point

- 4.1 Shrinking Economy
- 4.2 Increasing Migration of people towards Developed countries
- 4.3 Gender Disparities
- 4.4 Acute and chronic Medical illnesses
- 4.5 Increasing Dry Spells and Droughts
- 4.6 Increasing ~~poverty~~ poverty
- 4.7 Food and water scarcity

5 The Case Studies of two countries severely affected by the Environment Surpassing the Tipping Point.

5.1 Kuwait

5.2 Pakistan

6 Strategies and the Way Forward to Mitigate Challenges Arising From the Environmental Shift

6.1 International collaboration For Effective Policies

6.2 Promoting Green Economy

6.3 Education and Awareness about Environmental issues

6.4 Initiating a Global Reforestation Commission

6.6

Providing Economic, Food, and
Technological Assistance to the
~~Climate~~ affected countries

7

Conclusion

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful town by river. People lived peacefully, but as the town expanded, industries harmed the river. Ignoring warnings, pollution grew. When heavy rains came, floods struck, causing chaos. This parable mirrors our reality - a world where the environment has gone beyond the tipping point, urging people to take actions for a sustainable future. The rise in global temperatures has led to a surge in extreme weather events. June 2023 was the hottest June on record according to NASA's global temperature analysis. According to recent reports, the frequency and intensity of heat waves, storms, floods and droughts have increased significantly in the past decade. Moreover, a new study from NASA reveals that worsening environment may affect the production of corn and wheat as early as 2030 in a high green-

house gas emissions scenario. Ultimately, impacts to agricultural systems pose a direct threat to the global food supply. Furthermore, worsening environment leads to polluted air, with more wildfires and smog, harming peoples' health, especially those with conditions like asthma and heart disease. Hence, undeniable signs indicate that planet has reached a tipping point. Urgent and comprehensive actions are crucial to mitigate consequences and secure a sustainable future.

Convently, the environment has gone beyond a tipping point with alarming facts and figures, indicating the severity of the situation. According to World Meteorological Organization (WMO), in 2023, the world experienced severe climate events, breaking records and causing widespread destruction. The Earth in 2023 was 1.48 degrees celsius warmer than in pre-industrial times, the EU's

Moreover, the rise in the temperature of the world has compelled the movement of people from climate affected countries to developed and un-affected countries like the migration of people from Somalia to Italy, due to which there occur a sufficient rise in population in the latter countries. The conditions like rising sea levels, extreme weather events and resource scarcity force people to seek refuge elsewhere. Eventually, the problems due to the rise in population include the rise in street crimes and social challenges in developed countries, which overall threaten the peace of the nation. Hence the worsening condition of the environment forces people to migrate from affected countries to un-affected / less affected countries.

^{Moreover,}
↑ Deteriorating environmental conditions exacerbates gender disparities in various ways. Women, particularly in developing regions, face challenges in accessing resources like water and fuel. Climate-related events, such as natural disasters can disproportionately affect women, as they may have limited mobility and fewer resources for coping. Additionally, environmental shifts affecting agriculture can also impact women's roles as primary caregivers and food providers. Ergo, the escalating environmental challenges intensify gender disparities.

^{Furthermore,}
↑ The worsening environmental conditions have a profound impact on public health, causing various medical issues. Increased pollution and climate changes contribute to respiratory problems like asthma. According to

World Health Organization (WHO), Pakistan had reported 4531 cases of measles and 15 cases of wild poliovirus in 2022, and the main factor behind the rise of cases was uncontrolled floods. Extreme weather events lead to injuries and mental health concerns. Hence, deteriorating environment adversely affects public health, worsening both medical conditions.

Additionally, severe dry spells, and droughts are also caused due to the environment surpassing a critical point. The droughts not only make the soil infertile but also cause difficulties for the farmers to sow and reap their agricultural products. Also Pakistan has been included by the United Nations Conventions to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in the list containing the top 23 drought-hit countries between 2020-2022, and that region is one of the major areas in Pakistan hit by droughts and

dry spells. Hence, the tipping point of the environment has triggered occurrences of droughts and dry spells.

Besides, worsening environment significantly contributes to increasing poverty. Gradually shifting weather patterns, rising sea levels, and extreme events are worsening people's life. While the impacts of bad situation of the environment affect every nation on every continent, they don't do it equally. People already burdened with poverty and oppression often suffer the severe consequences. These vulnerable communities facing heightened challenges to sustain their livelihoods, homes and families. The escalating frequency of extreme events, such as hurricanes, wildfires, and droughts, not only endanger lives, but also intensifies the risk of conflicts, hunger and poverty.

climate ^{agency} and weather monitoring service says. According to NASA's recent evidence, both the extent and thickness of Arctic sea ice has declined rapidly over the last several decades. In addition to this, nearly 200 countries ^{at COP28} agreed for the first time to transition away from fossil fuels and reach world net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The preceding paragraph highlighted the current global environmental scenario. The following discussion in this essay elucidates the factors responsible for the environment reaching beyond the tipping point.

According to Statista, global GHG emissions have continued to rise and reached a new high of 53.8 billion metric tons of CO₂ in 2022. Excessive greenhouse gas emissions, primarily from burning fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas, have pushed the environment beyond the tipping point. CO₂ and methane released in large quantities, trap heat, leading

to global warming. This warming triggers severe consequences, including extreme weather events. ~~By~~^{the} continuous accumulation of these emissions has caused irreversible damage, marking a critical tipping point.

Moreover, improper disposal of waste, polluting land, water, and air has propelled the environment beyond the tipping point. Collected wastes lead to the emission of greenhouse gases, which increase the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, resulting in the heating up of environment. Improper waste dumping leads to soil contamination. This contaminated soil cannot be used for growing trees, eventually affecting the environment.

Furthermore, another factor is unsustainable agriculture practices. Widespread use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides has contaminated soil and water, disrupting ecosystems. These practices ~~can~~ cause problems like desertification, water degradation

and climate changes. As people move eat meat, trade more agricultural products, and seek biofuels, the challenge for agriculture increase. Hence, unsustainable agriculture practices worsens the environment.

In addition to this, the global trend of weak enforcement and absence of environmental policies worsens environmental threats. The surge in environmental laws over the past 30 years has not translated into effective action due to insufficient implementation and enforcement. Lack of clear standards, inadequate funding, and weak enforcement globally hinder the effectiveness of environmental laws as highlighted in the inaugural global assessment by the Environmental Law Institute and the UN Environment Programme. This issue is not limited to developing countries; even developed nations struggling with enforcement. Therefore, lack of environmental policies ~~is~~ is a crucial ~~role~~ ~~is~~ factor contributing to pushing the environment beyond

the tipping point.

Following the discussion on the causes of the environment surpassing the tipping point, let's now explore the harmful consequences faced by people due to this critical situation.

The consequences of the environment surpassing the tipping point extend to the economy, causing a significant downturn. Increased natural disasters and climate-related disruptions disrupt supply chains, leading to economic instability. This can be witnessed from ~~Pakistan's~~ ~~Planning Minister's~~ ~~statement~~ that ~~more than \$10 billion~~ ~~is~~

~~recently~~ ~~recent~~ World Bank's report ^{in Oct, 2022,} ~~in~~ in Pakistan, floods have caused damages exceeding \$30 billion, with reconstruction needs totalling over \$16 billion. Also according to IMF, total costs of the 2018 wildfires in California were upto \$350 billion, or 1.7 percent of U.S. GDP. Ergo, globally, the economy shrinks due

Adding more to it, as the environment crosses the tipping point, it severely affects food and water security. Shifting climate patterns disrupt farming, causing crop failures and shortages. Unpredictable events like floods and droughts worsen these issues, disrupting water supplies and sanitation. Vulnerable communities, already burdened by poverty, ~~struggle~~^{find it hard} to access essential resources. The critical point amplifies challenges in traditional farming, intensifying the struggle for sustenance and jeopardizing both food and water security.

~~At this stage, it is pertinent to present the case studies of some states~~

At this stage, after discussing consequences, it is pertinent to present the case studies of some states that are highly affected by the worsening environment.

Kuwait wins the race and leads the list of top climate-wit countries. In 2022, the World Bank reports a doubling of its temperature compared to the global average, reaching a scorching 53.2 degrees Celsius, with a projected increase of 4 degrees Celsius. This extreme heat has led to the transformation of rivers into plains, causing the death of fish and birds. Jungle fires are a frequent occurrence, posing a threat to wildlife. However, people use and rely on air-conditioners to counter the hot waves, further exacerbating energy consumption.

~~Similarly, the other example of~~

Similarly, the other example is Pakistan. being constantly under the attacks of global warming and its drastic impacts. Experiencing consecutive floods in 2010 and 2022, the country suffered immense economic and social losses. Antonio Guterres, the UN secretary, declared a

humanitarian crisis due to floods, resulting in thousands of lives lost to diseases and vast fertile lands submerged. The repercussions are evident in Balochistan, where the loss of fertile land has contributed to a flour crisis.

After analysing the drastic threats of the deteriorating environment, it becomes pretty important to suggest ^{some} measures in order to counter the menace.

Indeed, the first step,
 ↑ International collaboration is crucial to address the challenges of the environment surpassing the tipping point. By fostering effective policies through global cooperation, nations can pool resources, share expertise, and implement sustainable practices. Joint efforts can lead to comprehensive strategies tackling climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. Collaborative initiatives, such as international agreements and conventions, play a vital role in creating a unified front against environmental threats. Hence, international collaboration is a

key for global environmental sustainability and resilience

Second, promoting a green economy is crucial to tackle challenges from the environment surpassing the critical point. Shifting towards sustainable practices, such as renewable energy sources and eco-friendly industries, reduces pollution and conserves resources. Green jobs provide employment, while sustainable agriculture ensures food security. Adopting these practices globally fosters resilience against environmental threats, contributing to a ~~healthier~~ healthier planet. Hence, promoting a green economy is an effective strategy to mitigate the adverse effects of the environment shift, creating a sustainable and balanced future for both people and planet.

Third, education and awareness are key to addressing environmental challenges. By teaching sustainable practices and highlighting the impact of environmental degradation, people can make informed choices. Awareness fosters a sense of responsibility, encouraging eco-friendly behaviors. Hence, education empowers communities to implement effective solutions, creating a collective effort toward mitigating challenges posed by the environmental shift for a more sustainable future.

Fourth, combating the threat of degradation of the environment can involve a worldwide effort to plant more trees. Trees play a crucial role by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen, acting as a natural carbon sink. The Amazon forests, known as the Earth's lungs, contribute significantly to global oxygen levels. However, excessive use of products like

paper and fireworks has led to deforestation, impacting oxygen levels and contributing to global warming. Ergo, a global initiative to plant more trees emerges as a crucial step in combating the threat of environmental degradation.

Last but not the least, addressing the declining environmental conditions requires supporting climate-affected countries economically, providing food aid, and sharing technological advancements. Technological assistance can help these nations rebuild infrastructure and implement measures to mitigate future floods and droughts. Economic support enables them to sustain lives on Earth after facing such environmental disasters. An example is the Canadian government's aid to Pakistan after the 2010 floods. There fore, aiding affected countries

vulnerable countries is crucial to combat harsh environmental situation.

On the whole, the deteriorating state of the environment, beyond the tipping point, presents alarming consequences. Amplified poverty, escalating health issues, and aggravated economic downturns burden societies. Disruptions in weather patterns lead to increased migration heightening social and political tensions globally. To address these challenges, collaborative international efforts, reforestation campaigns, and supporting climate-affected nations economically are imperative. Urgent and comprehensive actions are essential to reverse these damaging trends. Certainly, indisputable signs of environmental damage signify that our planet has reached a tipping point. Immediate and thorough measures are crucial to alleviate repercussions and ensure a sustainable future.

"Environment is no one's property to destroy; it's everyone's responsibility to protect." (Mohit Agoli)