

COP24: A Silver Lining in Defining Climate Change

The noteworthy 24th Annual Climate Change conference referred as Conference of Parties (COP24) hosted by the Polish city of Katowice from 2- 15 December 2018 has transpired to be a promising tread for implementing the Paris Agreement for combating global warming. Attended by nearly 14000 delegates from more than 195 countries the event marked the origination of an intercontinental dominion under which all the countries are obliged to tender their emission report and state the conscious efforts taken by them for reducing the carbon footprint in every 2 years from 2024. The adoption of the rule book for addressing the issues of climate change is highly creditable, amidst the initial setback with strong opposition from major fossil fuel exporting nations viz U.S, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The strong resistance showed by these countries indicates troublesome talks in the succeeding summits.

The defining issue of the climate change is rising temperature. The Paris Agreement advocates to keep world's average temperature below 2 degree Celsius from pre- Industrial levels but, in the present circumstances there is the rise of 3 degree Celsius in the global warming which is resulting in stern catastrophe. The year 2018 experienced numerous, unparalleled natural disasters, almost in every country and continent highlighting more than ever the need to reduce greenhouse emissions. In fact, the committee of the world's prime environmental scientists, the Intergovernmental panel on climate changes (IPCC) upholds to keep the levels of global warming below 1.5 degree from pre industrial levels.

The silver lining is that the participating nations agreed on most of the problematic issues of the rule book for applying the 2015 Paris Agreement. Important decisions included, consensus on methods of measurement of carbon footprints, providing a transparent report on initiatives taken by each country in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and its verification.

The controversy on the carbon credits which a country obtains for its efforts for reducing emissions will definitely take time to be resolved. Countries like Brazil insist on alternative method of counting where as experts are of the opinion that the new method will lead to double counting of credits.

The much needed finance ought to come from the rich and developed countries which is yet another critical issue. The rich countries need strong resolve to replenish the green climate fund, adoption fund and least development countries fund. Germany has taken the lead and showed its willingness by contributing 1.7 billion dollars which is the double of its first commitment in 2014.

In 2009, developed countries assured to mobilize 100 billion dollar a year in climate finance for the vulnerable countries by 2020. The target was restated in the Paris agreement and countries pledge to continue mobilizing at this level until 2025.

The outcome of cop24 surely presents a Ray of hope but there is still a very long way to go. Fossil fuel still continues to be the driving force for many developing economies of the world and the use of green energy is to be pushed further at an accelerated rate. The summit of G20 countries proposed to be hosted by Japan will precede the UN climate summit in Chile in the month of November 2019 with a pre cop meeting at Costa Rica.

However the year 2020, as it will showcase how far the participating countries have been successful in their pledge of reducing emissions and will determine the roadmap and success of the Paris agreement.



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