

Cancun Accord: Will it be a Reality or Proved to be a Myth?

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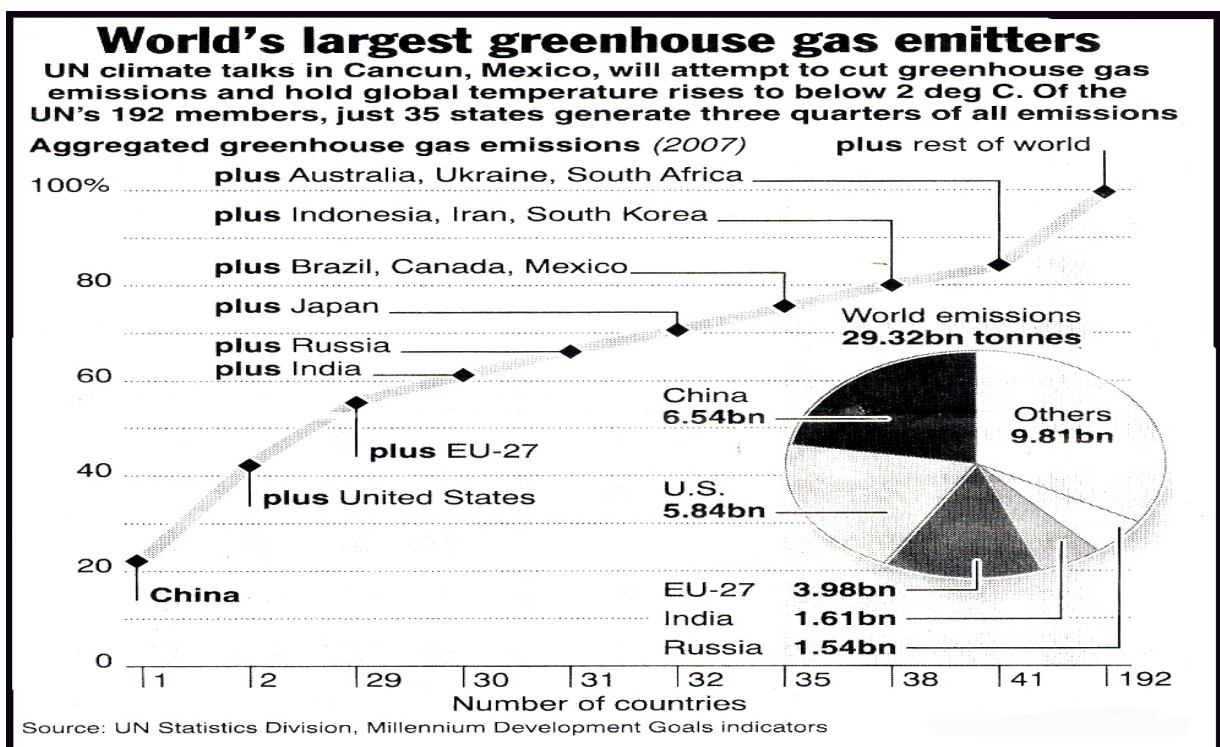
Abstract Global warming or climate change is the most critical and strategic issue of 21st Century. For the last 25 years i.e. from 1985, global warming summits have been taking place. But the real breakthrough has not been come up and the same has become a distant dream. Copenhagen or COP 15 Accord made some head way and as a result, global leaders took note of it. But the same was not considered as a decision and hence, there was no legal binding on the members in respect of cut in global carbon dioxide emissions (chart). Keeping in mind the out come of Copenhagen Summit, it was believed that Cancun summit would give some concrete solution to the problem of global warming or climate change. The Cancun summit out come is mixture of optimism, consensus and compromises. Therefore, the present paper examines Cancun agreement at a glance and the reasons for optimism, consensus and compromises. The paper also opines whether Cancun Accord would be proved to be a reality or otherwise.

Keywords: Bali summit, Copenhagen summit; Cancun Accord; global carbon dioxide emissions.

Introduction

According to the report prepared by World Climate Research Programme (WCRP), the frequency of extreme climate events, their magnitude and extent are rising and there are enough bases for strong action to enforce mitigation and adaptation measures at Cancun Summit. {1} This is because there has been a linkage between climate change and the frequency of heat waves.

Chart 1

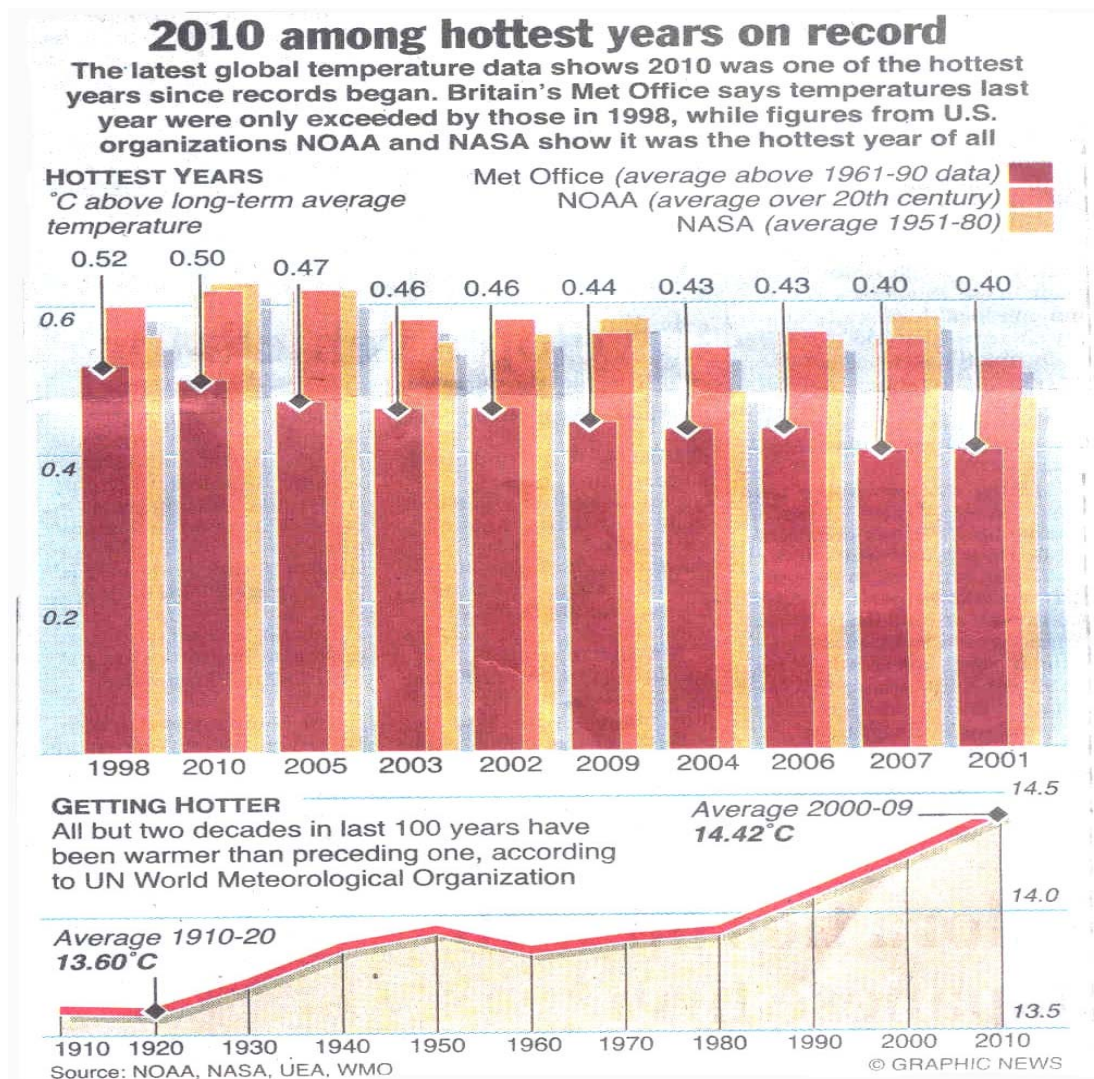


Since the year 1998, the world has witnessed ten warmest years. The decade of 2000s was warmer than the decade of 1990s and the decade of 1990s was warmer than the decade of 1980s. {2} Global mean sea level is higher now and is rising more rapidly than any other time in the last 3000 years at the rate of nearly 3.4 millimeters a year. {3}

Major events from extreme cold winter in Siberia in 2001 wherein the temperature went down to unbearable and unimaginable level of -60; hurricane Catarina in 2004 that developed in the South Atlantic Ocean for the first time, the worst drought in Brazil, the deadliest hurricane since 1928-Katrina, the tropical cyclone Nargis that hit Myanmar; floods in Pakistan and exceptional rainfall in many parts of the globe. The most note worthy trend and feature that has been observed and that is that most of the extreme events like hurricane, tropical storms, heat waves and rainfall have been of regional in nature and character.

The noticed fact is that high temperatures (**Chart 2**) are likely to be more frequent than cold. The heat wave in July in Russia was worse than the heat wave of Europe in 2003, which was in a class of its own. The heat wave in Russia was unprecedented since 1500s. Even the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCCs) fourth assessment report warned that the number of heat waves is going to increase and warm nights are on the rise. In years to come, the frequency of tropical storms, hurricanes, cyclones would be higher in magnitude. {4}

Chart 2



In the light of the above observations, it has become imperative for all countries of the world to give serious thinking on the issue and make out immediate attempts to tackle it. Let us examine Cancun Accord which is being considered as a one step forward.

Cancun as a Venue

Forty years ago, Cancun was a small fishing village with a few families. There were some holiday homes but it was a thin Island of lush wetland, connected to the mainland by two narrow strips. Today, a planned tourism and investment policy has transformed Cancun into a posh beachfront with big hotel chains and restaurants to attract more tourists. {5} The other side of it is that Cancun is a living example of ecological devastation; it is the hotels, the tourism and sexual trafficking of women. It is the antithesis of sustainable development

Cancun Accord: The Following are the Major Segments of Cancun Accord:

Cutting Carbon Emissions: In regard to cut in carbon emissions, the major players especially developed or rich countries have made pledges over the last year. To reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by the end of 2020 under COP 15 (Copenhagen) but this was not incorporated in the official UN process. Cancun Accord now formally puts those pledges into UN documentation, although they may increase

or decrease in coming years. The Accord merely call on the developed countries to “**raise the level of ambition of the emission reductions to be attained by them individually or jointly,**” with a view to reducing their aggregate level of emission of green house gases.

For the first time **developing economies have also agreed upon to look at how they can reduce emissions in coming years. But these economies did not make specific pledges. The most disturbing thing in Cancun Accord is that none of the cuts in emissions are legally binding. The same thing was done in Copenhagen Accord in 2009.**

Climate Aid: A new climate green fund was agreed at Cancun to transfer money from the developed or rich countries to developing or poor economies to tackle the consequences, impacts and implications of global warming or climate change. Accordingly, poor nations are considering this as a success at Cancun. This is because, these countries would **out number developed countries of rich economies on a supervisory panel to be created for this fund** that is to be set up in 2011. But no figure was put on how much money will be contributed to this fund.

Deforestation: Formal support was extended for the UN deforestation scheme namely **Reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD)** under which developed nations pay poor economies not to chop down forests and so look away carbon emissions. But details in respect of when and specifically what form the scheme would take a shape- whether rich economies would be able to use it to ‘offset’ their emissions rather than make cuts at home are to be clarified.

Kyoto Protocol: The Summit has deferred decisions on Kyoto Protocol; the existing international agreement which is a binding on developed or rich economies to cut emissions to next year i.e. 2011 summit to be held in South Africa. This means whether countries would sign up for a second ‘commitment period’ to cut carbon emissions after the existing deadline of 2012 remained to be seen. This also indicates that decisions on the role and contribution that the Kyoto Protocol would play in an ultimate future legal document that binds the nations to emissions cuts the ‘holy grail’ of the UN negotiations are delayed.**{7}**

There should be no gap between the first commitment period of Kyoto Protocol, which is expiring in December 2012, and the second commitment.

Technology Transfer: The issue of transferring knowledge of clean technology between nations was also backed at Cancun Summit. In this direction, a technology Executive Committee; a Climate Technology Centre; and a network are to be established. But there are no details about the money, place, and time/year and by whom. The most noticeable feature of the Accord is that economies were agreed upon on the principle of having their emissions cuts inspected. The monitoring, reporting, and verification would be based on the size of the nation’s economy, though who would carry out the inspection is not specified in the Accord.

Base Year: The Accord allows flexibility in selecting the base year for setting emissions reduction targets. Emissions trading and the project –based mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol shall continue to be available to Annex1 parties as a means to meet their quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives. However, the Cancun Accord could have an impact on the Kyoto Protocol since there are no binding emission reduction targets for the developed or rich nations and it favours a pledge and review system of voluntary emission reduction commitments.

Vague Provision: The Cancun Accord recognize that deep cuts in global greenhouse gas emission are required as documented in the 4th (IPCC) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and curb the rise in global average temperature below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. **{8}** In the absence of any fixed target, this could be an inadequate and insufficient as well as vague provision.

Human Rights: In the last 25 years history of climate change or global warming, for the first time the Cancun Accord has given much emphasis that in all climate change related actions, human rights must be respected. Accordingly, the Accord also recognizes the need to engage with a broad range of stake-holders namely- youth and persons with disability and call for gender equality and effective participation of women and indigenous people in effective action on all aspects of global warming.

Funding: On funding horizon, the Cancun Accord calls for information on the fast start finance promised at Copenhagen (COP 15) by the rich nations. These participants' countries endorse the pledge by the developed economies to make available at least US \$ 100 billion annually till 2020 {9} and say a significant share of this new multilateral funding should follow through the Green Climate Fund. This new fund would be operated through UNFCCC financial mechanism.

Reasons for Optimism

The balanced package dubbed as Cancun Accord builds on the decisions taken a year ago i.e. 2009 at Copenhagen. The Accord also lays the ground work for further progress in the future. The Cancun Accord comprise understanding on a system of transparency, a fund to help developing economies, a system of technology sharing and parameters for funding deforestation efforts in developed nations. The Cancun Accord represents a step towards operationalising the Bali Action Plan.

The Cancun Accord built on the growing clout of the Basic countries namely-Brazil, South Africa, India, and China. In particular, India played a proactive role in shaping the Accord, contributed by outlining the framework for a global monitoring system for both developed and developing nations, a technology mechanism, brining in the concept of equitable access to sustainable development.

Most importantly and strategically, for the first time in the history of global warming, the Accord brings the United States of America (USA) into a regime that is sort of comparable to that applicable to other industrialized nations The USA, a major player in hammering out this Accord ensured that while there was progress on all the segments on the Bali mandate, the issue of transparency was given primacy. {10}

On the other side, the European Union (EU) has given up its leadership position in climate change negotiations and instead concentrated on broader goals. Europe continues to lead by example. The EU wanted a Second Commitment period for Kyoto Protocol, and that has been worked out. {11}

The main reason for the optimism is the importance of the Accord lies in the fact that for the first time, a United Nations document has acknowledged that global warming must be kept below 2 degree Celsius compared to the pre-industrial temperature. The targets set by rich countries to reduce emissions and measures taken by developing nations to reduce the growth of emissions would now be listed in the UN system. Not only this, a system has been put in place to efficiently track efforts to reduce and limit emissions as well. A new adaptation Committee would support economies as they establish climate protection plans. A mechanism for brining an improvement in forestry and preventing emissions by building natural carbon sinks has also been put in place.

The only hold out to the process was Bolivia, which felt that Cancun Accord was not enough of a response to the environmental cons. For an Accord starved UN climate process, Cancun Summit is fairly enough. Environmentalist however disagreed with the Accord. They believe that Cancun may be saved the process but it did not yet save the climate.

Still Complex Issue

Faced with this great wall of un-enlightened self-interest, it may be tempting to say that humans have not yet evolved to the point where we are clever enough to handle as a complex a situation as climate change. Few may agree that democracy may have to be put on hold for a while. But the very complexity of the issue

shows the opposite. Dictatorships are conspicuously bad at complex problems. Why should they be any better at stopping climate change than they are planning economies? The more complicated and extensive a problem is, the more it matters that as many people and organizations as possible are engaged upon solution.

The developed or rich economies need to believe in what they are doing, and be able to shape decisions affect them so they could be in their interests. These countries need to be connected in networks that share knowledge and power. **Developing democracy is as important and strategic in the response to climate change as developing green technologies.** {12} It is also the best manner to vault the great wall of self-interest, because, unlike most responses to climate change, it does not involve paying for benefits that will largely be enjoyed by others. The world enjoy the benefits of invigorated democracy and strengthened communities ourselves-whatever happens to the climate, and whatever the weather. Diplomacy and multilateralism have triumphed, as many have said, but where has that left the task of combating climate change? If finance was the lure at Cancun, just as it was last year to get opposing countries to support the Copenhagen (COP 15) Accord, then at least that must translate into reality. Otherwise much more than optimism will be needed at Durban (South Africa) where the Climate Summit will be held in 2011.

Developed Countries not Interested

Those (193 countries) who had gathered at Cancun in the hope of influencing global climate policy got, instead, a slew of agreements (Accord) that left open the emission reduction targets for developed nations, which must have pleased the United States, the Japan and the others who are not in favour of binding cuts. {13} The USA has another reason to be pleased i.e. the mitigation pledges it had orchestrated at Copenhagen (COP 15) were adopted in the United Nations Framework. It should come, then as no surprise that the US has gone back with a transparency agreement in place and no binding emission cuts. They lose nothing since in any case they are not the part of the Kyoto Protocol.

It is very ease to be disheartened by the out come of Cancun Summit to take major measures in respect of an international agreement on fighting global warming. Despite apparent broad consensus on the threat that the climate change poses and the need for urgent action, short-term national interest is still being put before long-term collective good by the industralkised economies especially the USA and the Japan. Fortunately, world leaders across the world are not waiting to act and hence, **cooperation at the regional level for instance between Russia and China, is a eye opener that there is a will and there is a way to combat climate change problem.** {14}

At Cancun, national Governments for one reason or the other were resisting concessions required to break the logjam. Regional blocks appear more interested in apportioning blame than finding solutions. International organizations, however well intentioned, seem so far unable to bridge the divides. But away from the international arena, Businesses are not waiting for global agreement to reduce energy consumption. The need to cut costs, as well as to help safeguard the environment, is making energy conservation a major preference for firms in Russia and the around the world.

Governments world-wide are re-examining their resources of energy generation capacity. Renewable energy is also attracting Governments help. The USA is spending a huge amount of US \$ 66 billion to explore, develop and harness alternative fuel resources. The European Union (EU) is trying hard to generate 20 per cent of its total need of power renewable by 2020. China has passed a US \$ 47 billion green energy bull and is using subsidies and other financial tools to enhance investment in wind and solar power. {15}

The most pertinent fact to point out here is that as the world largest producer of greenhouse gases, enabling China to continue developing its economy without a huge rise in carbon emissions is critical and strategic to tackling climate change. Even if its per capita levels are still way below the US levels, China has now overtaken the United States of America as the globe biggest greenhouse emitter. Here too there is a reason for optimism. China is very much aware of the challenge and has promised-as a part of its attempt to

kick start the post Kyoto negotiations- to reduce emissions per GDP unit by as much as 45 per cent by the end of 2020.

It is necessary to understand why the Russian and Chinese Governments have such big ambitions for energy cooperation. Energy exports from Russia to China are now estimated to raise as much as 60 folds over the present decade. To help transfer the power efficiently, China is investing the equivalent of US \$ 250 billion on the needed improvement in the grid. The prices are three times up in China as compared to Russia, a compelling business case for both nations to cooperate is very clear. The ongoing debate in China on the introduction of an internal carbon price would only lead to more attractiveness of Russian hydro.

There are instances for such cooperation. The European Union (EU) is considering for creating a super-grid to enable the region to benefit from solar power generated in North Africa. Two important nations of the EU namely- Norway and Denmark are collaborating on the interchange of hydroelectric, thermal and wind power to lower cost of electricity generation and output. Mongolian has also a plan that wind energy is to be transmitted to South Korea and Japan.

Other View Point

It is certainly true that given the current state of play in climate change policies across many countries that have the approval of both developed economies and the majority of developing nations falls short in many ways in terms of concrete, far-reaching solutions on the critical issues in global climate governance. **Critical red lines that different nations and groups laid out even during the meeting at Cancun have been quietly modified.** But the fact of agreement between the rich and developed economies is not insignificant- and to deny it would be to miss the critical and strategic feature of the climate issue as a global problem and challenge. To put it differently, the absence of an outcome at **Cancun would have launched the multilateral process into uncharted waters with the risk, and its incalculable consequences, that the process itself would be scuttled or rendered effectively non-operational.** {16}

Cancun Summit was also marked by a relatively self-confident approach from the large developing countries, particularly China and India. China had made a strong propaganda for projecting what it was already committed to in its domestic climate talks, which the large contingent had little to counter with except for erudite discussions on climate policy by its NGOs. India had much more muted presence, apart from the media savvy, but nevertheless there was much interest in its policies and attitudes.

While acknowledging that developed countries have historical responsibility for the bulk of accumulated greenhouse gas emissions in the earth's atmosphere, which is what is causing global warming, the US and other developed economies argue that the current emissions' trajectories of major economies like China or India would neutralize their own emissions reductions and hence, climate change would continue to take place. This apparent mathematical logic appears to have convinced many within our own civil society and political ranks. Another more compelling mathematical logic has been deliberately obscured. **If we all agree that the increase in global average temperatures should not exceed say 2 degree Centigrade by 2050, this corresponds to a certain stock of GHGs in the atmosphere.** To reach that level, reduction in emissions required globally would have to be distributed over several countries. What the UNFCCC incorporated is a principle of equitable burden sharing in this respect rather than symmetry of legal obligations. {17}

Developed countries took on a legal commitment to undertake absolute emissions reductions not only to meet the requirements of keeping global warming which scientifically determined acceptable levels, but also, and this is fundamental, to vacate atmosphere space sufficient to accommodate the rising emission of developing economies, inevitable in the latter's course of economic and social development. If developing nations were encouraged to take mitigation measures beyond their own capacities, then such steps would have to be enabled and supported by financial and technological transfers from developed nations. What is now taking place in the negotiations; it is the wholesale overturning of these fundamental provisions of the

UNFCCC.

What Cancun Agreements have confirmed is that emerging economies namely-India, China, Brazil, Mexico can neither expect any financial nor technological transfers to support their development actions. Meeting any obligations these economies assume in a future climate regime would come up at the cost of meeting urgent and compelling developmental imperatives. The approach and attitude of rich nations is typical of other discriminatory regimes. They get to keep what emerging nations have because emerging economies got here first.

Strategy for Success in Durban 2011

If the negotiations on Climate Change see the light of success, then the following are the basic principles or issues to be followed by every nation in coming Durban Summit in 2011.

a) Multilateral headway on climate change can not happen without a clear cut binding agreement on reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Hence, Kyoto Protocol is in the right perspective and right direction. Therefore, every nation has to accept that there must not be any time gap between the first and second commitment. What is needed is to make it as a sound and strong base for future talks and also make it most effective and efficient to deliver the desired goods to the globe in general and member countries in particular.

b) In whatever form the accord is drafted, negotiated; finalized and adopted the very basic principle based on natural justice i.e. "common but differentiated duties, responsibilities and accountabilities" required to be accepted and implemented in the true spirit, zeal and sincerity. Rich nations must take responsibility sportingly as they are the largest contributor greenhouse gas emissions. Accordingly, these countries should be more dutiful and accountable to the world. These nations must take corrective steps in the right perspective and direction. Added to this, emerging economies namely-China, India, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa must also own responsibilities of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and must also take corrective measures.

c) In order to meet the challenge of global warming, the creation of financial resources is inevitable. Pledging of funds should not remain as a myth. It must be transformed into reality. Creation of fund worth US \$ 100 billion should see the light of the day. The existing levels of pledges are at the low ebb and can not serve the purpose of reduction of emissions and adaptations. The process of creating such fund is very slow and at the will of the contributors.

d) In Cancun Summit, the US and the China were the major players in the negotiations. Any agreement or accord with the consent of these two nations would become useless and in fractious. The consent of the US and China in regard to MRV and differentiated responsibilities is the need of the hour.

e) Any accord should on climate change should not hold hostage or become a hinder in respect of two vital strategic issues namely- multilateral trade negotiations and transfer of technology to the needy economies.

When 1993 countries would gather at Durban, South Africa in 2011, it is their moral duty and responsibility to contribute positively and constructively in saving the planet. They must think at least once that they have to play an encouraging role in saving the climate which may create far-reaching consequences, impacts and implication to the world wherein all are we living. Every one must hope that a sense would prevail upon the nations to come out with some concrete plan, policies and programmes of saving the earth from further decay.

Conclusion

From Copenhagen (COP 15) in 2009 to Cancun (COP 16) very little headway has been made out in the negotiations on Climate Change or global warming. But the most unfortunate thing is that no concrete solution to the problem which is the biggest challenge of 21st Century. Developed nations who are

responsible for this mess are not serious in their attitude, approach and solutions. These countries or the major players are not realizing that if immediate measures are not taken then the humanity (people) would face unbearable and unimaginable consequences and impacts. What is immediate required is the consistency, continuity and diversity in the attitude, approach and practices. The next COP 17 at Durban, South Africa must give a rethinking on the challenge and out come must not be a myth but must be transformed into reality.

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Programme Planning in School: Perspectives on Out-Door Programme

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Abstract *he objective of this paper is to emphasize the need and importance of outdoor learning in our secondary schools which will act as a panacea to improving academic excellence and discipline in schools. It is believed that refocusing the out door learning will go a long way to strengthen the social, skills and mental development of the students. The methodology here involves the review of the past and present perception of school head on outdoor programmes. It also finds out that the awareness is not there among the stakeholders in education. It was also discovered through personal interaction with staff and students that most schools do not take part in outdoor programme. Most of the schools interacted with show no knowledge of what outdoor programmes are. The uniqueness of this paper is providing clues on how school head can introduce and carry out the outdoor programmes. They should see it not as extra curricula activity but as an inevitable part of completing the school curriculum. This paper is calling for a refocus on the outdoor learning and how this can be achieved internally without waiting for fund from the government but as a means of attracting the government.*

Keywords: *Programme, Planning, Outdoor, Learning*

Introduction

The school can be defined as an industry engaged in the transformation of human being, ready for meaningful living and making his or her own contribution to the development of the society.

For the school to achieve this role, they will not work in isolation, It is on this ground that the school is referred to as a social system where the different unit need to work together to achieve a common goal.

Akinwumiju and Agabi (2005: 101) defined the social system as "a system that is essentially service oriented. It is a system that exists primarily to service society with the purpose of maintaining a social order. It therefore, does not exist in isolation with its environment".

The school as service organization needs to plan its programme in order to achieve its set up goal. Senge (1990) Watkins and Marsick (1993) in Hoy and Miskel (2006:33) sees the school as "places where participants continually expand their capacities to create and achieve, where novel patterns of thinking are encouraged, where collective aspiration are nurtured, where participants expands its capacity for innovation and problem solving".

From the views above one can deduce that learning can take place outside the classroom, to produce a total educated child that will fit into the society. The school in planning its programme should also take note of non-academic programmes which also enhances the academic programmes, that is the psychomotor domain, the cognitive and the affective domain. In the past most of this outdoor programmes were referred to as extra curricula activities which led to schools not attaching too much importance to it. The word extra according to Edem (2004) made it to add anything to the exam scores of the students.

The less attention paid on the outdoor programmes and the use of the psychomotor domain has led to series of indiscipline cases in our schools today.

The non-academic programme as so called because its does not add to the exam scores of the students and as such must schools are not committed or dedicated to it. Even where they are done, it is done haphazardly or just for the sake of doing it. The non- academic programmes are more of a practical way of learning.

According to Smith (1971) in Ozuru (2003: 132) that outdoor learning should offer educational experiences designed " to help the student identify and solve real-life problems to acquire skills and