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An Overview of Sustainable Climate Action in the Global South, with Reflections on the Role of Companies

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Abstract:
Climate change basically refers to long-term shifts in temperature and weather patterns. These changes may be natural or anthropogenic. The aim of this paper is to examine the ways by which developing countries and corporate bodies in these countries can tackle the climate change situation for developing countries are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Granted that climate change affects countries including the Global North, nevertheless, its effects are more pronounced on Global South actors, because of their poor economic pre-disposition and lack of capacity to tackle climate change independently. Furthermore, the paper analyzed the practical hindrances militating against the role of corporate bodies in combating climate change in the Global South. The study adopts the doctrinal method of legal research which involves an extensive analysis of the primary and secondary sources of relevant legal materials. Findings include affirmations of the position that corporate bodies can contribute in combating climate change in the Global South, although at the moment, the impact of their roles do not yet appear significant. Consequently, the paper recommended that in addition to the notable agreements and actions taken at the international level, it is imperative for corporate bodies to significantly support climate change mitigation and adaptation goals in the Global South.

Keywords: Climate change, climate action, sustainable development, Global South, Global North

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1. INTRODUCTION

Climate change is a global issue. It has a great impact on every country. However, its impacts differ from country to country, and depend on whether a country is in the Global South[1] or the Global North.[2] Climate change has more devastating effects on the Global South actors than the Global North actors. In addition to States, corporate bodies have a significant role to play in mitigating the effects of climate change. This paper explores the ways by which the actions of corporate bodies can lead to a reduction in greenhouse carbon emissions, so as to curb the effects of climate change. The devastating effects of climate change have made it imperative for stakeholders including governments, non-governmental organizations, civil societies, and the public and private sectors to synergize for a sustainable outcome.

To prevent climate change from reaching a dangerous threshold within the next decades, the international community has agreed that global warning must be below 2^{o}C above pre-industrial levels. This is aimed at limiting increase in temperature to 1.5^{o}C.[3] The continuous concentration of greenhouse gases, such as nitrous oxide, carbon dioxide, fluorinated gases and methane, in the atmosphere, are a consequence of human activities, and this is mostly caused by industrial activities.[4] It is important to note that carbon dioxide emanating from human activities contributes majorly to global warming. Although methane is a more powerful greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. It has a shorter atmospheric lifetime. However, like carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide is a greenhouse gas that accumulates in the atmosphere over decades or centuries.[5] On the other hand, there are non-greenhouse gas pollutants, for example soot, which have different warming and cooling effects, and which lead to poor air quality.

Fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas, are the largest contributors to climate change.[6] The greenhouse effect is a process that occurs when gases in the atmosphere trap the sun's heat. The temperature overtime changes and become warmer and alters the usual balance

[1] Global South refers to the nations of the world which are regarded as having a relatively low level of economic and industrial development, and are typically located to the south of more industrialized nations. The Global South broadly comprises Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean Available at https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/global-south/62929. Accessed on 24th July, 2024.

[2] Global North refers to those technically and socially well-developed countries, it comprises of the rich and powerful regions basically located in North America and Europe. Available at https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/global-north. Accessed on 24th July,2024.

[3] Climate Action Available <https://www.eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/glossary/climate-action.html.accessed on 26th July, 2024.

[4] Causes of Climate Change Available <https://www.climate.ec.europa.eu/climate-change/causes-climate-change- en. Accessed on 30th July, 2024.

[5] *Ibid*

[6] Causes and Effects of Climate. Available <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/causes-effects -climate change. |Accessed on 30th July, 2024.

of nature. This poses risks to life on earth. Extreme and changing weather patterns, or climate change generally will hamper development in the Global South if left unchecked.[7] Climate change is presently one of the global challenges which need urgent attention as a result of its effects. Although climate change affects everyone, Global South countries are more vulnerable to its impacts.[8] Climate change is currently one of the greatest drivers of poverty and hunger putting 45 million people worldwide at a risk of famine.[9] If climate change is not regulated, it will lead the average global temperature increase beyond 3'C. [10] and the increase will manifest in different ways that are unfavourable to life on earth.

No country is immune to the impacts of climate change, but the world's poorest countries are the worst hit. Over the last decade, these countries have been hit by nearly eight times as many natural disasters, compared to three decades ago, resulting in a three-fold increase in economic damage.[11] The Global North countries are responsible for almost half of all emissions since the Industrial Revolution, as estimated by the World Inequality Database. Lifestyles in Europe, North America and other nations in the Global North produce a carbon footprint 100 times greater than that of the world's poor nations combined. In 2019, the top 10% of global emitters; 771 million individuals, were responsible for about 48% of global CO2 emissions, while the bottom 50%, that is, 3.8 billion individuals, were responsible for almost 12% of all emissions. However, this does not imply that developing countries, in the Global South have contributed far less to global warming. It implies that least developed countries have had a less than equal share in the direct benefits of fossil fuel use, including energy consumption.[12]

Thus, there is an urgent need for all and sundry to ensure that the global temperature rise is limited to below 2^{o}C or even 1.5^{o} C. In addressing the homogenous nature of the increasing effects of climate change, both the public and private enterprises need to appraise the issues involved and develop the necessary adaptations. However, it is pertinent to note that adaptation costs will be much higher at high levels of global warming by 2050 and 2100, in contrast to lower levels of warming from the 2030s. Consequently, strong global mitigation actions can reduce the adaptation costs by three quarters by 2100. It is equally important to state that although adaptation costs are higher

[7] Climate Action <https://www.un.org/sustainable development/climate change. accessed 30th July, 2024
[8] S Huq and M Adow, Climate Change is Devastating the Global South <https://www.aljazeera.com. Accessed on 30th July, 2024.
[9] *Ibid*
[10] *Ibid*
[11] For the Poorest Countries, Climate Action is Development in Action. Available at https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2023/12/02/for-the-poorest-countries-climate-action-is-development-in-action. Accessed on 3rd August, 2024.
[12] E Strazzante, S Rycken, V Winkler, "Global North and Global South: How Climate Change Uncovers Global Inequalities", 2022 Available at htpps://www. https://gceurope.org/global-north-and-global-south-how-climate-change-uncovers-global-inequalities/. Accessed on 4th August, 2024.

for high-income countries in absolute dollar value, the costs are however, higher relative to gross domestic product for low-income countries.[13]

1.1 What is Climate Change?

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) defined climate change as "a change of climate that is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity, that alters the composition of the global atmosphere, and that is in addition to natural climate variability over compatible time periods". [14] The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defined climate change as "any change in climate over time whether due to natural variability or observational record of climate which occurs because of internal changes within the climate system or in the interaction between its components, or because of human activities".[15] It is significant to note that the climate has constantly been changing since the evolution of mankind. However, what is worrisome is the faster rate at which it's changing. In 2018, the US National Climate Assessment remarked that the earth's climate is now changing faster than at any point in the history of civilization.

1.2 Climate Change and Sustainable Development Goals

Over the past years, it has become crystal clear that no country can escape the impacts of climate change. However, at the global level, climate change effects are not uniform. Thus, countries have come up with action plans on how to tackle the effects of climate change albeit globally. A World Bank report estimated that the ecological crisis might drive up to 135 million people into poverty by 2030. [16] On the other hand, sustainable development goals are a comprehensive plan to build a sustainable partnership by both developed and developing countries. It is a concept that incorporates a long-term decision making, a holistic outlook integrating different disciplines and the relevance of pro-activism on the part of society and the ecosystem.[17]

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[13] D Chapagain, F Baarsch, M Schaeffer, & S D'haen, (2020). Climate Change Adaptation Costs in Developing Countries: Insights from Existing Estimates. Climate and Development, 12(10), 934–942. Available at https://doi.org/10.1080/17565529.2020.1711698. Accessed on 3rd August, 2024.

[14] United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Available at https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/agricultural-and-biological-sciences/united-nations-framework-convention-on-climate-change. Accessed on 4th August, 2024.

[15] United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Available at https://unfccc.int/files/press/backgrounders/application/pdf/press_factsh_science.pdf. Accessed on 4th August, 2024.

[16] Reversals of Fortune, Available at https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/611fc6f2-140b-551e-9371-468eec64c552/content. Accessed on 4th August, 2024.

[17] A Brief History of SDGs <http://www.sdgacademylibrary.mediaspace.kaltura.com. Accessed on 30th July 2024.

In September 2015, members states of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a blueprint for peace and prosperity.[18] The aim of the Agenda 2030 is to address the urgent environmental, political and economic challenges facing the world. On 1 January 2016, the seventeen sustainable development goals of Agenda 2030 officially came into force.[19] Sustainable development strategies provide opportunities to redesign communities to reduce the impacts of climate change while also positively impacting human health and well-being.

Goal 13 of the sustainable development goals of Agenda 2030 refers to taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. This goal covers actions to mitigate climate change, together with adaptation efforts, and the promotion of corporate and institutional capacity to address issues relating to climate change. Climate change poses a major threat to the long-term sustainability of the planet. In the same vein, the systems of consumption and productions which are drivers of climate change pose significant challenges for the sustainability of society. There is need for developed and developing countries to build capacity to adapt and strengthen resilience to climate-related hazards. Member states who are signatories to international treaties and conventions are expected to mobilize funding for meaningful mitigation actions integrated into national policies, strategies and planning.

2. KYOTO PROTOCOL AND PARIS AGREEMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

2.1 The Kyoto Protocol

The Kyoto Protocol is international treaty which was adopted on 11th December 1997. After a difficult ratification procedure, it entered into force on 16th February 2005. There are presently 192 parties to the Protocol.[20] The Kyoto Protocol sought to cut down greenhouse gas emissions by industrialized and developed countries by 5.2%.[21] This commitment emanated from countries with large portions or accounts of emissions following the UNFCCC's common but differentiated responsibility principle. It required the industrialized countries to make a commitment to reduce their greenhouse gases emissions in accordance with agreed individual targets. The Kyoto Protocol did not impose binding targets on non-Annex countries, which are basically the Global South countries, including major carbon emitters like China and India. The Kyoto Protocol is binding on the Global North or Annex I countries, since they are responsible for the high

[18] A Dagnachew climate change measures and sustainable Development Goals <https://www.sdgs.un.org.accessed on 30th July, 2024.
[19] *Ibid*
[20] F Bassetti, Success or Failure? The Kyoto Protocol's Troubled Legacy. Available at htpps://www.climateforesight.eu/articles/success-or-failure-the-kyoto. Accessed on 26th August, 2024.
[21] Ibid

level of global greenhouse gases. The Kyoto Protocol devised a means of helping countries to meet their emission targets through emissions trading, in which case countries that emit less than they are allowed to can sell this amount to industrialized countries that produce more than they should. Hence, it becomes economically beneficial to reduce emissions.

2.2 Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement is an international treaty which was adopted by 196 countries during the Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, France on 12 December, 2015. It came into force on 4th November, 2016. The Paris Agreement is based on a five-year cycle of intense climate action to be undertaken by countries. It is geared towards strengthening and synergizing global responses to the threat of climate change. The major aim of the treaty is to keep the global temperature rise below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to further its efforts towards 1.5 degree Celsius. The treaty extends to climate change mitigation, adaptation and finance. By February 2023, 195 countries had become signatories to the treaty. The Paris agreement is also aimed at enabling and equipping countries to deal with the impacts of climate change, and providing a platform for the flow of finance to facilitate low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient pathways.

Both the Kyoto Protocol of 1997 and the Paris Agreement of 2015 were concluded under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Both treaties are aimed at drastically reducing greenhouse emissions in the atmosphere, and forestalling dangerous human interference with the climate system. However, the two treaties differ significantly. The Kyoto Protocol was only targeted at developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gases emissions, while the Paris Agreement requires all countries whether in the Global North or Global South to embrace climate change as a shared problem, and requires countries to set emission targets. The Kyoto Protocol did not compel countries like India and China who are among the major carbon emitters to take action. The United States of America was a signatory to the agreement in 1998 but never ratified it, but later withdrew its signature in 1998. Governments all over the world are required by virtue of the Paris Agreement to set targets known as nationally determined contributions, with the sole aim of preventing the global average temperature from rising more than 2”C above pre-industrial levels, and making frantic efforts to keep the temperature rise below1.5’C.

3. IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Countries in the global south are the most vulnerable in the climate change crises. The crisis can manifest in various forms like prolonged drought which may lead to starvation; heat wave which damages plant harvests, and prevents labourers from

working outdoors.[22] In Nigeria for example, climate change has led to more intense and untimely rainfall, landslides, gully erosion, flash floods, land degradation and many other devastating consequences.[23] There are also health complications which can precede or occur after an extreme event such as flooding. Floods have a devastating effect on life. People are exposed to activities that put their health at risk, for example, preparation for flooding can lead to relocating to an unsafe and exposed place, and post-event cleaning of the debris of flooding can also expose individuals to harmful substances. Flooding can lead to the destruction of property, and the loss of infrastructure and public services. Health risks can also emanate from extreme events reoccurring in succession in a particular area. Climate change can exacerbate underlying medical conditions too.

Another negative impact of climate change is that it leads to increased temperatures as a result of the continuous and increasing concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. This potentially leads to a rise in the death toll and sicknesses caused by heat. Examples include heat cramps, heatstroke, hyperthermia, and heat exhaustion. A long exposure to high temperature is also associated with constant hospitalization with respect to kidney, respiratory and cardiovascular disorders. [24] Climate change also affects food availability as drought or floods disrupt farming activities, thereby causing food scarcity and decreases in access to food.[25] Essentially, an increase in carbon dioxide and climate change affects the safety and distribution of food in two major ways. The first is that an increase in temperature, weather patterns and extreme climate conditions has a great impact on spoilage and contamination of food. Secondly, high concentrations of carbon dioxide stimulate growth and carbohydrate production in some plants.

However, it can consequently lower the protein level and essential minerals in consumable crops like rice, potatoes, wheat. This has a potential negative implication for human nutrition. Climate change also affects marine and fresh water resources, which can increase the chances of being infected with waterborne diseases caused by viruses, bacteria and protozoa. It is important to state that water borne diseases are also a result of toxins produced by algae and cyanobacteria. The inhalation, ingestion, and consumption of contaminated food or drinks can expose man to these toxins.

4. CORPORATIONS AS CLIMATE CHANGE STAKEHOLDERS

Companies are creations of law. A company is a legal entity incorporated in accordance with the provisions of the law. It is without doubt a fact that everyone is a

[22] Huq and M Adow, Climate Change is devastating the Global South. Available at htpps://www.aljazeera .com. Accessed on 28th July, 2024.

[23] Airenakho, Land, Soil and Climate Change: How Nigeria is Enhancing Climate Resilience to Save the Future of Its People. Available htpps:// www.worldbank.org. Accessed 28th July, 2024.

[24] Climate and Health Assessment, Available at https://www.globalchnage.gov. Accessed on 26th July, 2024.

[25] M E Brown, *e tal*, Climate Change, Global Food Security and the U.S Food System. (2015) U.S Global Challenge Research Program.

stakeholder of climate change. However, companies are vehicles of creating economic value in society.[26] Companies constitute the majority of the world's operational capacities, whether in the form of structures or money. Supply chains that unify humanity emanate from these stakeholders, and the largest companies have the capacity to transform entire industries in one decision. Resultantly, they bear a larger part of the responsibility of contributing to climate change and pollution.[27]

A previous study traced 14% of branded pollution, that is, pollution that can be traced to a producer, to the top three polluting brands; Coca-Cola, Pepsi and Danone S.A.[28] Thus, if the society is to address climate change issues, the solutions must come from the market, particularly the corporate sector. Corporations are profit oriented and managers are poised to take actions that are in the interest of investors. However, climate change is altering the rules of the game. The directors and managers acting in the best interest of their investors must increasingly incorporate climate change into the decision-making processes.[29]

4.1 Ways Companies can Address Climate Change

4.1.1 Operational Efficiency

With a focus on combating climate change, companies can direct their operations to discover new ways to do more things with less resources. By cutting down on resource inputs or the production of greenhouse gas emissions, there is the likelihood of lowering the cost of production, cost of compliance and the company's carbon footprint. Companies can achieve the foregoing by making use of alternate materials and processes, dematerialization of production processes, development of more efficient manufacturing processes, migrating from products to services, and bringing companies together within their industrial ecologies.[30] In order to tackle climate change through their operations, companies may reduce their packaging and printing of goods or documents. They can minimize the use of packaging materials and use biodegradable or recycled materials instead. Companies can make use of paper bags or redesign the product packaging to use less material or place packaging at a higher cost to discourage it. In the same vein, they

[26] N Bonnisseau, The Stakeholders of Climate Change. Available at http://www.plana. earth/academy/the stake-holders –of-climate change/. Accessed on 30 July, 2024.
[27] *Ibid*
[28] A.J. Hoffman communicating about climate change with corporate leaders and stakeholders, Oxford Encyclopedia of Climate Change with Communication, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016.
[29] *Ibid*
[30] 17 Practical Ways for Businesses to Help Battle Climate Change. Available at https:// www.forbes.com/sites/forbes coaches council/2023/11/21/17- practical-ways -for -businesses-to-help-battle-climate-change/. Accessed 1st July 2024.

can digitalize their operations to reduce the need for printing, make use of digital invoices, communication and reports.

4.1.2 Adoption of Renewable Energy

Companies can adopt the use of renewable energy and reduce reliance on fossil fuels, thereby reducing a great portion of greenhouse gas emissions. This transition involves implementing renewable energy options like solar, wind or hydroelectric power. Simple acts of turning off the lights in the office when not in use, slightly lowering the heating or the air conditioning or taking devices off the plugs when they are not needed are some good actions companies can implement. Moreover, by paying more attention to other daily routine actions, businesses can slightly reduce their energy consumption and, thus, their impact on the climate.[31]

4.1.3 Fiduciary Duties

A company's board of directors has the responsibility of managing the company's business activities. On the other hand, the stakeholders have alternative means of influencing the board of directors which includes the power to remove directors by ordinary resolution when the directors breach any of their statutory duties.[32] Directors owe the company and shareholders a duty to act at all times in the best interest of the company, and must not allow a conflict between their personal interests and the interest of the company. Hence, where shareholders are committed to mitigating the effects of climate change, they may compel or encourage the board of directors to initiate, undertake and implement climate mitigation strategies that will be beneficial to everyone.

In Nigeria for example, the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020, provides that directors owe a fiduciary duty to the company,[33] and must at all times act in the best interest of the company as a whole.[34] The directors are statutorily required to exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence under Section 308(1) of CAMA 2020. Shareholders' primacy or activism generally refers to initiatives to influence the operations of the company. Shareholders who want to promote the conservation of the environment may influence the board of directors to tackle environmental issues. The board of directors will

[31] 10 Actions Companies Can Adopt To Fight Climate Change, Available at <htpps://www. https://youmatter.world/en/category-economy-business/actions-companies-climate-change-environment-sustainability/. Accessed on 20th July, 2024.
[32] Company Law and Climate Change Available <http://www.climatehughs.org Accessed on 31 July, 2024.
[33] Section 305 (1)
[34] Section 305 (3)

be obliged to pay attention to environmental concerns and how best to sustain them.[35] Thus, as the issue of climate change gains momentum worldwide and there is a focus on sustainable ways of tackling same, directors can take up voluntary disclosure frameworks requiring disclosure on sustainable-risk managements, and include this as part of their regulations. This way, climate change will become a relevant consideration in the assessment of directors' duties. The directors may be expected to combat climate change; so that where a director fails to act on climate change strategies, the shareholders can pursue a claim in court for breach of his or her fiduciary duties under the law.

4.1.4 Hazardous Waste Management

Another major way companies can reduce the negative impact of climate change in the Global South is to imbibe the concepts of Cradle to Grave (C2G) and Cradle to Cradle (C2C).[36] The concept of cradle to grave refers to the responsibility of companies that generate hazardous wastes to safely manage the wastes from their first generation to their final disposal, and even beyond.[37] Therefore, a company which generates hazardous waste must take up the responsibility for its proper disposal. Cradle to Cradle concept implies that a company should design its products in a way that the materials and components can be recycled.[38] This promotes a circular economy approach and reduces the environmental impacts of traditional production patterns.

Ideally, the best waste management is to forestall waste generation *ab initio*. However, manufacturing companies cannot outrightly eliminate waste generation. Corporations can embrace the practice of waste minimization or source reduction, which involves the collective strategies of design and fabrication of products or services that minimize the amount of waste generated and reduce the toxicity of the resultant waste.[39] Companies can reduce waste by using less hazardous substitute materials, reusing materials or by modifying components of design and processing. Advancements in packaging reduces the quantity of materials use, increases the efficiency of distribution, reduces fuel consumption and the resultant air emissions. For example, companies can

[35] M Gelter, Sustainability and Corporate Stakeholders (Oxford Business Law Blog, 7 July 2021 sustainability-and-corporate-stakeholders. Available at <htpps://blogs.law.ox.ac.uk. Accessed on 5th July, 2024.

[36] H Alibasic, 'Role of Corporations in addressing Climate change; Available at https://www.reseachgate.net/publication/322753795 Role-of corporations -in-Addressing-climate-change. Accessed on 2nd August, 2024.

[37] R Espinoza, Cradle to Grave Requirements for Hazardous Waste Generators, https://www.blog.idrenvironmental.com Accessed on 2nd August, 2024.

[38] Cradle to Cradle. Available at https://www.sustainabilityguide.eu. Accessed on 2nd August, 2024

[39] Waste Management strategies, Available at https://www.courses.Lumenlearning.com. Accessed on 3rd August, 2024

decide to stop using polythene bags for packaging or they can resort to the use of paper bags for packaging of their products.

4.1.5 Recycling and Reuse

Companies can contribute to a reduction in the effect of climate change by making use of recycled materials.[40] This will drastically reduce the use of raw materials or the need of natural resource exploitation for new raw materials. Recycling waste directly conserves natural resources, reduces energy consumption and emissions generated by the extraction of virgin materials and their subsequent transformation into finished products. Recycling drastically reduces greenhouse gas emissions that are the major contributors to global climate change. Generally, it is an effective tool in fighting climate change, as it reduces environmental impact and also promotes sustainable lifestyles.[41]

Sometimes, recycled materials are used as input materials and processed heavily into end products. For example, the use of old aluminum cans or bottles to repackage or make new aluminum products. On the other hand, recycled materials pass through little or no processing before their re-use.[42] Thus, recycling reduces waste and consequently pollution. It forestalls the extraction of new raw materials and saves energy. Recycling reduces the need to exploit fossil fuels that are used to make plastics. For every metric ton of paper recycled for example, 17 trees can be saved and water used in manufacturing is cut by 50%.[43] It is estimated that recycling between 2020 and 2050 will reduce emissions by 5.5 to 6.02 gigatons of carbon dioxide, which is equivalent to taking over one billion cars off the streets for one year. Recycling is regarded as a practical yet easy change to help curb greenhouse gas emissions and limit the climate crisis.[44]

5. MITIGATION EFFORTS BY SOME COMPANIES IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH TOWARDS CLIMATE CHANGE

Mitigation efforts refer to ways in which the impacts of climate change can be reduced. They include enhancing energy efficiency, transitioning to renewable energy sources, adoption of regenerative agricultural practices and protecting and restoring

[40] Recycling means the recovery of useful materials such as glass paper, plastic, wood and metals from the waste stream so they may be incorporated into the manufacturing of new products.
[41] Waste management strategies. Available at https://www.menlearning.com. Accessed on 3rd August, 2024
[42] Combating climate change through Recycling: Available at https://www.unfccc/.int/climate-action/momentum-for-change/activity-database. Accessed on 3rd August, 2024
[43] How Recycling can help the climate and other facts. Available at www.bbc.com/future/article/20230317-how-recycling-can-help-the-climate-and-other-facts. Accessed on 3rd August, 2024.
[44] Celeste Robinson and Kate Huun, "The Impact of Recycling on Climate Change", Environmental Centre, University of Colorado, Boulder. 15th December 2023. Available at https://www.colorado.edu/ecenter/2023/12/15/impact-recycling-climate-change#:~:text=The%20benefits%20of%20recycling&text=Project%20Drawdown%20estimates%20that%20recycling,the%20streets%20for%20one%20year. Accessed on 16th September 2024.

forests and critical ecosystems.[45] It is remarkable to note that South Africa is the largest greenhouse gas emitter in Africa. However, it is the first African country to implement the Carbon Tax Policy in the year 2019.[46] The tax initiates the polluter-pays-principle and is charged on fuel inputs based on emission factors and procedures in line with the standards published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The tax accounts for about 90 percent of the country's total GHG emissions, with only agriculture, forestry, land use, and waste excluded.[47]

In South Africa, there are several environment-based taxes at the national and the local government levels, which include fuels, vehicle taxation, aviation taxes, product taxes, electricity, water supply, and wastewater.[48]
Climate change leads to extreme weather conditions like drought and flooding. This in turn has resultant effect on the health of communities in South Africa. In other to ameliorate diseases of all kinds in South Africa, they came up with National Ambient Air Quality Standards 2020. South Africa employed the use of legislative measures to enforce compliance, while updating the compliance level on the South African Air Quality Information System.

Climate change is a global issue and Kenya has been a major participant in the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol processes, and plays a key role in environmental protection and conservation in the East African Community. Kenya ratified the UNFCCC in 1994 and the Kyoto Protocol in 2006. Kenya in response to climate change adaptation measures initiated a climate change response strategy known as the National Climate Change Strategy in 2010, and a number of flagship programs are to be implemented through existing sector-based policy structure.[49] Forests in Kenya play a significant role in the conservation of biological diversity, water supply regulation.

Most companies in Kenya now make use of centralized water system to manage and conserve water usage. Centralized air conditioning systems in companies also reduce the quantity of refrigerants released into the atmosphere. Countries that signed the Montreal Protocol of 1987 have been banned from using ozone depleting refrigerants. Companies are now made to use hydro fluorocarbons or HFCs. This has gone a long way

[45] What is Climate Change Mitigation and Why is it Urgent? Available at htpps://www.climatepromise.undp.org. Accessed on 26th August, 2024.
[46] Haonan Qu, S Suphachalasai, Sneha Thube *e tal*, South Africa Carbon Pricing and Climate Mitigation Policy, Available at <https://www.imf.org/-/media/Files/Publications/Selected-Issues Papers/2023/English/SIPEA2023040.ashx. Accessed on 25th August, 2024.
[47] Ibid
[48] South Africa's Long Term Mitigation Scenarios and Climate Policy Response. Available at <https:www.climate.ec.europa.eu. Accessed on 27th August, 2024.
[49] A Review of Kenya's National Policies Relevant to Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation: Insights from Mount Elgon. Available at htpps;//www.cifor-icraf.org. Accessed on 26th August 2024.

in reducing ozone layer depletion.[50] Currently in Kenya, most shopping malls do not package customer's purchases in polythene bags. Rather, they goods are packaged in paper bags that can be recycled or that are easily biodegradable. This prevents sourcing for new materials for production and reduction of emission of greenhouse gases.[51]

6. PROBLEMS FACED BY GLOBAL SOUTH ACTORS IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE ACTION

6.1 Finance Challenge

Most countries in the global South are faced with lack of financial power and ability to shoulder climate change action. In the same hand, most businesses and corporate bodies in these regions lack resources to undertake climate change action plans. The United Nations Framework Convention on climate change report states that emerging economies require at least $6 trillion by 2030 to meet less than half of their existing nationally determined contributions. [52] According to OECD, the tangible movement of climate finance from developed to developing countries ranged from $4 billion to $83.3 billion in 2020. Furthermore, the UNFCCC observed that global climate finance flows reached an annual average of $803 billion in 2019–2020, a 12 per cent increase compared to prior years. In 2019, at least 120 of the 153 developing countries had undertaken activities to formulate and implement National Adaptation Plans to enhance climate adaptation and resilience, an increase of 29 countries over the previous year.

6.2 Lack of a Special Fund for Loss and Damage to Strengthen Operations

The high frequency of extreme weather events in 2022, combined with high temperatures and floods in many parts of the world, provide an objective and compelling backdrop for effective global funding for loss and damage (L&D) initiatives. Consequently, at the COP27, held in Egypt, in November 2022, the topic of loss and damage took center stage, with unprecedented momentum building around the financial arrangements for loss and damage.[53] It was unanimously agreed that new, additional, predictable, and adequate financial resources should be provided to assist developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change to cope with economic and non-economic losses and damage related to the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and delayed events. However, the Fund has not

[50] S Bolakhe, Rethinking Air Conditioning Amid Climate Change, Available at <htpps: www.knowablemagzine.org. Accessed on 27th August, 2024.
[51] Climate Change Mitigation Measures in India. Available at htpps://www.c2es.org. Accessed on 26th August, 2024.
[52] S. Kunar, Climate Action in the Global South: Achievements and Gaps www.energyalliance.org accessed on 2nd August, 2024.
[53] S Liu, Yu Eli & B Wang *e tal*, "Challenges and Counter Measures for Developing Countries in Addressing Loss and Damage caused by Climate Change. Advances in Climate Change Research, Available at htpps:// https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1674927824000285. Accessed on 5th August, 2024.

yet negotiated the main principles, modalities, management, and complementarity with the existing financial arrangements of the Convention, and has not yet identified key elements such as the subject of contribution, the scale and type of finance. Therefore, it is unclear how developing countries can effectively obtain finance under the auspices of international treaties.

6.3 Domestic Policy Challenges

Countries in the global south lack robust institutions and national policy systems. Hence, most governments at national and sub-national levels are yet to put in place policies to facilitate the transition of their people and economies towards renewable.[54] This transition is remarkably complex. In addition to innovations in new technologies, transitions must be designed and viewed through a lens of justice—between countries, across geographies within countries, across workers, across generations, and across gender gaps.

6.4 Lack of Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change and Poor Economic Indices

Most countries in the global south do not possess the adaptive capacity to cope with the changes in the climate as a result of education and access to information. They do not have access to insurance and or credit markets. Most adaptation options involve the use of technological systems like new agricultural techniques, flood control systems, climate predictions and early warning systems. Countries in the Global South do not possess the requisite knowledge and education to effectively use these technologies. There is no specific attention in the European Union for adaptation by countries in the Global South. Thus, there is a lack of a clear and well-funded strategy specifically on adaptation in developing countries including a focus on poverty and vulnerability

Changes in the climate aggravate the effects of population growth, poverty and rapid urbanization. Most developing countries do not have mitigation targets. Without adaptation and mitigation,[55] the losses to be counted are estimated to be up to 20% of gross domestic product.[56] Thus, countries in the Global South have not yet been able to effectively respond to climate change by mitigation and adaptation measures.

[54]A Bhattacharya, H Kharas, J W McArthur "Developing Countries are Key to Climate Action" March 3, 2023. Available athttps://www.brookings.edu/articles/developing-countries-are-key-to-climate-action/. Accessed on 20th July, 2024.

[55] Mitigation refers to an anthropogenic intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases, Mitigation can manifest in various forms like reducing production and consumption.

[56] Climate Change Impacts on Developing Countries. Available at <htpps://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2007/39311/IPOL. Accessed on 30th July, 2024.

7. CONCLUSION

Generally, it is important to focus on dealing with climate change in a more inclusive and equitable manner. Every action taken counts; from increasing the representation of Global South authors in climate research, to opening debates upon production patterns and changing consumption patterns, to recycling waste and increasing corporate social responsibility of companies.[57] To tackle climate change, we have to vastly raise our ambition at all levels. A lot is happening around the world already, investments in renewable energy have soared significantly. However, more needs to be done particularly by Global South countries**.** The world must transform its energy, industry, transport, food, agriculture and forestry systems to ensure that we can limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C, maybe even 1.5°C. In December 2015, the world took a significant first step by adopting the Paris Agreement, in which all countries committed to take action to address climate change. However, more actions are critically needed in developing countries in order to meet the targets.

Businesses and investors need to ensure emissions are lowered, not just because it is the right thing to do, but because it makes economic and business sense as well. With a sustained synergy of collective or collaboration efforts between corporate bodies, international organizations and global North actors, climate change action will be advanced greatly. Aside from the financial interest in ameliorating risks of climate change, and reducing the resultant negative impacts, companies are also interested in enhancing positive image of the products and services of a company.

[57] E Strazzante, S Rycken, V Winkler, "Global North and Global South: How Climate Change Uncovers Global Inequalities", 2022 Available at htpps://www. https://gceurope.org/global-north-and-global-south-how-climate-change-uncovers-global-inequalities/. Accessed on 4th August, 2024.