

United Nations Environment Programme – Background Guide



Oakridge MUN 2022

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dear Delegates,

It is with great honour that we welcome you all to the United Nations Environment Programme at Oakridge Model United Nations Conference, 2022. As the representatives of member nations of the UNEP, you are tasked towards debating, deliberating and reaching a consensus on the agenda at hand.

As you are aware, the committee will be discussing the agenda ***“Discussing energy conservation and management in accordance with Agenda 21 to achieve sustainable development”***. This background guide has been designed to help you get started on your research. However, this document shouldn't be your only source of research. Building upon the outlook presented by this guide, you are expected to carry out your own research through authentic sources and make sure to engage in comprehensive and pragmatic debate throughout the sessions, given the vague matter of substance under discussion.

The Executive Board will not interfere in the flow of debate unless absolutely required. Therefore, the onus to ensure that the committee does not stagnate lies on the delegates. We strongly believe that with good research, the delegates will be able to steer the committee in the right direction.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Executive Board at any time prior to or during the conference in case you have any queries about the agenda or the rules of procedure. We are here to help you during the conference at all times. We request the delegates to not view this conference as a zero-sum-game. Model UN conferences are collaborative in nature rather than competitive and we would like to keep this spirit alive during our committee. Our goal isn't to solve the world's problems in three days, but rather to educate ourselves about them, thereby ensuring that we go on to become a generation of sensitized leaders, equipped with the skills and will to make our world a better place.

With that being said, we wish you all good luck and eagerly look forward to the conference.

With warm regards,

Deepshika Yadugiri

Chair (E): deepshikay.kiron@gmail.com

Faraaz Uddin

Vice Chair (E): mdfaraaz999@outlook.com

POSITION PAPER GUIDELINES

- Position Papers are due at 11:59 PM on the 4th of August, 2022
- Position Papers can be submitted by one of two ways:
 - The Google Form linked here, https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1a3-0IPSHWw8WFRpKyeR5SI7VLRjWWG_1?usp=sharing
 - Email to: deepshikay.kiron@gmail.com & mdfaraaz999@outlook.com
 - Please Note: This email is strictly for submissions of position papers. You will not receive a reply for this email.
- There should be two pages with an additional page for citations, for a total of 3 pages.
- Papers should be single-spaced in Times New Roman 12 pt. font and include no pictures.
- Following sections are suggested:
 - Background
 - Position of your Country / Person
 - Possible Solutions
- At the top of each paper, include your country/person, name, committee, and topic.

INTRODUCTION TO MODEL UNITED NATIONS

MANDATE

The mandate of a committee refers to the extent of powers that the committee can exercise. It can also be interpreted as the authority to carry out some action or implement a certain policy, true to the spirit of the power vested in the same. For example, The UNEP, tasked with the responsibility of maintaining its global authority, that is to set the environmental agenda, promote the coherent implementation of the environmental

dimension of sustainable development within the UN System and serve as an authoritative advocate for the global environment, enjoys a vast and powerful mandate that has been further explained below.

PROCEDURE

It is important for the committee to have proper rules of procedure enforced to ensure conducive flow of debate. The committee will be following the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA) Rules of Procedure. The delegates are expected to adhere to the rules at all times and maintain the decorum of the committee.

FOREIGN POLICY

Foreign policy is mostly unique to each country and delegates are expected to thoroughly research as well as adhere to the foreign policy of the nation they are representing. Violations of foreign policy will be taken note of by the Executive Board.

LOBBYING

Lobbying involves the art of negotiating and convincing the other members working alongside you in the committee. This may be considered as the most crucial part of a Model UN conference and in tradition, is what sets it apart from general competitive debate. The art of lobbying is an important skill that delegates should put to use in the committee.

DECORUM

Decorum refers to the etiquette that is to be maintained in the committee. In a Model UN committee, you represent the interests of a nation in the capacity of a diplomat and are thereby supposed to behave in a manner that is strictly professional at all times during the committee sessions. No delegate shall cause disturbance or flout any rules of procedure.

RESEARCH GUIDELINES

Delegates are requested to take note of the following points while planning their research

1. Make sure you are thorough with the Rules of Procedure (in this case the UNA-USA RoP). The long form of the Rules of Procedure can be found at

<https://unausa.org/model-un/>
2. Research on the foreign policy of your allocated nation, their interests, allies, remarks by heads of states, policies pertaining to the agenda and general information as well
3. Read the UN Charter and treaties, conventions and past actions by the committee pertaining to the agenda at hand.
4. Put your analytical thinking skills to test to come up with comprehensive and pragmatic solutions that ensure a solution oriented approach to the committee
5. Usage of the internet is prohibited in committee. However, hard copies, downloaded copies and offline saved links shall come in handy.
6. Ensure you put the art of lobbying to good use in committee to gather support from co- delegates.

NATURE AND PROOF OF EVIDENCE

Documents from the following sources will be considered as credible

proof for any allegations made in committee or statements that require verification:

- **Reuters:** Appropriate Documents and articles from Reuters News agency will be used to corroborate or refute controversial statements made in committee.
- **UN Documents:** Documents by all UN agencies will be considered sufficient proof. Reports from all UN bodies including treaty-based bodies will also be accepted.
- **National Government Reports:** Government Reports of a given country used to corroborate an allegation on the same aforementioned country will be accepted as proof.

The documents stated above will hold a binding nature of establishment. Other sources like Wikipedia, Amnesty International, or newspapers like the Guardian, so on and so forth will not be accepted as credible proof; but may be used for better understanding of any issue and even be brought up in debate, if the information given in such sources is in line with the beliefs of a government or a delegate.

About the United Nations Environment Programme

UN Environment Assembly and Governing Council

The United Nations Environment Assembly is the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment. It addresses the critical environmental challenges facing the world today. Understanding these challenges and preserving and rehabilitating our environment is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Environment Assembly meets biennially to set priorities for global environmental policies and develop international environmental law. Through its resolutions and calls to action, the Assembly provides leadership

and catalyses intergovernmental action on the environment. Decision-making requires broad participation, which is why the Assembly provides an opportunity for all peoples to help design solutions for our planet's health.

History of the United Nations Environment Assembly

The United Nations Environment Assembly was created in June 2012, when world leaders called for the UN Environment to be strengthened and upgraded during the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, also referred to as RIO+20. The Environment Assembly embodies a new era in which the environment is at the center of the international community's focus and is given the same level of prominence as issues such as peace, poverty, health and security. The establishment of the Environment Assembly was the culmination of decades of international efforts, initiated at the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972 and aimed at creating a coherent system of international environmental governance.

Governance of the United Nations Environment Assembly

-United Nations Environment Assembly Bureau

The Environment Assembly sets the global environmental agenda in cooperation with UN institutions and Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

The meetings of the Assembly are governed by its [Rules of Procedure](#), laid out through resolution titled, UNEP/EA.3/3

The Assembly is led by a Bureau and its President. The UN Environment Assembly Bureau assists the President in the general conduct of business of the UN Environment Assembly. The Bureau is composed of ten Ministers of the Environment for a term of two years and follows geographical rotations.

The Assembly is the governing body of the UN Environment Programme (UN Environment) and the successor of its Governing Council, which was composed of 58 member States. The UN Environment Assembly, with a universal membership, is now composed of 193 Member States.

-Committee of Permanent Representatives

The Committee of Permanent Representatives is the inter-sessional intergovernmental body of the Assembly. The Committee is led by accredited Permanent Representatives to the UN Environment Programme, which account for 118 members. The Committee of Permanent Representatives was formally established as a subsidiary organ of the Governing Council (now the UN Environment Assembly) in May 1985. The Committee meets on a quarterly basis led by a five-member Bureau elected for a period of two years.

Throughout the year, Member States engage in formal preparatory discussions under the framework of the Open-ended meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives. The Committee contributes to the preparation of the agenda of the UN Environment Assembly, provides advice to the Assembly on policy matters, prepares decisions for adoption by the UN Environment Assembly and oversees their implementation. The outcomes of the most important preparatory meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives are available in the documents section.

A model of joint cooperation

To reach decisions on matters pertaining to the Assembly, joint sessions are convened with the Bureau of the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives. The Joint Bureaux meetings enhance cooperation and transparency on the development and functioning of the Assembly. It is also during these preparatory meetings that the agenda and the structure of the Assembly are defined and adopted.

Agenda: ***“Discussing energy conservation and management in accordance with Agenda 21 to achieve sustainable development”***

About

The Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change serves as a crucial reminder that climate change is already affecting

our lives today, and that the damages are widespread, rapid and intensifying. A swift global transition away from fossil fuels is paramount to stabilizing the climate system.

The International Methane Emissions Observatory, supported by the UNEP, in 2021 published a detailed report on their conference, and it is no surprise to observe that the question of Methane Gas emissions has been one of the frontline issues which the UNEP has been adamant on covering.

UN Environment Programme and renewable energy

Many types of barriers hamper the widespread deployment of renewable energy. UNEP helps break down the barriers by:

- Providing advice to developing country governments on policies that create a more favourable environment for renewable energy,
- Raising awareness of successful approaches to policy, finance, and technology options,
- Providing information, and dispelling myths about renewable energy,
- Working with the finance sector to encourage investment by lowering risks for renewable energy projects.

UN Environment Programme and energy efficiency

UNEP has a wide portfolio of energy efficiency activities covering transport, building, lighting, district energy and the appliance sectors. UNEP also integrates energy efficiency into its sustainable production and consumption activities. With its partners, UNEP continues to strengthen the business case for energy efficiency in developing and emerging economies, enabling them to reap economic and environmental benefits, including the alleviation of poverty.

UNEP also works with the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative's (SEforALL) Global Energy Efficiency Accelerator Platform. The Platform was launched at

the UN Secretary General's Climate Summit 2014 to achieve the goal of doubling the global rate of energy efficiency improvement by 2030. The Accelerator Platform brings together countries, cities, private companies, international organisations and financial institutions to accelerate improvements in energy efficiency. UNEP co-leads four of SEforAll's Energy Efficiency Accelerators through its projects on efficient lighting, appliances and equipment, transport, and district energy.

Agenda 21

UNCED 1992: The United Nations Agency, member administrations, and prominent entities are expected to undertake Agenda 21 on an international, regional, and municipal basis in an attempt to face all dimensions of how people interact with the ecosystem. First at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, over 177 administrations endorsed Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the Proclamation of Principles for the Sustainable Stewardship of Forests. In order to guarantee adequate adoption of the UNCED, to evaluate and reflect on implementing of the accords at the municipal, state, and global scales, the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) had been established in December of 1992. It had been decided that the United Nations General Assembly would gather in a special meeting in 1997 to conduct a 5 year assessment of the Earth Summit's performance. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), which took place in South Africa in 2002, the pledge to the Rio fundamentals, the comprehensive integration of Agenda 21, and the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21 had all been strenuously reiterated.

For further reference;

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Agenda21.pdf>

UNSDGs

A unifying framework for continuity and preservation for individuals and the environment, both today and hereafter, is provided for in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was endorsed by all the United Nations Member Nations back in 2015. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals, that are an imperative appeal to act for every nation, developed and yet to develop alike, in a multilateral framework, lies at the crux of it. Members understand that combating food

insecurities and other forms of inequalities requires policies that enhance welfare and literacy, lessen injustice, stimulate financial development, combat environmental catastrophe, and fight to protect our coastlines and woodlands.



SDG 7's target 7.1 calls upon the international community to ensure universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services by 2030. This target highlights the importance of equal access to energy services, in particular for marginalized groups such as women and the rural poor²². Efforts to increase energy access must also take into consideration the affordability and reliability of the energy supply and services. Increasing sustainable energy across all sectors of society is a must for social and economic development²³. There are 1.2 billion people without electricity access, with a majority living in rural areas. Even if electricity is available, it may be unreliable and unaffordable. As a consequence, rural communities lack the necessary energy services to support a decent standard of living and promote economic productivity.

However, each of these objectives, including eradicating famine to lowering inequality to creating viable societies all across the world, is rooted in the ecology.

In order to assist the accomplishment of these 17 Goals, UNEP is dedicated to collaborating with all stakeholders involved. In order to achieve the objectives and maintain the prosperity of earth, they advocate for sustainable stewardship. They seek to guarantee that the ecosystem is incorporated into all facets of responsible progress and they do this by strengthening nations' capacity to measure their performance towards the targets.

SDG Progress Report (2022): <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2022/>

SDG Progress Report (2021): <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/>

SDG Progress Report (2020): <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/>

Additionally, the Global Sustainable Development Report is produced once

every four years to inform the quadrennial SDG review deliberations at the General Assembly.

Global Sustainable Development Report (2019):

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/gsdr2019>

Global Sustainable Development Report (2023):

<https://sdgs.un.org/gsdr/gsdr2023>

Role of Stakeholders(Regional & International Actors)

1. Western Europe: Ever since the commencement of industrialization, these states have largely depended on coal and oil. This has seen a discernible shift in preceding years away from coal-based energy, and towards the employment of renewable energy resources. They are able to regularly broaden their scope of alternate energy resources owing to their economic standing. This transition to sustainable power has been led by nations like the United Kingdom, Germany and France.
2. Eastern Europe: The less wealthy counterparts are heavily, if not solely, reliant on the gas produced from Russia. There are early indications of a shift towards renewable energy sources through following the actions taken and accepting the support from the western nations. Their lack of energy security and their dependency on Russian energy have raised concerns in many international organizations, mainly NATO.
3. North America: Bearing in mind their economic capacity and resources to mitigate their reliance on fossil fuels, the United States and Canada can take on active roles in pressing the international community towards sustainable development in energy. Previously observed, the U.S. has established strong relationships with Western Europe through diplomatic ties in order to participate in policy reforms in the European Union. Their existing supply of natural resources could assist the rest of the world in its transition away from heavy dependence on non-renewable energy.
4. South America: By 2015, almost every country in South America had established renewable energy targets and imposed laws to assist their achievement. Latin America has some of the pioneering nations in promoting more effective implementation of renewable energy mechanisms. Brazil is the key player due to its fossil fuel supplies and advancement in renewable energy, its geographic location as well as market size would be optimal for facilitating regional energy integration. Through bilateral agreements between countries in the region, the energy transition in South America is progressing impressively
5. Africa: The energy consumption of Africa in 2004 was more than 80% dependent on conventional thermal power generation. Majority of this derives from Southern Africa, Nigeria, and North Africa. The disparity between African nations' transition towards cleaner energy supplies is tremendous,

countries especially in Sub Saharan Africa still have limited access to stable energy supplies due to poor infrastructure and high prices. Certain countries such as South Africa and Mauritius have successfully turned to privatization or foreign investment to further progress energy security and sustainability. Other countries in Africa have a strong dependence on their abundant natural resources but are noticing the importance of alternative energy sources.

6. International Energy Agency: The IEA is an international forum of 29 Member States that mainly focuses on promoting energy security and enhancing sustainable energy development for economic and environmental prosperity. It subsequently provides an array of frameworks and regional expert workshops to foster economic and technological advancements in the energy sector, in order to assist Member States as far as the implementation of sustainable energy measures are concerned.

Current Situation

Its high time energy independence and security are to be considered as important components of national security and energy strategies. Today, power is mostly generated by massive, centralized plants, and electricity moves along transmission lines. Energy independence can be achieved, in part, by minimizing energy consumption through energy conservation, energy efficiency, and by generating energy from local, renewable sources, such as wind, solar, geothermal, etc.

It is worth noting that the Energy Efficiency Programmes as suggested by the UNEP happen to be regarded as the 'game changer', owing to the potential of cost-effective measures which countries could otherwise take, further, energy efficient technologies and mechanisms provide economic development, job creation, reduction of pollution, improvement in human health and alleviation of poverty.

According to the IEA's report, the global economy could boost by \$18 trillion by 2035 if we adopted energy efficiency as the first choice for new energy supplies, also achieving, inter-alia, other cost-saving and green benefits.

The IEA, in the same report estimates by numbers, concluding that the lack of common cause by member nations leaves out a stagnated world disorder, as energy investment needs to be scaled up significantly to bring the UN SDG 7 under pursuit to achieve.

Energy Crises are known to create beyond political disrupt in the world,

Not only does the same create socio-economic imbalances, but creates political disturbance in the world, the quest for fossil fuels is just one amongst many. Besides, with the failure of the energy markets, we see a crash in not only the global economy but also, a crash of the energy available; such factors, as we observe, are enough to give rise to socio-political disturbances.

The question arises, of the role of nuclear energy in low-carbon transition, given its ability to provide a low-carbon baseload electricity. The substance left to debate is if or not countries will include the development of long-term energy plans and climate strategies, as they seem appropriate owing to the nuclear crises.

QARMA (Questions A Resolution Must Answer)

- How can member states be incentivized into switching to alternative renewable sources of energy?
 - What implementation steps should be followed moving ahead?
How can the implementation be made economically less burdening for LEDCs?
- What is the future role of regional organizations, economic forums (WTO, OECD), and international energy forums (IEA, OPEC) in helping nations abide by the Agenda 21? ● How can member states Integrate Cross-Sector Operations to the Maximize Development Impact?
- Should the private/domestic energy sector have social and environmental obligations? How would such be mandated?

Summarizing Comments

To comprehensively approach a problem, once the 'right evidence' has been collected to substantiate and identify the issue at stake (for example, fracking, causing environmental damage), you'd have to approach that problem, rather, translate your research into policy and effective action (how to mitigate the damage). Hence, to show that your proposed solution will indeed tackle the problem (to enable fracking, only when it does not lead to water pollution). It is very necessary, to consider, that you'd need to assess compatibility between risks and the benefits that come out of the same, bearing in mind how the same approach you'd take in this discussion would help the UNEP at large.

To give you an example, the fracking example as we gave earlier, while holding

several benefits, may outweigh the costs for the average citizen, as it poses significant risks for those living close to fracking sites given the significant level of contamination of both soil and air. A further problem is whether an intervention that is effective in an academic or a research setting will prove just as effective in the real-world context.

(considering the question of avenues: campaign, political, legislative, administrative, and judicial). The research-based approach we otherwise take to tackle an issue, may involve complex mathematical and statistical modelling and, in the case of behaviour-informed intervention, may be randomized control trials.

Delegates are also requested to consider, that many policy interventions involve lots of separate measures, since approaching any problem from the root to out stem it, would only prove to be futile; given the same, through the course of discussion, you are also to consider, that for a committee with a vague mandate like this, it is often difficult to pinpoint the impact of a single one.(What if tobacco bans are the real reason why people are giving up smoking, rather than bans on lighting up indoors)

To sum you up, the numerous factors when it comes to discussing energy conservation and management, which you, as diplomats would like to tackle, like the interdisciplinary character of the evidence available, and the difficulty in proving the individual effectiveness of different policy options are some of the major challenges, for any debater who is approaching such a problem would face.

Both advancement and defence of humanitarian law have remained the responsibility of the United Nations. The environmental catastrophe, which includes global energy management, is a perennial issue, albeit, which does not receive frequent notice or discussion. Healthcare framework as well as the sustainability of our biosphere may very well be in danger if climatic disruption and environmental deterioration persist. While worries concerning pollution and consumption as a whole are certainly raised, there isn't much information, discussion, or resolution on this particular subject. However, it is crucial to do a comprehensive study on the issues raised in the section above. Energy consumption reduction is quintessential for a future, but this is simply the first step toward a sustainable one.

Links for further research:

<https://www.un.org/en/energycompacts/page/registry>

<https://trackingsdg7.esmap.org//> - on the site of ESMAP, the results of the SDG 7 targets can be researched and sorted by worldwide and

each country.

<https://www.irena.org/aboutirena>

<https://www.seforall.org/impact-areas/programmes>

<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/737086/energy-policy-report.pdf>