

**FORUM:** The Second Environmental Commission

**QUESTION OF:** Measures to reduce the danger of rising water levels on cities

**SUBMITTED BY:** Trinidad and Tobago

**CO-SUBMITTERS:** Palau, Philippines, Vanuatu, Jamaica, Sao Tome & Principe, Dominican Republic, Timor-Leste, Marshall Islands, Japan, Solomon Islands, Syrian Arab Republic, South Africa, India, United States of America, Libya, Hungary, Mongolia, Croatia, Cape Verde, Lao PDR, Ireland, People's Republic of China

THE ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION,

*Fully aware* that rising water levels are linked to climate change and global warming,

*Welcoming* all efforts and contributions to tackle climate change in order to prevent endangering coastal cities or stop the rise of water levels,

*Reminding* that 2.4 billion people (40% of the global population) live on coastal areas,

*Noting* that about 110 million deaths are caused by rising sea levels each year,

*Reaffirming* its foregone efforts on the Paris Agreement of 2015,

*Noting with satisfaction* the increasing efforts of People's Republic of China as it is a major stakeholder of the issue at hand and one of the countries most concerned by it,

*Noting with deep concern* the urgency of the issue as documented by National Geographic (19 February 2019), ocean heating which is a major factor of water level rise hit a new all-time high in 2018,

*Concerned* about the substantial socio-economic losses, the displacement of the population, and the change in lifestyle of citizens due to accelerated sea-level rise,

*Defining* greenhouse gas emission as an increase in the amount of carbon dioxide and other gases in the atmosphere causing the surface of the Earth to warm up,

*Alarmed* that a scientific study done by Nature Communications found that about 200 million more people will be threatened by rising water levels by the year 2100,

*Urging* the reduction of greenhouse gases to slow down global warming which further slows down rising ocean levels,

*Accepting* a certain level of climate change-induced losses, emphasizing damage cost-sharing, investing in the construction of “adaptive” infrastructure, and focusing on developing agricultural techniques,

*Acknowledging* that mankind has sped up the processes of global warming and climate change due to emitting greenhouse gases, depleting the Earth's resources, and deforestation,

*Taking into account* the immense financial hurdle to support LEDCs in their efforts to protect coastal cities,

*Draws attention to* the immediacy of the issue and its grave chain of consequences if underestimated and therefore further urges all countries and organisations to increase their efforts,

*Reminds* of the problems that deforestation has led and will always lead to and requests increased contribution to lower its scale,

*Encourages* to invest into short-term and especially long-term measures to protect otherwise lost habitat and protect cities and their citizens from rising water levels,

1. Urges all member states to regulate the release of greenhouse gasses (such as Methane, Carbon Dioxide and Nitrous oxide):
  - a) signatories must be open to annual monitoring of carbon emission by United Nations Environment Program personnel
    - i. governments are expected to provide full transparent reports of the amount, gallons of fossil fuels consumed, cattle raised and pounds of waste produced
    - ii. requires member nations to publicize their carbon emission records so as to prove the statistics are true
  - b) suggests governments to set an emission target of 25% to reduce emissions gradually by carrying out an analysis since the signing of the Paris Agreement
  - c) failure to comply with these terms will result in punishment placed and enforced by the UN, the extent of the punishment will be dependent on the size of economy and scale of infraction, with consequences such as:
    - i. economic sanctions placed by the UN
    - ii. states will be convicted in court;
2. Urges the use and management of reusable materials by all signatories through ways such as but not limited to:
  - a) recommends instituting a new recycling program to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere by:
    - i. placing separate bins for metals, wood, paper, plastic, aluminium, and glass waste
    - ii. reducing the amount of factories emitting greenhouse gases in the air
  - b) supports the idea of using reusable materials and biodegradable materials including but not limited to:
    - i. metal water bottles
    - ii. metal straws
    - iii. biodegradable cutlery
    - iv. biodegradable plastic
  - c) further recommends countries to invest in scientific and technological research in order to find biodegradable alternatives for:
    - i. plastic bottles
    - ii. plastic wrapping/packaging
    - iii. plastic bubble wrap
    - iv. plastic air fresheners
    - v. plastic cutlery;
3. Suggests the conservation and management of ecological resources:
  - a) promotes the conservation of trees by reducing the production of paper, wood, cardboard, wooden pencils, use non-wood based materials
  - b) supports the idea of planting more trees by planting 2 or more trees for every tree cut down, in order to decrease the rate of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere
  - c) encourages the planting of trees along freshwater coasts to reduce erosion;
4. Endorses international cooperation to address the root cause of the sea-level rise, that is mainly affecting vulnerable cities and communities in the present, by complying with the Paris Agreement standards set clearly in 2015, in order to avoid further destruction:
  - a) especially requires action on Article 4, Paragraph 2 which requires that each Party outline, communicate and maintain their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), always in a fact-based document, and to pursue domestic mitigation measures with the aim of achieving the objective
  - b) supporting climate action and policies set in the COP25, established as the Blue COP in

order to position the ocean as a main factor when it comes to climate action by demanding cooperation between all parties to commit to the ambitious climate action policies set in 2015

- i. fostering and developing new bridges between governmental, intergovernmental and civil society initiatives and platforms working to address the role of the ocean in both the Global Climate Action Agenda and in the implementation of the Paris Agreement;

5. Encourages member nations to implement prevention methods to combat the physical rise of sea levels such as but not limited to:
  - a) encourages the execution of nature-based coping strategies such as mangroves protecting shorelines, lakes storing large water supplies and floodplains absorbing excess water runoff while
  - b) the construction of embankments to prevent flooding and overflow, this is specifically crucial for island nations who are at greatest risk
  - c) strengthening of coastal protection in ways such as but not limited to:
    - i. the implementation of artificial reefs
    - ii. conservation and restoration of coral reefs by transplanting or breeding coral reefs;
6. Proclaims national assurance of water security in cities which require care in water management by:
  - a) alerting the global community of the great vulnerability of freshwater resources as a result of sea-level rise and salt intrusion
  - b) solving the issue of salt intrusion in order to provide clean water resources as the Sustainable Development Goal number 6 states “Clean water and sanitation” by means such as:
    - i. implementing a national “water quality testing” to prevent contamination caused by tap water
    - ii. preventing leaks by installing water alarms or indicators so that leaks can be detected and fixed quickly as many intrusion problems start with over-pumping because of an unchecked leak;
7. Recommends public education about the coastal environment in order to sensitize the government and people about the issue:
  - a) reducing consumerism by educating the population and rewarding safe and sustainable companies
  - b) offering climate education and monitoring, using all the available knowledge sources, sharing data and knowledge
  - c) addressing social vulnerability, equity and institutional support as such investments enable capacity-building, social learning, and participation in adaptation contexts, as well as reducing water level rise short-term risks and building long-term ocean resilience and sustainability;
8. Further invites all delegations to develop a “National Water Policy, Implementation and Prevention Programme” as every country has different geographical, social and cultural realities, so every one of these needs are contemplated as long as the targets are met by:
  - a) implementing policies that inform the public of the consequences of sea level rise on their designated areas
    - i. policies include instructions and guidelines with adaptation measures to cope with the prospects of higher sea levels;
9. Further reminds all delegations to be aware of the impact rising sea-level has on society and encourages each and all of their governments to act upon these dangers by proposing measures like:
  - a) flood-resistant housing programmes when homes are too poorly built to withstand floodwaters, which often linger because of poor drainage in the most susceptible areas

- b) flood warning/forecasting systems which can be improved by taking the relative sea-level rise of each country into account
  - c) favouring flexible responses supported by monitoring systems for early warning signals
    - i. periodically adjusting decisions
    - ii. using robust decision-making approaches and expert judgement and scenario-building
    - iii. creating an effective protocol, that is adjusted to the specific needs of each community, for populations to respond to floods mechanically;
10. Insists that all member nations affected by rising sea levels to publicize records and rates of their respective countries for reasons such as :
- a) specific approaches and strategies to be put in place to prevent consequences of the rise of sea levels
  - b) more precise research can be done by scientists to record and predict the rate of the rise of sea levels;
11. Requests willing MEDCs to contribute a percentage of their tax revenue to support LEDCs incapable of independently fixing the issue in order to construct an international aid fund for members who cannot meet this goal on their own through methods such as:
- a) the percentage given will be up to the members' discretion
  - b) this can be a gradual donation that can reduce as the situation improves
  - c) participating MEDCs will receive a discount on import and export rates;
12. Strongly urges states to improve infrastructure: road works, train tracks, the range of trains and tunnels through ways such as but not limited to;
- a) increasing the utility of trains and public transport, this will result in less demand for planes (as trains will now be able to connect many more countries) as a result less greenhouse gases will be emitted directly into the ozone layer,
  - b) better infrastructures will aid many countries or more than just environmental level at also an economical one to tremendously aid and result in the rise of many countries GDP;