

Do developed countries have a higher obligation to combat climate change? essay

[Environment](#), [Climate Change](#)



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- This debate has been stimulated in large part by the Kyoto Protocol, which exempted developing nations such as China and India, from the same emissions-reductions obligations as developed countries. The principle underlying Kyoto is known as “common but differentiated responsibilities”, which continues as a centre piece principle for those calling on Developed countries to assume a greater responsibility. China, India, and other developing countries call for recognition of this principle, while many developed countries argue that conditions have changed as developing countries have begun to industrialize and pollute more rapidly in recent years.
- Developed emit more per capita; more obligated to cut rate.

Emissions per capita are much higher in developed countries (20t per capita in the US) compared to developing ones (less than 4t per capita). This means that individuals in developed nations are more responsible for causing global warming, more responsible for continuing global warming, and so more obligated to cut emissions and solve the problem.

These individuals must, therefore, pressure their governments to take greater action on their behalf

- Contraction/Convergence equalizes per capita emissions, burdens wealthy. Contraction and Convergence is a good proposal for addressing the imbalance between per capital emissions around the world. It holds developed countries responsible for cutting their per capita emissions (contraction) and meeting developing countries in the middle (convergence).

Developing countries are fairly allowed to continue to develop and increase per capita emissions to a level equal to developed countries “ in the middle”. The obligation, in this case, falls more heavily on developed nations to reduce their emissions. •Since, developed countries caused global warming so they must fix it as well. It must be pointed out that climate change has been caused by the long-term historic emissions of Developed Countries and their high per-capita emissions...Developed countries bear an unshirkable responsibility. ••Developed countries hypocritically reprimand developing states. It is hypocritical for developed countries to complain at developing countries for polluting more heavily at present, when this is exactly what developed countries did long ago to achieve their great wealth. Furthermore, it should be noted that it is only through this heavy industrialization that developed countries are now in a position of wealth and know-how that offers them the luxury of going “ green”.

•Developed states have more available money to fight climate change. Developed states obviously have more wealth to employ in combating global warming AGAINST THE TOPIC Obligations”/” equality” distract from solving climate change. The idea that some countries are more responsible than others to cut emissions and fight global warming misses the point – global warming is a collective, global problem that can only be successfully combated if every country puts its wits and resources fully behind resolving the crisis. Developed and developing countries are equally responsible to resolve the crisis. Developing nations should swallow their legitimate frustrations with developed nations for causing global warming, and focus

their attention on helping form a collective solution. Seeking equality of emissions fails to cut overall emissions.

If developed nations are forced to cut emissions and developing nations allowed to increase per capita emissions – with both meeting in the middle – the ultimate result is that developing-country-increases cancel out developed-country-reductions. Overall emissions would be kept constant and not reduced. In fact, because developing nations have larger populations, meeting in the middle on per capita emissions could result in even higher overall emissions. Developed nations did not always know that they were causing global warming by burning fossil fuels and emitting greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. This knowledge only began to form in the 1980s and 1990s, over a century after the industrial revolution had begun. It is inappropriate, therefore, to hold developed nations morally accountable for starting the industrial revolution and causing global warming; they knew not what they were doing. China, India, and Brazil are the most notable large developing nations in the G20.

Due to their size, economic power, and emissions (now and in the future), they share an equal responsibility to fight global warming.