

Maldives efforts to combat climate change an environmental sciences essay



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Global warming has been causing climate change and this has been affecting the Earth at an alarming rate. Maldivian government are aware of the need to cut down emissions. The tiny Indian Ocean nation of the Maldives will become carbon-neutral within 10 years. This was the pledge made by Maldives President Mohamed Nasheed on March 15. The low-lying country will be among the first in the world to be inundated by rising sea levels caused by human-induced climate change. The highest point in the chain of 1190 islands and coral atolls is just 1.8 metres above sea level. The latest research indicates that if present rates of carbon emissions continue, global warming will likely cause sea level rises about one metre by 2100. This is close to double the rise predicted by most scientists just two years ago.

71. For the Maldives, climate change is a real issue. The 16th Conference of Parties (COP 16) in Cancun, Mexico from 29 November to 10 December. It estimated that Maldivians emitted 1.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide in 2009 via electricity generation, transport, waste and fishing. This was the same estimated amount of carbon emitted by flights carrying 650,000 tourists to the Island each year. The total works out at 4.1 tonnes per Maldivian compared to 23.5 tonnes per person per year in the United States.

72. These measures were announced in the face of stark warnings from scientists that rising sea levels could engulf the Maldives and other low-lying nations this century, rendering the Island almost entirely uninhabitable with a rise in sea levels of one metre.

73. Without a global agreement to lower GHG emissions to combat climate change and rising sea levels, the Maldives could disappear from maps in spite of Nashed's efforts. 2

74. Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed is listed as the 39th top thinker in the world in Foreign Policy magazine, for his high profile role in combating climate change. Top two billionaires have been travelling the world - first to China and soon to India, as well as around the US - on a mission to create a global club of "Great Givers" who will transform philanthropy from a pastime of the wealthy into a calling for everyone who is rich. 3

Combat Climate Change.

75. Solar power helps combat climate change, reduces our dependency on imported oil and more importantly cuts out electricity costs. The Maldives stands at the front line of climate change and we don't have the luxury of time to sit and wait for the rest of the world to act.

76. The Maldives which is particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels through global warming. The Maldives is made up of nearly 1200 islands that lie off the Indian sub-continent. None of the islands measure more than 1.8 metres (six feet) above sea level, making the country particularly vulnerable to a rise in sea levels associated with global warming. The Maldives face a very real threat from rising sea levels and I share President Nasheed's ambition to prevent the environmental disaster and human rights catastrophe that would befall the islands should the world fail to tackle this problem.

77. Our Climate Change Act is the most ambitious in the industrialized world, committing to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 42 per cent from 1990 levels <https://assignbuster.com/maldives-efforts-to-combat-climate-change-an-environmental-sciences-essay/>

by 2020 and by 80 per cent by 2050. Scotland also has 25 per cent of Europe's offshore wind and tidal resources and 10 per cent of wave potential and the capacity make a significant difference in meeting universal climate change goals. The Maldives to become the world's first carbon neutral country and in turn create a greener, more sustainable future for our planet.

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78. The international community has welcomed President Nasheed's efforts to raise awareness over the dangers of climate change, which threaten to submerge his low-lying nation. That same international community must not sit back and watch as the remnants of dictatorship try and sink the Maldives' fledgling democracy. 5

Declaration of the Climate Vulnerable Forum.

79. Alarmed at the pace of change to our Earth caused by human-induced climate change, including accelerating melting and loss of ice from Antarctica, Greenland, the Himalayas, Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya, acidification of the world's oceans due to rising CO₂ concentrations, increasingly intense tropical cyclones, more damaging and intense drought and floods, including Glacial Lakes Outburst Floods, in many regions and high levels of sea-level rise than estimated just a few years ago, risks changing the face of the planet and threatening coastal cities, low lying areas, mountainous regions and vulnerable countries the world over.

80. Conscious that our nations lie at the climate front-line and will disproportionately feel the impacts of global warming, in the end climate change will threaten the sustainable development and, ultimately, the

survival of all States and peoples - the fate of the most vulnerable will be the fate of the world; and convinced that our acute vulnerability not only allows us to perceive the threat of climate change more clearly than others, but also provides us with the clarity of vision to understand the steps that must be taken to protect the Earth's climate system and the determination to see the job done.

81. Recalling that UNFCCC is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

82. Emphasizing that developed countries bear the overwhelming historic responsibility for causing anthropogenic climate change and must therefore take the lead in responding to the challenge across all four building blocks of an enhanced international climate change regime - namely mitigation, adaptation, technology and finance - that builds-upon the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol.

83. Taking account their historic responsibility as well as the need to secure climate justice for the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities, developed countries must commit to legally-binding and ambitious emission reduction targets consistent with limiting global average surface warming to well below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and long-term stabilization of atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations at well below 350 ppm, and that to achieve this the agreement at COP 15 UNFCCC should include a goal of peaking global emissions by 2015 with a sharp decline thereafter towards a global reduction of 85% by 2050.

84. Convinced that those countries which take the lead in embracing this future will be the winners of the 21st Century.

85. All other countries to follow the moral leadership shown by the Republic of Maldives by voluntarily committing to achieving carbon-neutrality. Assert that the achievement of carbon neutrality by developing countries will be extremely difficult given their lack of resources and capacity and pressing adaptation challenges, without external financial, technological and capability-building support from developed countries. Declare that, irrespective of the effectiveness of mitigation actions, significant adverse changes in the global climate are now inevitable and are already taking place, and thus Parties to the UNFCCC must also include, in the COP15 outcome document, an ambitious agreement on adaptation finance which should prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable countries, especially in the near-term.

86. Decide to hold a second meeting of the Climate Vulnerable Forum in Kiribati in 2010 to take forward this initiative, to further raise awareness of the vulnerabilities and actions of vulnerable countries to combat climate change, and to amplify their voice in international negotiations. In this context, request support from the UN system to assist the most vulnerable developing countries take action in pursuit of this Declaration. 6

Copenhagen.

87. The event preceded the United Nations' Climate Change Conference (COP15) that began, where 192 parties are meeting with the intention of formulating an agreement to stabilize the level of greenhouse gases in the

atmosphere. Organizers hope the conference will prove as successful as COP3 in 1997, known as the Kyoto Protocol, which led to agreements on mandatory emission reductions. During the week-long visit to Denmark, over 200 delegates aged 14-17 from 42 countries set up stands in Copenhagen town hall promoting their country's efforts to combat climate change. The Maldivian delegates confessed theirs " was one of the most popular" with many people fascinated by the immediate threat climate change and sea level rise poses for the low-lying island nations. Maldivians are an innocent (party) suffering from the actions of developed countries. 7

88. The issue has taken on urgency ahead of a major UN climate change conference scheduled for December in Copenhagen. At that meeting countries will negotiate a successor to the Kyoto Protocol with aims to cut the emission of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide that scientists blame for causing global warming by trapping heat in the atmosphere. Wealthy nations want broad emissions cuts from all countries, while poorer ones say industrialized countries should carry most of the burden. 8

1. The Guardian.

2. <http://www.climateactionprogramme.org>.

3. <http://www.asiantribune.com>.

4. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk>.

5. The Guardian, *ibid*.

6. <http://www.ecs.org.et>.

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7. <http://www.minivannews.com>.

8. <http://www.msnbc.msn.com>.