

1. The Paris Climatic Convention Deal may have been trumpeted as success by world leaders but is far too weak to help prevent devastating harm to the Earth. Comment.

Answer:

- Parties to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) reached a landmark agreement in Paris, charting a fundamentally new course in the two-decade-old global climate effort.
- The agreement calls for "holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
- To achieve that goal it was negotiated that countries should "reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible, recognizing that peaking will take longer for developing country parties, and to undertake rapid reductions thereafter.
- The agreement acknowledges "the importance of averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.

Expectations from the treaty:

- Paris marks a turning point in building the low carbon economy. Implementation of INDCs will mean that renewables will make up 78% of new power generation investment to 2030 in major economies. This will drive down the cost of renewable energy. Delivering this will require major reforms to electricity markets, business and financing models.
- The continuation of climate financing in the Paris Agreement beyond \$100bn promised up to 2020 will provide support to emerging and developing countries to deliver these necessary economic and governance reforms.
- The commitments present in Paris will not deliver 2°C, or 1.5°C immediately, but the Paris Agreement commits to a process of increasing emission cuts every 5 years to meet that goal. The long term goal of greenhouse gas neutrality in the second half of the century will require a rapid phase out of fossil fuels.
- Paris is a significant achievement for multilateral diplomacy. In an increasingly multi-polar world strong cooperative agreements have become far harder to deliver. The Paris Agreement shows it is possible to agree international regimes to manage critical global problems. This will set a positive example for other issues.
- The Paris Agreement has broken new ground and placed adaptation, resilience and response to climate impacts at the heart of the new regime. This includes stronger early warning systems, addressing treatment of environmental refugees, and providing extreme weather insurance to 400 million more people in vulnerable countries by 2020.

Weaknesses and Flaws in outcomes of Paris Summit

- The emission cuts contained in the agreement are based on voluntary pledges called 'Intended Nationally Determined Contributions' (INDCs) that governments drew up individually before the talks, based on what they were prepared to deliver, not what science or equity demanded. These cuts have now become an official part of the deal, but go nowhere near far enough to achieve a 1.5°, or even a 2° goal, and the agreement does not require these targets to be re-examined until 2020.

- Rich countries aren't pledging to do any more about their inadequate emissions reduction targets which are going to lead us to around 3.7° warming of the planet. None of the developed countries are doing their fair share to reduce their emissions and move away from fossil fuel energy. The withdrawal of USA from the treaty has put a big question mark on its implementation process in the future. If developed countries lag behind in accepting such serious issue as climate change, then the developing nations alone can't face the challenges effectively.
- 'The Copenhagen text included aviation and shipping emissions, that together are as large as the emissions of Britain and Germany combined, but they are not mentioned in the Paris text.' Overall, the agreement 'is weaker than Copenhagen' and 'not consistent with the latest science'.
- The Paris deal requires no emissions reductions from countries before 2020. By the time the pledges come into force in 2020, we will probably have used the entire carbon budget consistent with 1.5°C warming. If we stick with the INDCs we will have warming between 2.7°C and 3.7°C.
- The Paris Agreement only commits to 'mobilizing' \$100 billion per year by 2020, to cover not just emission cuts but also adaptation. This is far short of the support required, and there is no firm commitment to increase this figure, merely an aspiration to review it by 2025.

Conclusion

- The Paris Climatic Convention is definitely a step forward as compared to previous climate meets but due to provision of voluntary obligations and lack of penalty in case of violation makes the deal weak in terms of implementation.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Answer the following Questions

1. In the context of India taking greater responsibility in management of the global commons, there has been a shift in India's climate change negotiation stance. In this context, analyze the evolution of India's climate policy. (150 words)
2. Highlighting the constitutional role of the Finance Commission (FC), discuss the issues which are being debated w.r.t. terms of reference (ToR) of the 15th Finance Commission. (150 words)