Environment & Ecology · GS - III

Analyse the significance of consensus-based decision-making in global climate negotiations. How do disagreements over fossil-fuel phase-out and climate equity complicate the adoption and implementation of collective climate commitments?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 22/11/2026	GS - III	Environment & Ecology

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

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Answer Hint

Consensus-based negotiations, UNFCCC, COP process, fossil-fuel transition, CBDR-RC, climate finance, energy security, climate justice, multilateral cooperation

Model Answer

Introduction

The UNFCCC's Conference of the Parties (COP) provides a multilateral platform for negotiating collective responses to climate change. Consensus helps build broad international ownership, but divergent national interests can delay ambitious agreements.

Challenges in reaching consensus

1. **Fossil-fuel dependence:** Economies dependent on coal, oil and gas are concerned about energy security, employment and transition costs.
2. **Climate equity:** Developing countries emphasise historical emissions and the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC).

3. **Climate finance:** Disagreements over the scale, accessibility and provision of finance weaken trust between developed and developing countries.
4. **Competing national priorities:** Differences in development needs, technological capacities and energy mixes complicate agreement on common timelines.
5. **Consensus constraints:** The need for broad acceptance can dilute proposed language or delay final outcomes.

Significance of collective agreements

- Establish common goals and international expectations.
- Encourage transparency, reporting and accountability.
- Mobilise finance, technology transfer and capacity-building.
- Provide direction to national climate policies and energy transitions.

Way Forward

Climate negotiations should combine ambitious mitigation targets with credible climate finance, technology cooperation, just-transition support and differentiated pathways.

Conclusion

The COP31 deadlock, as described in the report, illustrates the difficulty of reconciling climate ambition with energy and development priorities. Durable climate agreements require both environmental commitments and equitable burden-sharing.

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