Environment & Ecology · GS - III

Describe the major outcomes of the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). What are the commitments made by India in this conference?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2021	GS - III	Environment & Ecology

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

COP26 Glasgow Climate Pact, Paris Agreement, 1.5°C temperature goal, coal phase-down, fossil-fuel subsidies, nationally determined contributions, climate finance, adaptation, loss and damage, Article 6 carbon markets, Panchamrit commitments, net-zero emissions by 2070

Model Answer

Introduction

COP26 was held in Glasgow in October–November 2021 under the UNFCCC. It sought to strengthen implementation of the Paris Agreement and accelerate global action on climate change.

Major Outcomes

- **Glasgow Climate Pact:** Countries recognised the need for deeper emission reductions to keep the 1.5°C temperature goal within reach.
- **Coal and fossil fuels:** The pact called for accelerating efforts towards the phasedown of unabated coal power and the phase-out of inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies. The final language on coal was weakened from “phase-out” to “phasedown.”
- **National commitments:** Countries were urged to strengthen their 2030 targets and revisit nationally determined contributions in light of the temperature goal.

- **Paris Agreement rulebook:** Agreement was reached on important rules for carbon markets under Article 6 and transparency in reporting emissions.
- **Climate finance:** Developed countries were urged to urgently fulfil the $100 billion annual climate-finance goal and increase support for adaptation.
- **Adaptation and loss and damage:** Greater attention was given to climate resilience and the impacts of climate change on vulnerable countries, although demands for a dedicated loss-and-damage financing facility remained unresolved.

India's Commitments

At COP26, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced five commitments, commonly called the **Panchamrit**:

1. Reach 500 GW of non-fossil electricity capacity by 2030.
2. Meet 50% of energy requirements from renewable energy by 2030.
3. Reduce projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes by 2030.
4. Reduce the carbon intensity of GDP by 45% by 2030 from 2005 levels.
5. Achieve net-zero emissions by 2070.

Conclusion

COP26 strengthened the global climate framework but left gaps in finance and ambition. India's commitments signalled greater climate ambition, with implementation requiring investment, technology access and a just energy transition.

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