Committee: United Nations Framework on Climate Change

Topic: The Impact of Climate Change on Human Health

Country: Djibouti

Despite what many people believe, there is a unanimous consensus in the scientific community humans are creating a rise in the atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases, which will lead to the warming of the earth’s surface. This increase in temperature has been affecting human health in four major ways: thermal stress, infectious diseases, floods and droughts, and inequality. Thermal stress has raised the mortality rate, especially among elderly women. This is due to the decreasing physiological capacity for thermoregulation, such as an increase in heat waves. Thermal stress particularly affects urban centers because of the “urban heat island effect”. The transmission of many infectious diseases is very sensitive to climactic variation. The reproduction and survival rate of most vectors for infectious agents are very strongly affected by temperature. Climate change could cause a change in the ecological balance and cause multiple epidemics. It could also cause a number of floods and droughts. Floods could lead to issues such as injuries, communicable diseases, and exposure to dangerous toxic pollutants. Droughts directly hurt crops, which in turn leads to problems such as famine or malnutrition. Climate change will most likely increase the already existing health inequalities between populations, such as the poor, children, men, and women.

In the past, four main major organizations have taken action to help this issue: the WHO, the GFCS, the WMO, and the CCAC. The WHO, World Health Organization, raised awareness of the threats of climate change. They did this through providing evidence, technical guidance, and new approaches for protecting health from climate risks. An example of this is the WHO’s climate change and health work plan that would be implemented over a five year period of time, which started in March of 2009. The GFCS, Global Framework for Climate Surfaces, was created to reduce society’s vulnerability to the hazards of climate change. They did this by tailoring climate and weather information to inform decision-making. The WMO, World Meteorological Organization, is a specialized agency of the United Nations. It was created to improve public health through the coordinated development and use of climate services. Lastly, the CCAC, Climate and Clean Air Coalition, goal was to address SLCPs, which are Short-Lived Climate Pollutants. This was done by raising awareness, enhancing regional action as well as developing new regional actions, and promoting practices.

Djibouti has had its share of health issues due to climate change. Climate change has caused the malnutrition emergency in Djibouti because of the very dry land from droughts. It is astonishing how climate change’s ability to affect food security greatly contributes to conflict and population displacement. Djibouti has attempted to phase out coal-fired power plant to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

There are two main solutions to the issue of climate change affecting human health: mitigation and adaptation. The health benefits that come from climate change mitigation are easily achieved locally in a somewhat short period of time. Good ways to do this are public urban transit policies that facilitate walking and cycling, electricity generation through renewable energy sources, the use of clean fuels, and energy-efficient and climate-adapted designed housing and buildings. Past emission are creating unavoidable climate change, even if greenhouse gas emission were to stay at the current level that they are at now. This means that the only appropriate solution to this issue is adaptation. This is more cost-effective for nations and can be done in developing countries through actions such as sustainable development.

Committee: United Nations Framework on Climate Change

Topic: Climate Refugees

Country: Djibouti

“Climate Refugee” is a relatively new term that raises issues on an international basis. It is also referred to as environmental migration. This new term is defined as migrants forced to move due to either sudden or gradual alterations in the natural environment related to either a rise in sea lever, extreme weather events, or drought and water scarcity. Climate change is affecting every human on the planet and there is no way around it. Environmental migration is an imminent threat, but it comes gradually. Because it occurs gradually, there is very low coverage ion the media. The UNHCR, United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees, predicts that although humans will try to adapt to the ever-changing climate, they will eventually be forced to migration to ensure basic survival. The biggest issue with climate refugees is in a political category instead of a legal category. The global population does not have any legal protection from any agency to uphold their basic human rights and safeties. Climate disasters also make ways for social uprisings, in which the citizens of a nation blame their governments for the terrible decisions regarding climate change.

Syria is a good case study of climate refugees. Syrian refugees were considered climate refugees long before they became legal refugees. Between the year of 2006 and 2011 Syrian experienced one of the most destructive droughts in recent history. It destroyed over sixty percent of farmlands in the Syrian countryside. Most of the wealthy farmers were forced to migrate into urbanized areas in order to find occupations. The Syrian refugees were climate refugees because of the clear correlation between climate change and the Syrian crisis. The delegation of Djibouti believes that climate refugees should be incorporated into the legal definition of refugee. Climate refugees and internally displaced people are very much linked to climate change.

Djibouti’s humanitarian situation has greatly deteriorated due to recurrent drought conditions induced by climate change. The original climate in Djibouti is already creating one of the harshest living conditions globally and climate change is only making it worst. These conditions have left Djibouti with only 0.01 percent of arable land. In Djibouti, fifty-eight percent of the population is food insecure; twenty-three percent of people live in extreme poverty; forty-eight percent of the country lives in absolute poverty; and thirty-five percent of the population has no access to drinkable water. Djibouti has twenty-five and a half thousand refugees, most of which are climate refugees. These people have no choice but to leave their country if they want to survive.

One of the best already known solutions for the issue of climate refugees is the NDERP. This stands for the Natural Disaster Emergency Response Plan. In an ideal world, every country would develop their own plan for both domestic and international emergencies. However, each countries plan should be tailored to the specific nation, because not all nations experience the same natural disasters as other countries do. However no matter what natural disasters your country faces, every nation should keep one main goal in mind when creating their own Natural Disaster Emergency Response Plan and that is the well being of the people inside its borders.

Committee: United Nations Framework on Climate Change

Topic: Steps to Enforce the Paris Agreement and Further Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Country: Djibouti

Last year the United Nation Climate Change Conference, also known as the COP 21, was held in Paris, France with the goal to create and follow steps that would reduce climate change. All members of the United Nations agree that actions must be taken to reduce climate change. However, it is extremely difficult to get countries to agree on a course of action or ways to enforce the course of action that was agreed upon. The binding of an agreement is a three-step process. The first step was to get the Paris Agreement passed at the conference in December of 2015. This step was successful. Countries must operationalize the Paris Agreement so that countries are able to implement their nation’s climate plans, which is know as NDCs: National Determined Contributions. The Second step is to get the Heads of States to sign the Paris Agreement at a high-level signing ceremony conducted by the United Nations in New York City, United States of America. This took place on April 22nd in 2016. This step is mostly complete, but there are still several countries that have not completed this necessary step. The third and final step is for each individual nation to bring the Paris Agreement back to their country’s form of legislative body and get them to ratify the agreement. So far, about one hundred and eighty countries have signed the Paris Agreement, but only sixteen have ratified it.

Because climate change has been a continuous issue, there have been a lot of past actions. However to save the planet, many more actions need to be taken and fast. Several agencies that specialize in different forms of climate change have been created to help find solutions to the issues that climate change creates. These agencies are the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the United Nation Environmental Programme (UNEP), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and many more. Other past actions include the Kyoto Protocol. This was created on December 11th in 1997. This protocol legally bound nations to reduce green house gas emissions. It was ratified by one hundred and sixty-three nations. However, both Australia and the United States did not ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

Djibouti submitted it’s carbon reduction pledge to the United Nations previous to the creation of the Paris Agreement. Djibouti committed itself to curb greenhouse gas emissions by roughly forty percent, but our government could raise that prediction to sixty percent with funding from the international community. The Delegation of Djibouti said that is would invest over 3.8 billion dollars in collaboration with the international community to achieve this goal. Djibouti is already attempting to create “National Strategies” for the green economy.

Whether it be at a local, national, or international level the solution to climate change must be taking at a two different approaches: mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation is both reducing emissions as well as stabilizing the amount of greenhouse gases already in the atmosphere. Adaptation is the ability to minimize humans’ vulnerability to the always-changing climate. Mitigation is for reducing climate change, while adaptation is for surviving in the conditions that have already been created. Both are to be done simultaneously by a nation if that country wishes to be successful in the solution to the issues created by climate change.