Topics: Impact of Climate Change on Human Health, Climate Refugees, Steps to Enforce the Paris Agreement and Further Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Country: Ukraine

Committee: United Nations Framework on Climate Change

Climate change is an issue that effects every country on the planet. The United Nations Framework on Climate Change is striving to make impactful resolutions pertaining to three specific aspects of climate change. Specifically, we will be discussing the significance of climate change on the health of individuals, Climate Refugees (also called Environmental Migrants), and steps to implement the Paris Agreement to continue to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In recent years Ukraine has become increasingly effected by climate change. Increases in heat waves, and drought frequency has made then more commonplace, and have proven to have disastrous effects when combined. Although little research has been done into the impact on Ukraine specifically, it has been done for Northern Europe (including Ukraine), and the results are daunting. Through various simulations, researchers have projected an annual increase of temperatures ranging anywhere from +2.3°C to +5.3°C for Northern Europe.

Ukraine is among the top 20 largest emitters of greenhouse gasses in the world. Ukraine signed the Kyoto Protocol, mandating reductions in GHG emissions, and the 2012 Doha Agreement. Furthermore, Ukraine has ratified the Paris Agreement, replacing the Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol had placed undo stress on developing nations to meet the requirements imposed on developed nations. The Paris Agreement provides steps that each member can take to fight climate change within their resources and means. Although Ukraine seeks to be involved in additional measures to combat climate change, an issue that has previously and continues to impair and wreak havoc on Ukraine’s ecosystems, economy, people’s livelihoods, lack of public awareness and funding for programs to combat the aforementioned effects.

While Ukraine is greatly affected by climate change, whose consequences will only compound in the future, we have seen, and are expected to see, far less repercussions than our neighboring countries. Consequently, we are experiencing an influx in migration of individuals seeking a home away from the severity of the effects of climate change in their native countries. This sudden increase in population is creating substantial alteration of our social and economic framework. Social tensions will begin to arise at a time when Ukraine is already experiencing economic and political tensions. Furthermore, the expanding population will contribute to the labour force. A larger populace will demand larger work force able to accommodate the new numbers of workers. Moreover, while immigration may have little impact on the average wages, it has a more significant impact on wage distribution. The wages of low earning workers will begin to drop, while the wages of medium to high earning workers will rise. However, these effects are speculation and will continue to solidify in accuracy as more immigrants arrive, and their skill sets (and therefore labour available to them) is assessed.

In conclusion, climate change is an issue that affects every aspect of Ukrainian government, and life. The future of Ukraine, and the rest of the world, is dependent on our ability to mitigate the damages that climate change. While projections show alarming futures for the ecosystems of Ukraine (and the rest of the planet alike), they are based on today’s GHG emission rates. As the committee designated to combat these destructive effects, we must consider the growing GHG emission rates and the compounding effects they have.

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