

CNSS COP29 PERCEPTS DAY 3

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Introduction

As COP29 enters its third day, the conference continues to be a hub for transformative discussions, pushing forward ambitious solutions to the climate crisis. Hosted in Baku, Azerbaijan, the 2024 gathering has seen significant momentum on multiple fronts, with key debates ranging from contrails and ocean plastics to urban climate action and the future of clean design.

Key Themes and Sessions on Day 3

Not Just Carbon: Climate Action Beyond Emissions:

A pivotal session on Not Just Carbon: Why the World Needs Climate Action on Contrails, Ocean Plastics, and the Future of Clean Design sparked lively discussions on often-overlooked aspects of climate change. Presenters emphasized the importance of tackling contrails—the condensation trails left by aeroplanes—which contribute to global warming by trapping heat in the atmosphere.

Dr. Kaisa P. Lahtinen, leading climatologist and speaker at the session, noted: "While carbon emissions have been the focus of our climate strategies, contrails represent a critical missing piece in our global emissions puzzle. A holistic approach is necessary to address all sources of atmospheric warming. "In parallel, the growing problem of ocean plastics was discussed. The session underscored the need for cross-sectoral cooperation to reduce plastic pollution, which is not only an environmental issue but also has significant impacts on marine ecosystems and human health. Another major discussion centered on clean design innovations—from architecture to manufacturing—highlighting breakthroughs in materials and processes that can dramatically reduce environmental footprints across industries.

Le Nguyen Bao Ngoc: A Call for the Mekong

A powerful address by Le Nguyen Bao Ngoc a climate advocate and environmentalist from Southeast Asia, highlighted the urgent need to focus on the Mekong River Basin. The region, which spans multiple countries in Southeast Asia, is facing increasingly severe climate impacts, including flooding, drought, and loss of biodiversity. Ngoc argued that the Mekong is often left out of global climate conversations despite being one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change. Her speech called for more international support for the Mekong region, including funding for resilience-building, sustainable agriculture, and flood prevention.

Troika High-Level Dialogue: Roadmap to Mission 1.5

The Troika High-Level Dialogue was another highlight of the day. This session brought together climate leaders from the past, present, and future COP presidencies to discuss the way forward on the mission to limit global warming to 1.5°C. Dr. Tami Ghertrude, the outgoing President of COP28, spoke about the importance of "setting clear, actionable roadmaps" for countries to follow in their climate efforts. The dialogue also emphasized shared prosperity, focusing on equitable solutions for both developed and developing nations. Key moments in the dialogue revolved around integrating climate action with social and economic development, ensuring that vulnerable populations are not left behind in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

COP29 High-Level Side Event: From Baku to Belem and Beyond

One of the most significant high-level side events on Day 3 was the session titled From Baku to Belem and beyond, which focused on urbanization and multilevel climate action. Mayors, city planners, and leaders from several cities around the world came together to discuss how urban areas can play a central role in climate action. The session also emphasized the importance of multispectral collaboration—bridging the gaps between local governments, businesses, and civil society to create sustainable cities. The event was framed within the context of the COP29 Presidency's focus on urban action and the upcoming COP30 Presidency in Belem, Brazil. The speakers underscored the importance of urbanization as a critical factor for meeting global climate goals, particularly in terms of emissions reduction and social inclusion.

Addressing the Arctic Ocean and Decarbonization **Strategies: Protecting Earth's "Refrigerator": The Arctic** **Ocean's Predicament**

At the COP29 climate summit in Baku, Azerbaijan, the rapidly melting Arctic sea ice was highlighted as a critical concern. Known as Earth's "refrigerator," this biome is crucial in regulating global temperatures. The alarming pace of climate change poses a significant threat to its existence. The Arctic ecosystem is vital for the cultural heritage and livelihoods of Northern Indigenous peoples. Disruption of this balance threatens their way of life. The Arctic ice reflects solar radiation, helping to regulate global temperatures. Its decline could lead to rising sea levels, extreme weather, and climate-related catastrophes. A coalition of environmentalists and experts proposed a 10-year ban on exploitative activities in the Central Arctic Ocean. The strategy aims to preserve the Arctic Ecosystem halt activities like shipping, fishing, and oil drilling to give the ecosystem time to recover.

The proposal for a 10-year moratorium is designed to be more than just a conceptual plan; it includes well-defined governance and legal frameworks to ensure effective implementation. These frameworks aim to establish binding regulations and agreements that restrict exploitative activities such as oil drilling, large-scale commercial fishing, and shipping in the Central Arctic Ocean. By emphasizing the need for intersectional leadership, the initiative calls for active participation and collaboration among various stakeholders, including, Government, with corporations who are following the Environmental Social Governance and Civil Society Organizations which are acting as advocates for environmental preservation. This integrated approach ensures that the Arctic's unique ecosystem is protected through a robust and enforceable governance system, prioritizing long-term environmental sustainability and equity for all impacted communities.

Decarbonization Strategy for Hard-to-Abate Industries

The panel discussion addressed the urgent need to decarbonize critical industries, such as steel, cement, and electricity, which are major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. The issue of targeting high-emission processes, for instance, use electric arc furnaces powered by renewable energy in the steel sector to reduce emissions. AI and IoT can optimize operations, enhance efficiency, and lower energy consumption. Digital twins, for example, can model and optimize power plant energy use.

COP29 - Not Just Carbon: Why the world Needs Climate Action on Contrails:

The session's title explored aviation's substantial climate impact beyond its carbon dioxide emissions. The focus was on aircraft-generated persistent contrails, which are a contributing factor to global warming. An estimated 33 billion tonnes of CO₂ would be released by these contrails at current traffic levels, making up around 16% of the remaining IPCC 1.5degree carbon budget. To reach net-zero CO₂ emissions by 2050, the speakers underlined the necessity of drastic legislative and corporate reforms across a number of industries. Speakers from Breakthrough Energy and the University of Cambridge highlighted the value of interdisciplinary cooperation in tackling climate issues at the event.

COP29 Implications:

The necessity of a thorough approach to aviation's climate effect at COP29 is highlighted by this session. The role of contrails and other non-CO₂ variables must be recognized and addressed, even though carbon dioxide emissions are still a major concern. To lessen the development of contrails, governments should think about implementing policies that reward operational improvements and technology breakthroughs. To create international aviation emissions norms and regulations, including contrail mitigation, cooperation between nations is crucial. Increasing people's knowledge of how contrails affect the environment can help them support laws and technological advancements that try to lessen their creation. All things considered, the discussion shed important light on the sometimes disregarded effects of aviation contrails on the environment. It underlined the necessity of creative ideas and cross-border collaboration to tackle this issue and support global climate action.

COP29 - Eco-colonialism: The Environmental Legacy of Colonial and Neo-colonial Exploitation

At COP29, the session explored the historical and current environmental harm caused by colonial powers. The event examined how past activities including resource extraction, deforestation, soil contamination, and forced monoculture have resulted in long-term environmental impacts, with an emphasis on countries that still suffer the weight of colonial exploitation. The climatic challenges that these countries are currently facing are largely the result of these activities.

The discussion focused on how colonized countries are disproportionately affected by climate change. These countries frequently find themselves in the forefront of climate-related calamities, even though they make relatively small contributions to greenhouse gas emissions. This emphasizes the necessity of a fair and reasonable strategy for addressing climate change that takes into account the past and present injustices experienced by these countries. The idea of neo-colonialism, in which modern behaviors such as uneven trade agreements and unsustainable resource extraction feed the cycle of environmental deterioration, was also covered in the session. These actions exacerbate climate inequality by frequently favoring developed countries over developing ones.

The discussion stressed the significance of environmental justice in addressing these issues. This entails giving vulnerable countries enough money to deal with the effects of climate change, exchanging information and technology that are climate-friendly, setting up a special fund for loss and damage, and upholding the rights of Indigenous peoples. COP29 can help create a more fair and just global response to climate change by recognizing the past and present effects of colonialism. Resolving colonialism's environmental legacy is crucial to creating a resilient and sustainable future for everybody.

The 9th Ministerial Conference on the Development and Transmission of Green Energy

The 9th Ministerial Meeting on Green Energy Development and Transmission, held on the margins of COP29 in Baku was based on purpose of the meeting was to enhance regional cooperation in the development and transmission of green energy among Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria. Green Energy Corridor program: In order to garner support from participating nations, Azerbaijan highlighted the significance of its "green energy corridor" program.

The possibility of producing and distributing green hydrogen in the area was the subject of the meeting. The creation of a joint venture to supervise the execution of green energy projects has advanced. The parties decided to start the required processes after Bulgaria indicated interest in joining the Agreement on Strategic Partnership. Regional cooperation on green energy has advanced significantly with the 9th Ministerial Meeting.

The participating nations hope to improve energy security, lower carbon emissions, and open up new economic prospects by concentrating on green hydrogen, renewable energy, and infrastructure development. By utilizing the resources and experience of the participating nations, the formation of a joint venture will make it easier to coordinate and carry out green energy initiatives. Bulgaria's possible admission broadens the initiative's reach and enhances regional collaboration even more.

But there are still obstacles to overcome, such as finding sufficient funding, resolving technical and legal issues, and making sure that people in the fossil fuel sector have a fair transition. To overcome these obstacles and achieve the full potential of the green energy corridor plan, political will and ongoing cooperation are crucial.

Ministerial Dialogues and Key Bilateral Talks

In addition to the thematic sessions, several ministerial dialogues took place on Day 3, which underscored the growing commitment of national governments to accelerate climate action. This dialogue saw commitments from developed nations to increase financial support for climate adaptation and mitigation in developing countries.

Representatives from the European Union and Japan reaffirmed their support for the Green Climate Fund, while countries like India and Brazil highlighted the need for more equitable financial mechanisms. During the Energy Transition and Just Transition Ministerial, key discussions revolved around energy justice, with ministers emphasizing the need for a just and inclusive energy transition, particularly for workers in fossil fuel-dependent regions. Bilateral Talks on the sidelines of COP29 have been particularly active. Azerbaijan's Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources met with counterparts from Norway and Germany to discuss collaboration on carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies. China and Brazil also held a series of bilateral talks focused on climate resilience and food security.

Key Quotes from Today's Sessions

COP29 President, Leyla Aliyeva:

"This COP is not just about pledges, but about transforming our climate policies into real-world solutions. We are at a crossroads where the next decade will define the fate of our planet."

UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Simon Stiell: "COP29 is about forging the partnerships and strategies that will get us to 1.5°C, and we must act with urgency. The time for promises is over. It's time for action."

Patricia Espinosa, former UNFCCC Executive Secretary:

"Climate action is no longer a choice, it is a responsibility. And every nation, every business, every individual has a role to play in this global mission."

Conclusion

Day 3 of COP29 has once again demonstrated the importance of a multifaceted approach to climate action. With discussions on contrails, ocean plastic, urbanization, and shared prosperity, it is clear that the global community is recognizing that climate solutions must extend beyond carbon emissions alone. As the conference progresses, the focus remains on creating actionable, inclusive, and innovative solutions that will lead to a sustainable, equitable, and prosperous future for all. As the Baku Declaration takes shape and international commitments continue to evolve, the eyes of the world remain fixed on COP 29, waiting for a comprehensive roadmap to global climate action.