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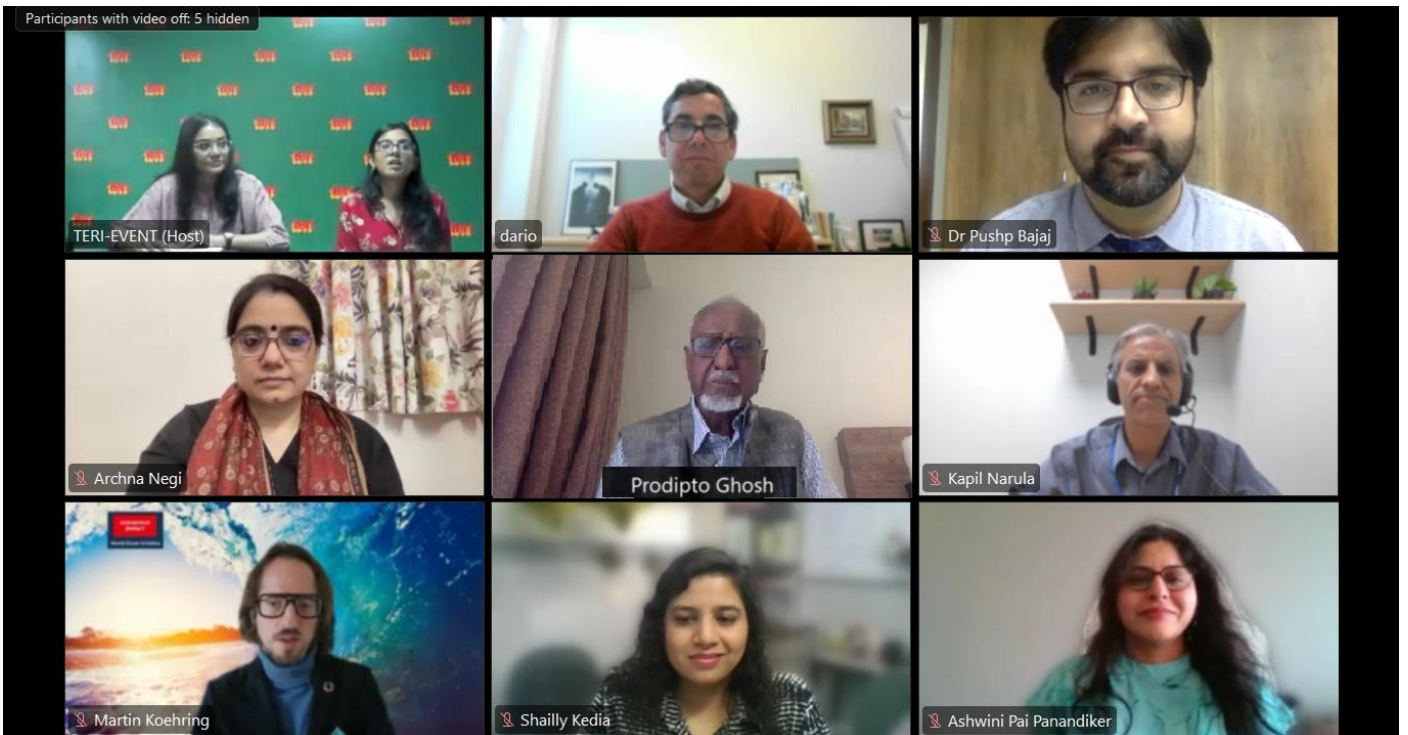
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VIRTUAL DIALOGUE ON GLOBAL COMMONS AND CLIMATE ACTION

16 September 2022 (Friday) | 2:00 – 4:30 p.m. (IST)



Virtual Dialogue on Global Commons and Climate Action

Date: 16th September 2022

Time: 2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. IST

EVENT PROCEEDINGS

WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) is the annual flagship Track II initiative organized by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). Instituted in 2001, the Summit series has a legacy of over two decades for making 'sustainable development' a globally shared goal. The only independently convened international Summit on sustainable development and environment, based in the Global South, WSDS strives to provide long-term solutions for the benefit of global communities by assembling the world's most enlightened leaders and thinkers on a single platform. Over the years, the Summit series has witnessed the participation of 54 Heads of State and Government, 103 Ministers, 13 Nobel Laureates, 1888 Business Leaders, 2745 Speakers, and 38,280 Delegates.

ACT4EARTH

Act4Earth initiative was launched at the valedictory session of WSDS 2022. Building on the discussions of WSDS, this initiative seeks to continuously engage with stakeholders through research and dialogue. Act4Earth initiative has two components: COP Compass and SDG Charter. The COP Compass will seek to inspire and mobilize leadership at all levels for inclusive transitions through ambitious and informed policies and measures, which will enable paradigm shifts towards meeting the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Paris goals through mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation. SDG Charter will seek to identify gaps and suggest ways for strengthening and mainstreaming sustainable in policy agendas for enhanced environmental, social, and economic outcomes.

Suggested Citation

The Energy and Resources Institute (2022), Virtual Policy Dialogue on Global Commons and Climate Action [Discussion Summary], Act4Earth and World Sustainable Development Summit, New Delhi: The Energy and Resources Institute.

Disclaimer

The event summary is based on auto-generated transcript. Some edits were made on grammar and spelling. The discussion can be accessed from YouTube: <https://youtu.be/-6ZgxMd4tdI>

THE DIALOGUE

The policy dialogue on Global Commons and Climate Action focused on the systemic transformations needed in the governance of global commons to build resilience against the impacts of climate change. The dialogue focused particularly on the governance of oceans, especially the areas beyond national jurisdiction. The objective of the policy dialogue is to engage with stakeholders and experts on global commons and governance, to solicit their feedback and inputs which will feed into the policy brief prepared by TERI research team.

SESSION LINE-UP

Welcome Address

- Dr Prodipto Ghosh, Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)

Presentation on the findings of the policy brief

- Ms Nivedita Chalayil, Research Associate, TERI
- Dr Ashwini Pai Panandiker, Fellow, TERI

Discussion and feedback by panelists

Moderator: Dr Shailly Kedia, Senior Fellow and Associate Director, TERI

- Dr Archana Negi, Associate Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University
- Dr Kapil Narula, Economic Affairs Officer, Climate Change and Natural Resources Sustainability Cluster, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA)
- Prof. Sanjay Chaturvedi, Chairperson, Department of International Relations, South Asian University
- Mr Martin Lok, Executive Director, Capitals Coalition
- Mr Martin Koehring, Head, World Ocean Initiative, The Economist Group
- Dr Pushp Bajaj, Research Fellow, National Maritime Foundation
- Ms Ashwini Hingne, Senior Manager, Climate program, World Resources Institute India

ACTIONABLE MESSAGES

Message 1: Global South can make an entry point in the climate negotiations through thematic analysis on either agriculture, or health, or transport – as bringing these in would allow for a more granular exercise, which identifies constraints and leads to a more composite exercise as far as the global stocktake is concerned.

Message 2: A critical aspect is addressing the knowledge gap in ocean governance. There is a need to increase our scientific understanding of the oceans.

Message 3: There is a failure to consider marine systems (or even earth systems) as a whole, where marine spatial planning and environmental assessments play an important role in limiting the impact of economic activities on oceans.

Message 4: The role of the private sector in ocean governance needs to be clearly defined. It is important to link the positive actions from the private sector and business with creating an enabling environment by governments. If we want to mainstream all actors, they should assess and disclose their impacts and their dependencies on nature and on the oceans making it mandatory for them to do that.

Message 5: Much more needs to be known about the Polar Regions; science and scientific research remains a priority for the governance of these regions. The Antarctica Treaty System still needs more dialogue, much more democratic or dialogic politics in terms of agenda setting, and arrival at a consensus.

Message 6: There is a need for the technology, capacity, and capability to be available across different countries, to address issues related to ocean governance. That also brings in the question of sharing this knowledge, sharing this data, and creating frameworks to do so. All those things need to contribute to this idea of generating overall awareness of the maritime domain.

Message 7: Any system of cooperation needs to ensure accountability, without which there is always an issue of the free riders.

Message 8: There is a need to create avenues for engagement with the local communities and vulnerable countries and bring them and their voices to the platforms.

MAKING WORDS COUNT

“ In working out multilateral cooperation on ocean governance, established principles, such as CBDR-RC, must be relied upon. There is a sorry history of negotiations on UNCLOS in the 1970s, when these principles were not as well established, resulting in huge disadvantages to developing countries.

Dr Prodipto Ghosh
Distinguished Fellow, TERI

“ The success of COP27 is contingent on the goodwill between the parties for international cooperation, but goodwill is in severe shortage in the current geopolitical context. Oceans for a very long time did remain largely absent from the global discussion on climate change and certainly there is a recognition that this will need to change.

Dr Archana Negi
Associate Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University

“ There is fragmented governance and measures which actually is not a bad thing in itself, because they offer sometimes multiple layers of protection. But sometimes they are also dysfunctional, incoherent and they fail to consider the entire ecosystem which is very essential.

Dr Kapil Narula
Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA)

“ The voice of Antarctica as a global common needs to be taken to other fora. The question is who it will do – whether it will be civil society, Antarctic Treaty parties themselves in their individual capacities – to convey a very strong message to the rest of the world, that if they remain at the receiving end of global climate inaction, then the consequences are going to be devastating for the entire globe.

Prof. Sanjay Chaturvedi
Chairperson, Department of International Relations, South Asian University

“ What governments are doing is not always aligned within their own structure, so a lot of times, for example, in relation to nature as well as the oceans, they expect the private sector to take certain actions but then the government policies themselves are not aligned with that.

Mr Martin Lok
Executive Director, Capitals Coalition

“ The way to get the buy-in and the political will, and the ambition from governments to actually do things, is by bringing the business community, economic stakeholders in it that will eventually help to build a business case for it, and ultimately bring society into this as well.

Mr Martin Koehring
Head, World Ocean Initiative, The Economist Group

“ The blue economy policy would most likely be a joint effort and it will show inputs from all stakeholders that are involved. Doing that at a global scale is much more challenging. Thus, the transformations that are required are in terms of strengthening the existing frameworks for ocean cooperation.

Dr Pushp Bajaj
Research Fellow, National Maritime Foundation

“ Whether we look at it from the lens of a historical contribution, or even the current contribution, the fact remains that there are certain actors who have a certain level of development and well-being and there are others who do not even have their basic needs met.

Ms Ashwini Hingne
Senior Manager, Climate program, World Resources Institute India

WELCOME ADDRESS**Dr Prodipto Ghosh, Distinguished Fellow, TERI**

This event is focused on the issues which were included in the Glasgow outcome on the interface between global commons, in particular, oceans and climate. The term 'commons' in the economic literature refers to resources over which property rights are not assigned and accordingly, everyone has an incentive to extract as much of the resource as possible before it is depleted. The economists' prescription for conservation of the commons is to assign property rights to the relevant agents; as long as the sum of such rights does not exceed the rate of regeneration, the resource may be expected to survive. Economics has little to say about the principles or processes governing the assignment of such property rights, but economists try nevertheless. Several resources may count as global commons: ocean resources, sea lanes for marine traffic, satellite orbits and extra-terrestrial bodies, the Antarctic, maybe even the electromagnetic spectrum and others. The one resource which has the greatest political salience at present is rights to the atmosphere: specifically, rights of countries to carbon space. Now, the rights to carbon space have been caricatured by some Western Scholars as the right to pollute. Developing country researchers, on the other hand, point to the fact that carbon space is an economic resource and binding constraints on carbon emissions may, *ceteris paribus*, lead to curtailment of economic growth.

The sharing of carbon space across countries is also deeply suffused with geopolitical strategic interests. This is the essence of the international negotiations on climate change under the UNFCCC. The current fuzzy scheme of sharing carbon space across countries is contained in the Paris agreement of 2015. The role of the oceans in global climate has become important after COP26. There are two important aspects to keep in mind: first, the role of the oceans as heat sinks and absorbers of GHG emissions, which is a pure global public good. Sharing of carbon space implicitly involves sharing of this function of the oceans. Any other scheme for direct sharing of this function of the oceans would conflict with the scheme of sharing of the carbon space (painstakingly worked out in the UNFCCC) and may lead to its unravelling. Given this, the scope for multilateral cooperation should focus on ways to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change on the oceans: including ocean acidification, depletion, migration of fish stocks, and impacts on biodiversity such as coral reefs. Such cooperation will involve sharing of some rights of ocean resources and responsibilities for taking or refraining from specified actions. These in turn will have economic implications.

Climate change may also make some existing resource sharing arrangements such as fisheries agreements smooth. In working out such cooperation, established principles such as CBDR-RC must be relied upon. There is a sorry history of negotiations on UNCLOS in the 1970s, when these principles were not as well established, resulting in huge disadvantages to developing countries.

(Dr Ghosh recalled an incident from a vacation couple of years ago when he was intrigued by the appearance of tar balls on Goa's famed beaches.)

On investigating the origin of the tar balls, I learned that this was due to UNCLOS tradition – that allowed oil tankers to discharge bilge water during their transit through the Indian Ocean. They are not allowed so off the course of Europe, North America, Japan and Australia. We may be sure that developing countries' negotiators will be much more vigilant this time around. So let me once again welcome all the participants to this important workshop and hope that your deliberations will provide some guideposts on the way forward.

Ms Nivedita Cholayil, Research Associate, TERI and Dr Ashwini Pai Panandiker, Fellow, TERI (on behalf of the study team)

What are Global Commons?

Global Commons are extensive resource domains that do not fall under the jurisdiction of any single country. There are two characteristics of common pool resources: high difficulty of barring others from using them (i.e., high exclusion) and high subtractability or the degree to which one person's use of a resource diminishes others' use. International law recognizes four global commons: Oceans/ high seas, Atmosphere, Antarctica, Outer space. Governance of global commons remains contentious since there is no single state or region having complete responsibility for the same.

Why Global Commons?

They are vital for the survival of all species on this planet. Global commons have direct linkages to climate change – in terms of rising sea temperature and sea levels, as well as overfishing, ocean acidification, marine litter and pollution. They are also under-researched, in terms of the existing governance structures which delineate the national and global jurisdiction, and in terms of their role in climate action.

Scope and Rationale

This particular study will focus mainly on the marine areas beyond national jurisdiction and their relation to climate action by examining the interface between the climate and the ocean governance. Oceans will be of particular focus because of, first of all, their magnitude.

About 70% of earth's surface is covered by oceans. **Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)** make up 40% of the surface of our planet, comprising 64% of the surface of the oceans and nearly 95% of its volume. Oceans absorb heat and regulate temperature of the planet and climate change impacts, such as rise in sea level, acidification, loss of marine biodiversity, and integrity of ecosystem. This makes it very important to study this global common, in terms of both governance as well as its relevance to climate action.

Governance of global commons

	Key Treaties/Convention/Agreements	Relevance to Environmental Action
Climate governance	UNFCCC + Kyoto Protocol, Paris Agreement	Acid deposition, GHG emissions, ozone depletion
Ocean convention	UNCLOS + BBNJ*, CBD	Address sea level rise, ocean acidification, biodiversity loss, marine pollution

**Ongoing negotiations*

The interface between **climate governance and ocean governance** is an important topic for policy and research consideration.

UNFCCC and Oceans

At global climate negotiations, historically, climate and ocean policies have been looked at in silos and this was brought forth by the IPCC in 2009, when they said in their report that this oversight is conflicting with the incredible role that oceans play in regulating Earth's climate, as along with the numerous manifestations of climate change in the marine environment. So until COP21, ocean was usually omitted from the negotiation

altogether. Paris agreement, however, mentions the importance of oceans in the Preamble. Following COP23, which was spearheaded by Fiji, an increase in Indigenous representation and concerted focus on the ocean-climate nexus was noticed. Finally, the ocean and climate change dialogue was mandated in COP25. At the most recent COP26, the major outcome was that governments permanently anchored the inclusion of strength and ocean-based action under the UNFCCC by multilateral process in Glasgow.

Glasgow Climate Pact and Oceans

The most recent Glasgow negotiations finally noted the importance of oceans and their role in integrating the ecosystems – including forests, ocean and the cryosphere. It emphasized the importance of protecting, conserving and restoring nature and the ecosystems (including marine ecosystems). It invited the relevant work programs and constituted bodies under UNFCCC to consider how to integrate and strengthen ocean-based action. There are different actors working in this space and there is a need to integrate what each of them is doing, so that the results are more meaningful and actionable.

Recommendations

One of the outcomes of COP26 is holding an annual ocean and climate change dialogue, but participation and inclusion of all the other stakeholders is key in these dialogues. There is a need for definite goals, targets and indicators – beyond what is already covered in SDG14 – institutional and enforcement mechanisms to steer ocean climate action. Indicators should include input, output and outcome indicators. International cooperation and deployment of financial resources is critical to actionability of the outcomes of COP26 and beyond. The question of coordination and reforms in the multilateral systems is very crucial. Sustained global ocean observations and projections of ocean physics, chemistry and biology are essential to inform better short and long-term policy making for the benefit of the people, nature and the economy. Investment is also key in ensuring international coordination and integration of ocean observations.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Dr. Shailly Kedia, Senior Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)

The guiding questions for the discussions are the following:

- What kind of transformations are needed to protect and govern global commons (particularly, oceans and atmosphere) such that they are used responsibly to address the challenges related to climate change?
- How can global commons be mainstreamed into the climate action agenda at an international level, so that various governance structures are interlinked to ensure appropriate policymaking?
- In what ways can the governance of global commons be considered from a lens of equity, ensuring that both the Global North and the Global South work in a concerted manner to tackle climate change?

Dr Archana Negi, Associate Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Dr. Negi set the stage for discussion in three parts. First, looking at context with regard to the road to Sharm el-Sheikh. The environmental context against which the conference is being held only emphasizes the worsening of the problem and how we are running out of time for fixing it. The summer of 2022 saw the warmest temperatures on record over the land areas of the world; record-breaking heat waves sweeping across the Northern Hemisphere; the Antarctic Sea ice at record low levels in the first half of the year; and the Arctic sea ice at the low end of the historical range as well. So, the developed countries (or the global North as well) is beginning to get a first-hand experience of issues like failed harvests and heat stress. Then, Pakistan saw devastating floods claiming the lives of close to 1500 people, wiping out crops, homes, and infrastructure across almost a third of the country. What is important to note here is that a country that is responsible for less than 1% of the global GHG emissions, finds itself very high on the vulnerability index of extreme weather due to climate change. Last week, UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres visited Pakistan and referred to the lack of attention given to climate change as ‘insanity and collective suicide’.

The second is the locational context and the fact that it will take place in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, under the conference slogan: *'Together for Implementation'*. Only four times before this was the climate conference hosted in Africa: twice in Morocco (Marrakesh), once in Nairobi and once in Durban South Africa. Therefore, this conference has been built as an African COP –not just with reference to its location, but also in the expectation that African interests as countries particularly exposed and vulnerable to the impacts of climate change will be brought and kept center stage. The global climate Risk Index of 2021 identifies the regions worst hit from extreme weather events related to climate change (like storms, floods, etc.) both in terms of human fatalities and direct economic losses. They took into account data from 2000 to 2019 and came up with three broad results: one confirming that least developed countries (LDCs) are generally more affected than the industrialized countries; second stating that from the period 2000 to 2019, the worst affected included Puerto Rico, Myanmar and Haiti; and third result that in 2019 the countries and territories most affected were Mozambique, Zimbabwe and the Bahamas. So, the locational context of COP27 should focus on African vulnerabilities, especially aspects of adaptation that are also crucial concerns for the global South at large.

The third point of discussion is the geopolitical context of COP27. The previous COP took place amidst very unstable conditions – in the backdrop of the pandemic. While those uncertainties have not receded completely, an additional threat to international cooperation has emerged from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which has essentially led to or caused disruptions in any attempted collaboration in all fields, including climate action. One example of which is the G20, a group of the world's major economies which account for 80% of global emissions. Usually, G20 has served as an important staging post for climate action, but is now affected by implications of the war in Ukraine. One of these would be that, G20 as a group has been destabilized because the members are not really talking to each other anymore. For instance, the July 2022 meeting where the Russian foreign minister walked out stating “there is nothing to talk about with the West”. The second impact of this war is that the larger issues of food and energy insecurity, especially the dramatic price rises, would push climate change down the domestic political agenda. There are other implications, for instance, one of the outcomes of COP26 which was the U.S-China Climate Accord has fallen apart, post Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan. The success of COP27 is contingent on the goodwill between parties for international cooperation, but goodwill is currently in severe shortage. So, these three contexts – the natural, locational, and geopolitical contexts – are important to keep in mind as we assess and head towards the conference at Sharm el-Sheikh.

Now coming to the second part of my intervention. What do we have on the table at the conference and what the global South could be focusing on? Mitigation remains a major key concern at COP27 as well. COP26 raised the ambitions, with the Paris agreement for mitigation being put to a test – where countries were asked to submit new or updated NDCs ahead of COP26, and many countries did so. Of over 120 parties which submitted new NDCs, a full implementation of these new targets will still mean an estimated warming of about 2.4 degrees C by the end of the century. At the close of COP26 at Glasgow, it had been declared that, though 1.5 degrees remains alive, its pulse is weak. So, the Glasgow Climate Pact did request parties to strengthen their 2030 targets in their NDCs, in order to align with the Paris goal by the end of 2022. In some sense, COP27 will reference to this so-called unfinished business of Glasgow: where are countries heading in terms of mitigation targets? Very few countries, so far, have submitted new or revised NDCs; thus, COP27 will really open up discussion on mitigation. Another important issue is that of adaptation in climate action, which for long has been overshadowed by mitigation – both in terms of attention as well as in terms of financing. The Glasgow Climate Pact had urged the developed countries to at least double adaptation financing. It also launched the two-year work program on the global goal on adaptation, to help countries adapt and increase resilience to climate change. Adaptation will certainly be high on the agenda, given that COP27 is taking place in a highly climate vulnerable country and continent.

The third issue which will remain extremely pertinent is that of climate finance. Again from the perspective of the global South, as well at COP26, developing countries had expressed frustration over the failure to deliver on the promises of regular finance to assist in adaptation and mitigation efforts. Therefore, at COP27, there will be a push both for fulfillment of the historic promises (refers to the USD 100 billion annual climate finance

each year) and also newer initiatives, like the launch of the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero which emerged from COP26.

The fourth issue, which is again very pertinent from the perspective of the global South, is that of loss and damage. Developing countries who contribute less to climate change seek financial support towards the cost of loss and damage. On this issue there were some breakthroughs at COP26, including the establishment of the three-year Glasgow dialogue. There were some symbolic pledges as well, but a formal dealing with the issue of loss and damages is something that will continue to be a high priority for countries coming from the global South. Then there is the issue of the Global Stocktake – the process for taking stock of the implementation of the Paris agreement, with the aim of assessing progress towards the long-term goals. This is from Article 14 of the Paris agreement; the idea is also to identify gaps and opportunities for enhanced action and support. Now each stocktake is a two-year process that is to happen every five years and is in sync with the Ratchet Mechanism. The outcomes will inform the indices as well as the negotiations. This assessment of progress on all aspects of mitigation, adaptation and implementation will come out of the GST. The first stocktake is already underway since Glasgow and there are three phases under which it's being done. The phase one was about collecting and preparing information which is underway. Phase two is the technical assessment part, which will be a part of the COP27 as well; it will be hosted as a technical dialogue. Finally, phase three will end up with presenting key findings at COP28, at the end of 2023.

Two important things about the GST: one, that by design it is meant to be participatory. So it allows for space for stakeholders to provide inputs. The hooks where the Global South can make an entry point could be thematic analysis on agriculture or health or transport. Bringing these in would allow for a more granular exercise, which identifies constraints and leads to a more composite exercise as far as the global stock take is concerned. Additionally, there had been several sectoral issues (such as coal) at Glasgow and COP27 would be important for assessing progress on all these deals as well. GST is critically important to assess these transformations. Last year's NDC synthesis report confirmed that the trajectory of stabilizing global temperature rise at 1.5 degrees is still distant – so the need for more ambitious climate action is necessary.

As somebody has noted very eloquently, if National Climate Plans or NDCs are the 'Beating Heart' of the Paris agreement, then the GST is the Agreement's regular health check.

On transformations

Any transformation will need to take into consideration the peculiar problems faced by any attempt to govern the Global Commons and the resource domains that do not fall under the jurisdiction of any one single country. Anthropogenic over-exploitation of these Commons was flagged decades ago. An article was published in 1968 by Garrett Hardin on '*the Tragedy of the Commons*' argued that any open access resource is vulnerable to tragic destruction. Hardin the famous example, where a pasture is open to all and everyone is going to graze - it until it is no longer sustainable. Where environmental or climate problems are concerned, the maximization of individual gain in the context of national interest, often comes at the cost of degradation of communal resources.

Elinor Ostrom, who received the Nobel Prize in 2019 for her research, demonstrated quite the contrary: that ordinary people can create rules and institutions that allow for the sustainable and equitable management of shared resources. She analyzed economic governance of the commons and studied the interaction of peoples and ecosystems for many years. Her research showed that the use of exhaustible resources by groups of people can be a rational exercise that can be carried out without government intervention. The transformations that are needed to protect and govern Global Commons, such as atmosphere and oceans, will need to draw from an understanding of the peculiar nature of the task of governing the Global Commons: one, not owning the problem due to its perceived extra jurisdictional location; second, treating the commons as the externality of human activity and not factoring it into the costs of everyday activities; third, the temptation to free ride.

It is important to keep an eye on other environmental agreements that could contribute to the overall climate objectives being pursued through the Paris agreement track. The 2016 Kigali Amendment to the Montreal

protocol on *Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer*, entered into force in 2019. This Amendment brought about a phase-down of hydro-fluorocarbons or HFCs by cutting their production and consumption. HFCs had, prior to this, been used as replacements of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which, however, were then discovered to be powerful greenhouse gases. The goal of the amendment was to achieve over 80% reduction in HFC consumption by 2047 and it was assessed that the impact of the Amendment would be avoiding up to 0.5-degree Celsius increase in global temperatures by the end of the century.

A high ambition coalition of more than 50 countries which have committed to protecting the world's oceans, the U.N. oceans treaty to protect and manage the high seas is ongoing. Oceans, for a very long time, did remain largely absent from the global discussion on climate change and certainly there is a recognition that this will need to change. Increasingly, it is understood that to protect and restore the oceans, we need to tackle climate change; vice versa, these are twin crises that need to be addressed in a complementary fashion. There are several recent reports that are published on principles for ocean climate action. How far the integration of the ocean issues into the Paris Agreement is taken forth in COP27 is something that one would need to look at.

On equity

Some of the issues to be taken up at COP27 are already marked as having special significance for the interests of the global South, such as: issues relating to adaptation, climate finance, loss and damage in particular. African countries and other developing countries have consistently been calling for adequate equitable and accessible climate finance to meet their adaptation needs, relative to mitigation. However, adaptation finance is underfunded: but OECD tells you that finance for adaptation only accounted for 25% of global climate finance flows. Even where finance is available there are barriers in relation to the ease of access and the procedural requirements are so onerous that it is very difficult to actually reach the financing opportunities. A big problem that has been flagged by the developing countries already, is that whatever little finance is available for adaptation is further diluted by the co-mingling of finance for loss and damage with the finance for adaptation. Newer calls sent forth by the developing countries include: a dedicated finance for nature-based solutions which would have the capacity to respond to both adaptation and mitigation needs.

These are the traditional global South positions on more focus on adaptation - especially more focus on adaptation financing - more robust recognition of loss and damage. However, the developing countries also need to ensure a very active and robust participation in the global stock take exercise; stressing especially on the sectoral analysis that are of concern to them. For example, highlighting health and other thematic cross-sectoral priorities that are ingrained in the goals of the Paris Agreement (such as food security, human rights, equity) would ensure that the societal implications of the current levels of climate action are well understood. The design of the GST suggests that equitable outcomes from this exercise will depend on equal participation in the process of stocktake - given that the stocktake is really going to define and design the future of climate negotiations. This is something that the global South needs to take very seriously.

Dr Kapil Narula, Economic Affairs Officer, Climate Change and Natural Resources Sustainability Cluster, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA)

(Dr. Narula highlighted three points about oceans) The first that over 60% of the global ocean is actually area beyond national jurisdiction or ABNJ, and only 1.2% of this is protected legally. The goal is to protect at least 30% of world's ocean by 2030, and this gap between the current 1.2% and 30% is really huge.

The second salient feature is that we should recognize that ocean issues are all interconnected, not only because oceans are physically connected, but also because it is intercoupled with the global climate.

The third aspect (which is a salient feature of ocean governance) is that the threats and the impacts on the oceans and climate do not recognize maritime jurisdiction boundaries, which is a construct that countries or

human beings have made; therefore, ocean issues cannot be considered in isolation. There is a need for integrated action and consequently global governance of oceans.

The next point, which is very, very specific to oceans is the global threats which emerge from climate change. In a very recent study last week, published by the Potsdam Institute of Climate Change in the journal *Nature*, they identified the 16 climate tipping points and it said that at current levels of global heating, the world already lies within the lower end of five of these climatic tipping points uncertainty ranges. The five tipping points which have been crossed include: Greenland ice sheet, West Antarctic ice sheet, collapse of convection in the Labrador Sea, massive die-offs of tropical coral reefs and abrupt permafrost thaw. Four of these five climate tipping points are related to oceans and that is the global threat. A characteristic of this threat is that one it is transnational and the scale ranges from local to global. There are interconnected feedback loops which we really do not understand. Therefore, the impacts are very non-linear. So, to close the setting of the stage, the guiding principle for ocean governance, which everyone recognizes, is that oceans are our global commons, they are our shared heritage, and they have to be used for the benefit of all and that implies both inter- as well as intra-generational equity.

On transformations in ocean governance

Ocean governance is primarily a multi-layered structure and governance is carried out under several levels: global level, regional level, national level as well as local level. The shape and size of this is also very different: some of them are formal treaties, others are sort of regional arrangements (like the fishery agreements). Some of them are more elastic - in terms of political or voluntary commitments. Therefore, the multi-layered structure of ocean governance makes it a very complicated governance arrangement. The second is that there are various overlaps and gaps. There is fragmented governance and measures, which actually is not a bad thing in itself because sometimes they offer multiple layers of protection. But, sometimes they are also dysfunctional, incoherent and they fail to consider the entire ecosystem as a whole which is very essential. There are many overlaps due to sectoral based approaches: that includes jurisdictional overlaps due to different mandates and prioritization of different sectors. Sometimes there is a regulatory overlap because of the scope of coverage, as well as, application to different parties. There is also overlap of actors, which primarily emerges from competition over resources and different activities. One critical aspect is of addressing the knowledge gaps in ocean governance: there is a need to increase our scientific understanding of the oceans, for instance, of deep sea or intercoupling between ocean and climate and various other aspects. The second neglected aspect is that the world community is slow to embrace traditional knowledge and the issues which are affecting the local communities. That is one of the key areas where we should address or focus some of our attention. This is because these traditional communities have been staying with the oceans and they treat the oceans as their own. There is also failure to consider marine ecosystems as a whole - where marine spatial planning and strategic environmental assessments can take a lead role in limiting the impact of economic activities on oceans. Models fail to account for warming, acidification and deoxygenation; therefore, that is a critical knowledge gap which needs to be addressed. There is a need to understand the impact of underwater ships and the resulting noise, light and vibrations on marine environment as well as marine life.

On mainstreaming

(Here Dr. Narula highlighted the aspect of regulating the emerging activities in ABNJ, and specifically mentioned deep seabed mining and ocean geo-engineering.)

In this case, it is extremely important that the precautionary principle is adopted for these (deep seabed mining and ocean geo-engineering) high-risk activities because we do not understand them enough. There are several impacts on biodiversity and ocean health – thus, there are impacts from deep sea bed mining, especially in your hydrothermal vents, seamounts and on ocean floor. We need to carefully consider the development of mining code being steered by the ISA, versus the call from some countries for a moratorium on mining. France is supporting this call for a moratorium on seabed mining.

The issue of bottom trawling is also extremely important. There was an announcement by Europe to ban bottom trawling in EU waters, under the deep-sea access regulation framework and they have closed down about 17% of the area, between four to eight hundred meters depth; this is about 16,500 square kilometers of area.

The last aspect on this issue is on freedom of high seas versus Common Heritage of Mankind. A balance needs to be adopted, but the framework of the treaty on ABNJ, from which we had many hopes, was concluded without any kind of further development or a formalized legal arrangement. This has been going on for 20 years now. For equitable approach, benefit sharing of the many marine genetic resources is an important aspect.

On equity

A few aspects that we need to envision and re-envision is our relationship with oceans and economic activities. Countries are adopting a sustainable approach which is extremely good. For an equitable approach, we also need to focus on blue financing for ocean protection. There are great examples of debt for nature swaps and blue bonds, as well as use of insurance tools for Mexico coral reef insurance, which was figured in October 2000 after a hurricane. This protects vulnerable communities and is much more equitable. The third aspect is to adopt an ecosystem approach and area-based tools, such as, marine spatial planning based on agreed scientific criteria. The highlight is to advance knowledge, ocean literacy and involve the younger generation.

Prof Sanjay Chaturvedi, Chairperson, Department of International Relations, South Asian University

When we use the term Global Commons with the Common Heritage of Mankind, we are taken back to the times of UNCLOS 3. Our attention is diverted to the deep-sea bed, and we start imagining International Seabed Authority and so on. When we talk about the maritime spaces beyond National Maritime Jurisdiction, high seas become very important and as compared to the areas within maritime national jurisdiction, governing the high seas is far more challenging and daunting. It requires very innovative, institutional landscapes and political trust.

But then, there are spaces which are somewhat contested global commons. They are very important, but they are contested, such as the Antarctica which is larger than India and China put together. It is a continent surrounded by what we call the Southern Ocean and there is the Antarctica Treaty of 1959 (ratified in 1961) which defines '60 degrees south' as the space of the Antarctic.

During the 60s and 70s, Antarctica was known as the continent of science, understandably because the Antarctic Treaty was negotiated at the height of the Cold War against the backdrop of international geophysical year 1957-58. Then in 1970s, we saw a very important discursive transformation of Antarctica: it was being seen as in terms of resource geopolitics. One of the provisions of the Antarctica treaty, the contested territoriality of Antarctica, is legally frozen. There are seven claims and counter claims of territorial sovereignty, with three overlapping claims on Antarctica peninsula: United Kingdom, Argentina and Chile. All these claims are legally frozen, they have remained alive, and they have started asserting themselves in a more compelling manner over the last few decades, especially since the 1970s when we began seeing Antarctica in terms of its geological map.

There was also evidence of oil and gas found in the Raw Sea of the Antarctic, and in the backdrop of the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea, we had something called the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CAMLR). Following this in 1988, we had what is called the CRAMRA, or the Convention on the Regulation with Arctic Mineral Resource Activities. After a crisis of consensus, then in 1990, there was the Madrid protocol, Antarctica protocol and Environmental Protection. All human activities in Antarctica are being subjected to environmental impact assessments. Fast forward to 2048, the ban on mining can be lifted and subjected to a very stringent review, but this is theoretically possible; so, 2048 is the time to watch.

(Professor Chaturvedi highlighted the following points in this regard)

Number one, Antarctica is a contested Global Common, but it is very central to the epoch of the Anthropocene and the climate change debate. The Climate Change Report by Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) reports that there is graphic evidence, with reference to the Western Antarctic ice sheet, that about 20 meters of global Sea Level rise is locked up in the highly vulnerable parts of Antarctica. West Antarctica ice sheet is one of the tipping points. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report also underlines the fact that the impacts of climate change on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean will have global consequences: including the monsoon patterns.

Even if Antarctic is a contested Global Common in terms of being isolated and disconnected (which also applies to Arctic) the interlinkages are very evident.

On transformations

It must be acknowledged that more needs to be known about Antarctica. The importance of science and scientific research as the first order value of Antarctica governance has to be retained. The preamble to the Antarctica treaty said '*Antarctica shall forever be governed for peaceful and scientific purposes in the best interests of humankind*'. However, the same Antarctica treaty has legally frozen these territorial claims. Contrastingly, there is a lot of emphasis on universalism, which means that as and when we have the assertion of territorial nationalisms in Antarctica, these assertions are always being tempered by this promise in the Antarctica treaty preamble – that Antarctica shall never become an object of international discord.

So, the transformations are of different kinds. First is a very deeply philosophical, but at the same time geopolitical transformation. The question is, how to transform the contested territoriality of Antarctica which is coming in the way of its governance as well as climate change related governance. For example, how do you turn it into trusteeship? So, the norm of trusteeship needs a lot of attention; also, in the context of what we can call post-colonial engagement with the question of contested Global Commons.

The other kind of transformations will be facilitated; Antarctica Treaty System today is very complex. It has the Antarctica treaty, the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CAMLR), with its headquarters in Hobart, and then, after the environmental protocol, we have a committee on Environmental Protection. Moreover, membership has increased, it has become far more diversified than it ever was and Asia has a much more visible presence. Africa is still conspicuous, and absent from Antarctic awareness. The question then remains who represents Antarctica? For whom does the Antarctica speak as a contested Global Common? The other way around, to whom does Antarctica speak? Does it speak for millions of people in Africa, who are going through and will be exposed to multiple exposures of climate change and the challenge of the Anthropocene?

Thus, there are deeply philosophical, geopolitical, and legal questions that need to be addressed as a part of transformation when we look at Antarctica.

On equity

The knowledge-power equation within the Antarctic system outlines that there is a juridical equality – all member states are there, but we still have a difference between the consultative members, ordinary members, and observers. Those countries which demonstrate substantial scientific interest in Antarctica are eligible for being considered as consultative members. We still have a system where more dialogue is needed, as well as more democratic or dialogic politics in terms of agenda setting, in terms of negotiations and arriving at a consensus is needed. Recently in the last meeting, the Ukraine crisis has also shadowed the deliberations of the Antarctica Treaty consultative meeting, which was held in Berlin, Germany. The next meeting is due in Finland, and then thereafter, India would be hosting the Antarctic Treaty consultative meeting.

Antarctica really does talk about the freedom of the high seas. As a matter of fact, from a claimant country's point of view, there are coastal States in Antarctica. From the point of view of non-claimant countries and

countries like India, which do not recognize these territorial claims, the waters that go right up to the coast of Antarctica and the deep seabed, in particular, is the Common Heritage of Mankind. During the 90s, there was a debate in the U.N. on the question of the Antarctica Treaty System. Antarctica has been a little careful and cautious in terms of placing some of its major questions on the agenda of the United Nations or COP. But the Antarctica Treaty System now is far more willing to engage with IPCC work to make its voice heard in COP meetings. At the end of the day, the challenges are twofold: first, the Antarctic Treaty countries, which are scientifically active, are trying to mitigate climate change within these spaces of the Antarctic Treaty area (south of 60 degrees south). That is one way of ensuring that you are contributing to climate action.

At the same time, the voice of Antarctica as the global common needs to be taken to other fora. The question is: who will do it? Whether it will be civil society, or Antarctic Treaty parties themselves – in their individual capacities – that will convey a very strong message to the rest of the world: if Antarctica and the Arctic (where there is four times more global warming) remain at the receiving end of climate global climate inaction, then the consequences are going to be devastating for the entire world, particularly for smaller countries.

Mr Martin Lok, Executive Director, Capitals Coalition

(Mr Lok added to the conversation with a focus on) How can we create a better understanding and linkage between the private and the public sector, with respect to the question of managing better the Global Commons and with the focus on the oceans, but also a little bit beyond. Based on a lot of the ongoing discussions in the sphere of nature policies, where Capitals Coalition is now globally negotiating a new nature framework – the global biodiversity framework – that will come to an ambitious conclusion in a couple of months in Montreal. (Mr Lok is a part of the business for nature policy team that is preparing all the business messages around these negotiations.)

There are a lot of common challenges in most of the discussions. The kind of policy messages that the business community is sending to the UNFCCC is quite comparable to the bonds that we are sending to the CBD. So, there is a joint understanding needed here.

On transformations

What is really needed is joint direction towards the global goals. We need a joint direction that is able to create a kind of inspiration that all stakeholders need to bring in their contribution. We also have the SDGs, but to put it frankly, there are a lot of SDGs which becomes difficult to manage and at the same time, within the context of the SDGs and the political discussions, climate is always on the top of a lot of the agendas.

Capitals Coalition, along with the Business Financial Coalition, which is bringing together the business Community around the CBD negotiations, is advocating to bring up a global goal for nature, comparable to 1.5 degrees for climate. The goal is to move towards a nature positive world by 2030, where we have more nature compared to the current situation. The global goal that they are rallying behind is to become nature positive, climate neutral and socially equitable. It is very important to have such a joint direction. One of the reasons for this is that we have all those international agreements working parallelly, but are not always sufficiently aligned. We need to align the international conventions and specifically in the field or in the way they are implemented. While most countries have different implementation strategies for nature, climate and oceans, the underlying causes as to why things are going in the wrong direction are quite comparable. Thus, the policies needed for each of them are quite comparable as well.

On mainstreaming

(On talking about his work with the Dutch government) It is futile to talk about mainstreaming without having the people, the sectors, the organizations in the same room. The key on mainstreaming is to really include all stakeholders and have a discussion together. For this, a joint understanding of what is the value of nature, people and of society and how can we include that is needed. The only way to do so is if we really bring this together and that does not always happen. One element of this is also the ambition loop used in the context of a basis for nature. What is really important is that we link the positive actions as well as finance from the

private sector business to creating an enabling environment by governments. What governments are doing is not always aligned within their own structure; so a lot of times, for example, in relation to nature as well as the oceans, they expect the private sector to take certain actions, but then the government policies themselves are not aligned with that. Capitals Coalition published a report on nature in February which stated that USD 1.8 trillion is spent by global governments on environmentally harmful activities which is not good.

If we want to mainstream all actors, they should assess and disclose their impacts and their dependencies on nature and oceans, and it should be mandatory for them to do so. This is an advocacy campaign Capitals Coalition is currently running towards the CBD and for businesses active in the oceans area. They started looking at oceans around 2016, when they published a natural capital protocol – which is a nine-step approach for business on how to include impacts and dependencies on nature. There is a comparable protocol for socially human capital too, but what is seen is that the discussions between the business community and the government are not always coming together.

Governments are implementing the ecosystems accounting framework set out by the United Nations Statistical Department (UNSD) and the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) framework and they are rolling this out in the oceans as well. However, on discussions with countries on the involvement of business in this accounting, it was found that in a lot of cases, the setup does not exist for the mainstreaming: which brings together what business, what government, the Finance is doing, and that is a thing that we need to invest in.

Mr Martin Koehring, Head, World Ocean Initiative, The Economist Group

Adding to the previous speakers' interventions, for issues on the Arctic and the oceans, there is a need to look at this from a scientific as well as an economic point of view. For example, conveying the knowledge about the coral reefs in the Arctic, which is forgotten as a natural capital in terms of mitigating climate change. The calcium carbonate structure that is in corals permanently locks up carbon. It is often forgotten that this is a much better way of storing carbon and a much better way of dealing with climate change in terms of natural capital. It is not just gathering the scientific knowledge that is important, but translating that knowledge into something that decision-makers, policy-makers and businesses can understand is equally important. Although scientific papers are crucial for that, it is that translation that comes through, for example, media by drawing actionable insights from these scientific studies.

On transformations

Governance of global commons has been 20 years in the making and we are actually getting much closer to this goal than we have ever been previously. There are some sticking points. It is not easy to establish these agreements on Marine Protected Areas and on the High Seas, or to get agreement on these impact assessments or in providing the finance and capacity building. The biggest sticking point is sharing of marine genetic resources and that is where the equity angle comes in. It is about what we do with this kind of biological material from plants and animals in the ocean. It has benefits for society, pharmaceuticals, industrial processes, and food. One of the sticking points is how do we share these benefits? In a way, there has been progress on this front. At the recent talks and although, the agreement was supposed to be finalized this year, even if it is delayed by a couple of months, we are much closer than we have been at any other point in the past 20 years or so.

There need to be governments' transformation, mainstreaming, and global frameworks, such as CBD, high seas treaty, and so on. What is also required is an accompanying economic model that can then be embraced by the governments. The way to get the buy-in, the political will and the ambition from governments to actually do things is by bringing the business community and economic stakeholders in it – that will eventually help to build a business case for it, and ultimately bring society into this as well. This economic model is being discussed currently. All the government structures will have something like this associated with them. It is really about translating nature into economic terms and establishing as a kind of a new financial asset class. This can really bring all this to life and make it more tangible for decision makers. It also brings the business and economic stakeholders into it. The idea here is to give monetary value to living nature as opposed to extracting and destroying natural assets. Of the things that have led to climate change, the most devastating

has been the extraction and destruction of resources to fuel the economy; instead of this, the new economic model should be about the value in living nature. There is data to support the value of a whale, for example, in terms of carbon sequestration, which has been estimated at USD 3 million. This kind of valuing of natural capital assessments has not been done in the past.

The economics of blue carbon is important to put governance structures around that, because blue carbon is an important way of linking the climate and nature conversation. It is about creating markets that make some of these protection solutions for nature – turning them into an economic opportunity.

(Mr Koehring talked about an article in the Economist which highlighted the need for these blue carbon markers)

Ultimately this is about bringing these kinds of new innovations, because governance only works to create a framework (for innovation such as blue carbon markers); following this the finance will come in. So, governance can only work in combination with innovation and finance.

On equity

There is a need to bring in voices of indigenous communities into innovation because they are deeply connected to nature. For example, in Kenya, a mangrove forest has been certified by a global certification organization. They are basically selling those carbon credits and this is absolutely vital for such communities; thus, it is important that such communities buy into that solution. Indigenous communities are working with other stakeholders to make sure that this is not just something that is done above communities' heads, but that it is something done with communities. Belize built the world's biggest marine protected area - Eastern tropical Pacific Marine Corridor, and all this is aimed at helping the 30 by 30 goal. There is also the need to bring governance structure into this

COP26 really brought NDCs to life: more than 50 countries from coastal area including an ocean element in the NDC. This is something to really build on as we go into COP27 and COP28. Talking about the sectoral approach, although it is sometimes difficult because it can hinder mainstreaming, is important as well because there is a need to tailor the solutions for the sector. For example, for shipping, there has been a long-standing conversation around decarbonisation. The IMO decarbonization plan is not Paris-compliant, so the Clydebank Declaration at COP26 is aimed at creating this zero carbon shipping lanes. Therefore, it is important to have these sectoral agreements as well as the overarching global initiatives.

The Great Blue Wall Initiative is another way of bringing in these different stakeholders. The IUCN conserved area of categories were used to create this project, but it also includes elements that are linked to climate change, in terms of critical carbon sinks, mangroves, seagrass, coral reefs and so on. These kinds of initiatives are important to connect nature and climate.

Dr Pushp Bajaj, Research Fellow, National Maritime Foundation

Speaking about the challenges associated with the governance, protection and conservation of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) and the high seas: there are financial, technological and logistical challenges that are associated with protection and conservation of marine protected areas. This also takes us to the fact that there are countries which do not have the capacity or the capability to address those challenges in the high seas. Taking the example of India, even with all the capacity that India has, there are no Marine Protected Areas outside the territorial seas of India. There was a talk of a proposal of an area outside India's territorial seas – in the exclusive economic zone – to be designated as a protected area, but it is still in the proposal phase. India also has issues related to trans-boundary conservation of Marine Resources. India has shared maritime expenses with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, and there is very rich biodiversity in those regions. To protect and conserve that biodiversity, there is a need for greater bilateral cooperation, along with multilateral cooperation to protect those areas which are beyond our national jurisdiction and might be in some other country's national jurisdiction.

Most of the countries simply do not have that capacity to implement those Marine Protected Areas in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction. Therefore, the lead has to come from nations that are more equipped to deal with those challenges, which are the developed parts of the world that have the required financial and technological capacity.

On transformations

India is clearly putting more emphasis on oceans and how to protect and conserve ocean resources, as well as how to utilize them in a more sustainable manner. This is clearly visible in India's recent policy decisions: the Maritime India Vision 2030, the Sagar Mala program and also the draft blue economy policy that has come out. India, historically, has not been very successful in bringing all the stakeholders on the table. However, there is optimism in the draft blue economy policy, which speaks about bringing all the stakeholders together in a blue economy committee. This committee would be formulated at the national level, all the different stakeholders will be part of it and will be part of the decision-making process, which shows a step forward. It is certainly different from the Maritime India Vision 2030, which was primarily an initiative of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. This blue economy policy would most likely be a joint effort and will show inputs from all stakeholders that are involved. Doing so at a global scale is much more challenging. Thus, the transformations that are required are in terms of strengthening the existing frameworks, for ocean cooperation. For example, the BIMSTEC, the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the Indo-pacific oceans initiative (announced recently in 2019) – all these frameworks have the potential to increase cooperation when it comes to Ocean Governance and also help in protection and conservation of Marine Biodiversity.

There is a need for the technology, capacity, and capability available across different countries to address this and that also brings in the question of sharing of this knowledge and data and creating frameworks for the same. For example, there is the Information Fusion Center of the Indian Ocean Region, and the European Union's project CRIMARIO which talks about data sharing and enhancing awareness of the maritime domain. We need to contribute to this idea of generating overall awareness of the maritime domain. Although we are aware of the illegal activities that are taking place in the maritime domain – the challenges associated with piracy, illegal, unregulated and unreported phishing – a lot of it is simply too difficult to tackle because of the vast nature of the high seas. It is simply unenforceable for one nation, and certainly not enforceable for a developing country that does not have that kind of capacity to deal with those issues in the high seas. So, these challenge demand cooperation in the scientific arena, in the data sharing arena and also in security arena.

On equity

The Paris Agreement does talk about equity, continuing the notion of common but differentiated responsibilities and different national circumstances. However, if we look at the evolution of this concept, we will certainly appreciate that it has taken a hit from when it started in the 1990s Rio Summit and the Kyoto Protocol. The language has changed quite a bit and those principles of the Kyoto Protocol of CBDR have been diluted successfully – to some extent by the developed countries – and the language has been shifted to incorporate all parties going from the Kyoto protocols Annex one and non-annex one kind of division, to now the Paris agreement which talks about contribution from all parties. All parties should contribute to climate action and there is a responsibility for us to do so, but the evolution tells us that there has been an attempt to dilute this language and it has been successful to some extent. While we have to continue pushing for this idea of a united front of the developing world, there is a need to say that there is historical responsibility on the developed countries, which is much higher than the historical responsibility of the developing countries, therefore, there is a higher kind of accountability which needs to be addressed through the mechanisms that were discussed before – about climate financing, loss and damage and so on. This was aptly brought out by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at COP26, when he asked for developed countries to increase support from USD 100 billion to USD 1 trillion, which is a more commensurate number to help the developing countries come out of the challenges associated with climate change.

Ms. Ashwini Hingne, Senior Manager, Climate program, World Resources Institute India

(Ms Hingne highlighted some key challenges commonly seen these kinds of issues of the Global Commons and the kind of complexities that have made it harder.)

With the climate discourse, even though it is a very typical Commons problem, there has always been a few things that have made it even more complicated. The first is the fact that there is a relative difference in the circumstances of the stakeholders. So whether we look at it from the lens of a historical contribution, or even the current contribution, the fact remains that there are certain actors who have a certain level of development and well-being and there are others who do not even have their basic needs met. So far, there is also a difference in the level of ambition in terms of action, versus the ones who will actually face the brunt of climate impact. The fact is that while there are some whose responsibilities far exceed the impacts they will ever face, there are also those whose ability to act far exceeds that of others. So inherently, there is this difference in the respective circumstances of different stakeholders and the need for them to act as well as manage the impacts of climate change and the other Global Commons.

The second is that most of these impacts are not extremely local or immediate, so the action today will not have an immediate consequence which is visible to the same contributors. This obscures the vision for even the most well-intentioned actors. These are the key reasons why there is a lack of momentum or awareness (as much as it should) and the urgency that is required.

At the same time, over the past several years there are certain shifts that have been taking place which are positive. There is acknowledgment of the differences – be it the way it has been enshrined in the Paris agreement (as imperfectly as it has been implemented) and also the acknowledgment of the need for more support coming in financially as well as in terms of capacities towards the most vulnerable. Again, there is a lot of room for corrective and more efficient action. The second shift is the fact that we are already seeing the impacts of climate change whether it is the heat waves, the floods, or the forest fires. It is no longer something that is far away in the future or is limited to a few geographies. It is happening across the world in the global South as much as in the North and therefore, there is deeper realization of the fact that it is affecting everybody and it is also affecting business. These two key shifts make us hopeful that that the kind of urgency that is required has become more obvious than ever before.

On Transformations

There are a lot of ways in which we could look at these potential transformations: first, is that of scale in terms of both climate change and managing the global oceans, which requires cooperation at the highest levels, at the international level across countries –especially given the differences in situations each one is in. While the Paris agreement builds on some of the design principles which Elinor Ostrom had laid out, she has herself asserted that we cannot wait for change to come from the top. Therefore, even in this space, the pace and scale of change that is needed has to be driven at all levels, not just global and international levels but also national, sub-national and local levels. This is primarily for two reasons: the first is that greater climate action at any level has the potential to create a positive feedback loop; this can essentially simulate greater action and mobilize people even at the international levels (which again then feeds back into greater action at an individual level). One such example is of the states, cities and businesses that continue to stay committed to and in fact, helped ramp up their ambition in the United States and this was despite United States backing out of the Paris agreement in the interim. Eventually the America's pledge movement (as they call themselves) mobilized public support and pushed the discourse in America towards finally reinstating their commitment to the Paris agreement.

The second is that, while most of these actions and initiatives happen at the national level, the impacts are extremely localized – especially to the local communities, coastal regions and the economies that are dependent on them. So corrective actions that are taken even at a national and sub-national level can benefit the people who might be most affected by it. We would see that the kind of developments that are happening in our coastal areas and corrective actions even at that scale, have a potential of safeguarding the people and communities that are dependent on them.

The second important transformation that needs to come about is that any system of cooperation needs to also ensure accountability, without which there is always an issue of the Free Riders that might not act enough, as well as discouraging others who might really want to act. Historically, as we have seen, there has been very little accountability that has been enforced really; be it either the fact that there have been people or there have been major contributors to the global climate crisis or be it defaulters of reduction targets or defaults even on commitments made on finance. This remains one of the key weaknesses of our times. This again translates to the kinds of needs that should be incorporated in any sort of global treaties or initiatives: without real accountability and commensurate penalties, there is very little hope of our collective climate or other goals of the future to be realized. This will mean mobilizing and being accountable for financing, not just things like decarbonization and adaptation, but also looking at things like loss and damage for the climate impacts that are already upon us. It will also require enabling a just transition so that even as climate policies or low carbon policies are implemented, people and communities that might be impacted due to these actions are also taken along and are not left behind. Next is to the need to ensure that adequate consequences to defaulters of their own targets are enshrined, without which there is very little incentive for everyone to act and to avoid Free Riders. The other point is really on enabling inclusive climate action and here, we need to look beyond what needs to be done, on procedural justice and looking at how things need to be implemented; to not talk just about the larger schemes and technological solutions, but also the local governance and policy making processes. As researchers, we also need to identify recommendations and ways in which we can create avenues for engagement with the local communities and vulnerable countries and really bring them and their voices to the platforms. This will inform what is needed to be done, so that the people who are most affected have a say in the decisions that are made. These platforms have to happen again at the local level, at regional levels as well as international level, where people who have the most skin in the game, are the ones who have the real seat at the table and whose voices actually matter.

The final intervention that I had in mind was to create engagement at scale. Now we are seeing the kind of discourse around climate change and has actually reached public consciousness. It is an impact that we are already seeing, but it is also due to engagement with popular figures like Greta Thunberg. Interestingly, there is actually a term called 'Greta Thunberg' effect which says that people who are more familiar with Greta Thunberg have a more stronger sense of collective efficacy – that if they raise their voice, they believe that it will have a consequence and that just encourages people towards more collective actions and towards reducing global warming. It is similar in other commons issues as well, where unless the public and the people at large are engaged with the issue, it may not really find the importance that it deserves. Therefore, it is important as researchers and as a civil society to also engage with different stakeholders in this space; to really build the awareness and take the conversation beyond just public, or heads of states and technical experts.
