



CVHS MUN XVI

UNEP



All position papers should be sent to our committee's email address:

cvhsmununep2023@gmail.com

Position papers due by January 7th 2023 by 11:59. If you have any queries or problems, please contact us via email!

Introduction

Hello delegates! My name is Emily Meyer and I'm super excited to be your UNEP head chair! I'm currently a senior at Capo and have been a part of our MUN program since freshman year. I'm so glad to have joined the program and have met so many great people and gotten tons of different opportunities because of it. Outside of school and MUN I spend most of my time doing dance! I look forward to meeting all of you in January and hope you enjoy the topics!

Hello delegates! My name is Ryan Semaan, and it is my honor to be your UNEP co-chair. Currently, I am a senior at Capo, and have been a part of MUN since my sophomore year. Joining the program was one of the best choices to have made, and it truly was a wonderful way to get together with people, meet new friends, and debate. Outside of school work, I spend a majority of time playing basketball, playing Pokémon and collecting cards, and watching anime. I look forward to our conference in January!

DEFORESTATION AND GLOBAL WARMING- TOPIC SYNOPSIS

I. Background

Deforestation is the process of deliberately removing trees from forested land, allowing space for agricultural purposes, and other human demands. While it is often found taking place



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in tropical regions, deforestation remains a global matter. Trees, through the process of photosynthesis, store carbon dioxide and release oxygen. When deforestation occurs though, the built up carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere and contributes to global warming. It is estimated that deforestation is responsible for fifteen percent of carbon emissions that add to global warming. In comparison, automobiles contribute to approximately fourteen percent of carbon emissions.

Some land has been placed under protection from deforestation, with the highest rate of safeguarded land being in Africa, Europe, and South America. Still though, only eighteen percent of the world's forested land is safe from deforestation. Countries vary on their policies regarding government intervention in deforestation. In the United States, any land that is privately owned (approximately twenty percent) is not under control of federal laws, and is only regulated by state governments.

The issue remains that deforestation has become a staple aspect of many domestic and international economies. Developed countries often use deforestation to clear land for urban expansion, while developing countries have to control population and agricultural growth, as well as a demand for timber by developed countries.

II. UN Involvement

The United Nations Secretary General's Climate Action Summit, in 2014, set an agenda of ten goals to reduce deforestation by 2030. But the declaration was rather ambitious and is estimated to not meet its goals by the projected year. The New York Declaration on Forests has stated that they, "will focus on supporting implementation by existing and new endorsers from key sectors such as finance, non-agricultural industries, and from countries and jurisdictions that are not already represented in the NYDF." Meanwhile, the UNEP has worked on the Green



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Gigaton Challenge with both public and private industries, with hopes of, “closing the [carbon] emission gap.” The initiative is focused on the jurisdictional side of the issue, believing that with such a widespread and substantial problem, solutions need to be met on the same scale.

III. Possible Solutions

There are a variety of complex solutions that can be carried out on numerous levels, depending on a country’s position and economic situation. A main solution would be government regulation. Whether on a federal or more local standpoint, government intervention in placing land completely under protection from deforestation, or setting regulations to limit it, are both steps in the right direction. There is also a need to crack down on illegal wood cutting that is typically done by industries who use wood for fuel. These companies need a substantial amount of wood in order to keep afloat, and flourish under illegal wood cutting.

Solutions can also be brought back to the root causes of the issue. Often overpopulation can lead to the need for expansion into forested land, and needing to clear trees in response. Controlling overpopulation can limit the need for urban growth into these areas.

While alone it is not the strongest solution, education on both deforestation and carbon emissions on global warming, can certainly help. Appropriate programs implemented in schools can be implemented, explaining what deforestation is, along with its causes and effects. Teaching the next generation to be concerned about expanding environmental problems will create more interest in the subject, and solutions in the future.

IV. Questions to Consider

1. How does deforestation play a role in your country's economy?



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2. What is your country's position on carbon emissions and global warming?
3. If your country has limited deforestation, how might its stance and solutions affect other countries?



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THE GREAT PACIFIC GARBAGE PATCH



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I. Background

In the North Pacific Gyre, between Hawaii and California, sits a collection of marine debris called the Great Pacific Garbage Patch (GPGP). While there are various garbage patches located in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, the Great Pacific remains the largest. The patch is in the North Pacific Subtropical Convergence Zone, where cold water from the Arctic meets the warmer waters of the south pacific. The vortex of garbage has formed from four different currents all flowing counterclockwise, creating a calm center, where trash is pulled into and settles. The garbage sits in the middle of the gyre for so long because a majority of it is not biodegradable, commonly including plastic.

The patch has become such a global issue because of its effect on marine life and global warming. Sea animals getting caught in the complexities of pieces of trash is a common issue throughout all oceans that becomes exponentially more intense in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. In addition, the collection of trash blocks sunlight from reaching the water, hurting plankton and algae. It also plays a fair role in global warming. The plastic in the garbage patch eventually gets broken down into chemicals that pollute the atmosphere, as the Earth is getting warmer. While the effects are worldwide, the countries contributing most to the expansion of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch are China and other Asian countries. Most countries, though, play a role in at least one garbage patch around the world.

II. UN Involvement

The UN has spent years of time and money on marine pollution. The Ocean Conference took place in 2017, working with voluntary committees, private corporations, the scientific



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sector, and other community organizations, to work towards a more sustainable ocean in general.

The resulting lockdowns from Coronavirus put more UN Conferences on hold, but one will take place in late June of 2022, in Portugal. The efforts continue to work towards completing the 17 UN Sustainable Goals by 2030.

While the UN will continue to focus on marine pollution as a whole, there has also been focus specifically on the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. The UNEP ran a trial of a system designed to remove the GPGP. The complex creation has a 600 meter long floating deck, and a 3 meter deep attachment. It gets carried by the ocean currents, and picks up trash along the way. This specific model set out from San Francisco, in order to tackle the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, although similar ideas have been previously worked for general ocean clean-up.

III. Possible Solutions

Solutions can be made on a multitude of levels, concerning both current fixes and future prevention. As far as current fixes, contributions to preexisting ocean clean up projects, or initiating one focused on the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, can make a huge difference. The Ocean Clean-up, started in 2013, has grown to be one of the largest marine clean-up programs in the world. Their approach has the possibility of eliminating almost half of the collection of garbage in the GPGP, as well as focusing on rivers that contribute to it. Programs specifically focused on river clean up have proven to be a big help. Research has shown that rivers are responsible for around 80% of all plastic pollution that ends up in the ocean, and possibly gets carried into the GPGP.

Countries also must focus on prevention of new trash into the ocean. Prevention is where the community can really find a place, supported by programs of their countries. Many countries



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don't recycle as much as 90% of their plastic waste, a majority of which ends up in the ocean.

Recycling on a small scale although can build up to create a difference, the largest enemy is big corporations. Getting companies such as Coke, McDonalds, Starbucks, and other global scale businesses behind limiting plastic waste and inducing recycling, can create real results.

IV. Questions to Consider

1. What is your country's specific connection to the Great Pacific Garbage Patch?
2. What has your country done in the past regarding ocean pollution?



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