

# International Environmental Conventions their Objective and Outcomes: A Review

**Mukke V.K.**

Shivneri Science College, Shirur Anantpal, Dist. Latur

## INTRODUCTION

Many of the most promising environmental problems facing humankind today are global problems which need to be addressed on an international front, rather than local issues which can be addressed by individual countries acting alone. For this reason, international environmental law is becoming increasingly important as a tool to counter global environmental problems.

Environmental conventions are the international agreements to protect the environment and preserve natural resources. These conventions focuses on various environmental issues for example climate change, ozone layer protection, air quality, water quality, soil degradation, biodiversity conservation, desertification etc.

International environmental agreements reflect key government policies on important environmental issues and enable countries to work together to address and develop common solution to issues that are global in nature. Countries cannot achieve desired results by acting alone. Countries have increasingly recognized this and have developed a wide range of international environmental agreements to enable them to work together on global environmental issues.

## **HISTORY**

An international environmental agreement or sometimes environmental protocol is a type of treaty binding in international law, allowing them to reach an environmental goal or in other word it is an international document intended as legally binding with a primary stated purpose of preventing or measuring human impacts on natural resources.

An agreement between two nations is known as bilateral environmental agreement. If the agreements are made among three or more nations it is called a multilateral environmental agreement. Such agreements primarily produced by the United Nations, cover subjects such as atmospheric policies, fresh water policies, hazardous waste, the marine environment, nature conservation policies, noise pollution and nuclear safety. The use of multilateral environmental agreements began in 1857. Between 1857 and 2012 a total 747 multilateral environmental agreements have been concluded. Multilateral environmental agreements were popularized by the United Nations. The majority of MEAS have been implemented since year 1972 at the United Nations conference on the Human Environment also recognized as Stockholm conference. The Stockholm declaration was adopted by all 113 countries in attendance at the conference and was the first Universal document of importance on an environmental issue.

Policies surrounding as multilateral environmental agreements are determined by the participating countries. The United Nations and World trade organization key intergovernmental organizations for forging and implementing the agreements.

## **NEED OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONVENTIONS**

- Protection of Environment
- Promotion of Sustainable development

(204)

## Important Terms

**Protocol/Agreement/Treaty:** A legally binding with official written agreement. Establishes right and obligations between each party.

**Ratification:** A state indicates its consent to be bound to a treaty. To enact the necessary legislation to give domestic effect to that treaty. Universal ratification- 197 parties.

**MEA:** A multilateral Environmental Agreement is a convention to which three or more sovereign states are parties. Each party owes the same obligations to all other parties.

**Following are some of the important and recognized environmental treaty or agreement.**

**I. Ramsar Convention (1971):** The convention on wetland of international importance, especially as waterfowl habitat, Ramsar, Iran. This convention is also called as Convention of wetland.

### Objectives:

- Conservation and sustainable utilization of wetlands.
- Stop the encroachment and loss of wetlands.

### Outcomes:

- Working towards the wise use of their wetlands through a wide range of actions.
- Further identification, designation and management of comprehensive suit of sites for the list of wetlands of international importance.
- Cooperating internationally in the delivery of wetland conservation.

**II. Stockholm Conference (1972):**

### Objectives:

- Recognize environmental education as a potential tool to better the lives of many nations.



- Engage the international community in environmental policy debate.

**Outcomes:**

- Environmental education and research
- Renewable resources must be maintained
- Pollution must not exceed environments capacity to clean itself.
- Improve the environment and establish standards.
- Non renewable resources must be shared and not exhausted.

**III. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Nairobi, 1992:** It is a multilateral treaty informally known as biodiversity convention. The convention was opened for signature at Earth Summit in Rio de Janerio on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1992 and entered into force on 29<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1993.

**Objectives:**

- Conservation of biological diversity.
- The sustainable use of the components of biological diversity.
- Fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.

**Outcomes:**

- Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystem, species and genetic diversity.
- Enhance the benefit to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- Reduce the direct pressure on biodiversity and promote sustainable use.

205

**IV. Kyoto Protocol 1997:** The Kyoto protocol is an international treaty which extends in 1992 United Nations Framework convention on climate change that commits state parties to reduce greenhouse gas emission. The Kyoto protocol was adopted in Kyoto, Japan, on 11 December 1997 and entered into force on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2005.

**Objectives:**

- To protect the climate change system for the benefit of present and future generations of mankind.
- To achieve stabilization of green house gas concentration in the atmosphere.

**Outcomes:**

- Enhancing energy efficiency.
- Protecting Green house gas sinks.
- Promoting sustainable agriculture.
- Promoting renewable energy and environmental friendly technologies.
- Tackling transport sector emission.

**V. Montreal Protocol 1987:** The Montreal protocol is an international treaty designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production of ozone depleting substances. It was agreed on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1987, and entered into force on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1989, following the first meeting in Helsinki, May 1989. Since then it has undergone nine revisions.

**Objective:**

- To protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production of ozone depleting substances.

**Outcomes:**

- The ozone hole in Antarctica is slowly recovering.

- Climate projections indicate that the ozone layer will return to 1980 levels between 2050- 2070.

## **VI. United Nation Conference on Sustainable Development-2012:**

### **Objective:**

- Securing renewed political commitment for sustainable development.
- Assessing the progress and implementation gaps.
- Addressing new and emerging challenges.

### **Outcomes:**

- Make UNEP the leading global environmental authority.
- All nations reaffirmed commitments to phase out fossil fuel subsidies
- Outcome document- Future we want.

## **REFERENCES**

[www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com)

[www.ozone.unep.org](http://www.ozone.unep.org)

[www.basel.int](http://www.basel.int)

[www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

[www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int)

[www.sustainable-environment.org.uk](http://www.sustainable-environment.org.uk)

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org>

*Reet*  
Assistant Professor  
Shivneri Mahavidyalaya  
(Arts, Commerce, Science)  
Shirur Anantpal, Dist. Latur