

Protection of the most vulnerable glaciers and ice sheets

I. Background Information

Glaciers are large bodies of ice that take hundreds of years to form. Around 99% of them are found in the polar regions in the form of ice sheets ("continental glaciers").

Glaciers are the biggest freshwater reservoirs on our planet. providing clean drinking water, through rivers to many people living in the valleys between big mountains.

Glaciers are important for scientists as we can study temperature changes throughout time thanks to layers in the ice.

Unfortunately, because of global warming, the ice sheets are melting. If all of them would melt the sea level would rise by a shocking 65 m.

For example, between 2002 and 2021 Greenland shed approximately 280 gigatons of ice per year, causing the global sea level to rise by 0.8 millimeters per year.

But that is not the only problem melting ice sheets would create. As they also trap methane and other greenhouse gases. Which when released would speed up global warming.

II. United Nations Involvement

A report by UNESCO in partnership with IUCN has warned that many UNESCO heritage glaciers will disappear by 2050. According to the report, $\frac{1}{3}$ will disappear regardless of our actions but we can save the 2nd third.

The action that the report calls for is clear- quick reduction of CO₂ emissions to keep the change of temperature to 1,5 celsius compared to the pre-industrial era

III. Questions to Consider

When writing Resolutions, concentrate on the following questions:

- What is my country's official position/stance regarding glaciers' protection?
- Does my country have any glaciers and or ice sheets? If yes, what are they?
- Are there UN actions that your country supported or opposed regarding the topic?
- How do other countries' positions affect your country's position on the residing issue?
- Which aspects of the issue are most important to your country?
- Is there evidence or statistics that help back your country's position?

Concentrate on researching relevant information that applies to your country. You will need to have a firm understanding of your country's policy towards issues. It is essential to have knowledge of prior events, seeing that there could be some sort of connection to be made. Also, familiarizing yourself with other countries' positions is recommended.

IV. Sources and Useful Links

United Nations

- <https://www.un.org/en/site-search?query=glaciers>
- <https://public.wmo.int/en/media/news/glacier-melt-and-arctic-change-affects-globe>
- <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-finds-some-iconic-world-heritage-glaciers-will-disappear-2050>
- <https://public.wmo.int/en/our-mandate/climate/wmo-unfccc-cop/cop27/road-map-for-2025-international-year-of-glaciers>

Problems with melting glaciers

- <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-63655140>
- <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/livelihoods-peril-indigenous-peoples-and-their-rights>
- <https://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/why-are-glaciers-and-sea-ice-melting>

Legislation around the world

- <https://eos.org/opinions/chiles-glacier-protection-law-needs-grounding-in-solid-science>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6230326/>

Data and monitoring

- <https://www.usgs.gov/faqs/what-are-impacts-glacier-loss-other-losing-aesthetic-landscape-feature#publications>
- <http://nsidc.org/greenland-today/>