

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar would like to applaud the attention brought to the critical issue of climate change, and stresses that measures must be enacted for the betterment of the region's socioeconomic status and the health of the populations. Climate change, while being a topic that is regularly discussed among large industrial nations, takes a personal toll on countries that are far excluded from the negative contributions to the environment. Instead, countries such as Myanmar, while emitting the lowest rates in carbon emission, receive the blunt end of the effects, with little infrastructure or ability to combat climate change. As an active advocate for strengthening policies and platforms against climate change, Myanmar strives to implement environmentally friendly business models and infrastructure in this developing nation, while encouraging larger world players to adopt stronger climate change policies, for the betterment of all individuals.

Myanmar has been consecutively ranked as the second most vulnerable country in the world in regards to extreme weather conditions.¹ In the past few decades, the country has seen an increase in temperatures, increase in total rainfall, a decrease in the duration of some monsoon seasons, and increases in the severity and frequency of extreme weather events such as cyclones, floods, strong rains, extreme temperatures, and drought.¹ In addition, much of Myanmar's employment and income is dependent on agriculture, forestry, and natural resources, which remain as highly climate-sensitive sectors, leading to loss of economic productivity.² Much of the population lives in the costal region, causing damaging impacts to infrastructure and the loss of lives with cyclones and tsunamis.² Myanmar also at risk for further impacts by climate change due to the increasing levels of deforestation occurring in the region.² These impacts have put the population at risk through lower standards of living, the spread of disease, and loss of habitable land.² High poverty levels and limited capital are affecting the rates that Myanmar can respond to climate change, and thus climate change is impacting the socio-economic development of the country on nearly all levels.¹

Myanmar recognizes the impact of climate change in this region and has actively attempted to mitigate its effects through policies emphasizing environmentally friendly approaches. In Myanmar's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution-IND C, in preparation for the Paris Agreement in 2015, Myanmar outlined the contributions to combatting climate change that it aims to take.² Myanmar urges for the incorporation of the environmental consciousness into policy decisions, particularly in regards to economic development, as this focus has been embedded into the seven strategic pillars of the National Comprehensive Development Plan.² As a developing nation, guidelines and restrictions for the development of the nation include a focus on renewable energy resources, sustainable infrastructure plans, capacity building, and protections on climate-change fragile economic sectors.² One particular focus is to equip fragile economic sector, such as agriculture with the means to adapt to the harsh realities of climate change.¹ Myanmar has developed a Myanmar Climate Change Alliance (MCCA) that serves this purpose, and works as a platform to integrate critical climate change reform and development into political agenda with the support of global partners.³

Additionally, Myanmar strongly calls for the protection of natural lands and reductions in the increasing deforestation rates. Myanmar proudly serves as a current carbon sink, as it holds the largest amount of forest land-cover in South East Asia, serving to reduce the output of carbon in the environment, and thus absorbing more greenhouse gasses than it emits.² Protecting these lands by maintaining 40% of the country's total area as forests, and strongly encouraging other countries to protect their forestry, serves as one of Myanmar's top priorities and as a direct contribution to global efforts.²

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Myanmar serves as a snapshot of other countries in the South East Asian region. While being a small country in capacity, Myanmar recognizes that large changes often come from the buildup of small contributions and smaller players. Myanmar hopes to serve as an example of how a country with a personally minuscule greenhouse gas emission can still contribute to the strides made in combatting climate change and empowering developing nations to voice these concerns and seek change for the better. The country hopes to increase the adaptive capacity of its vulnerable sectors and the population to extreme weather conditions. Myanmar is eager to work with the global community to support climate change measures, and create opportunities for internal sectors to pursue growth and development through a low carbon development pathway, to aid both economic productivity and the environment in a conscious manner.

1. National Environmental Conservation Committee, Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry *Myanmar's National Adaption Programme of Action (NAPA) To Climate Change*. (2012)
2. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar. *Myanmar's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution-IND C*. (2015)
3. Myanmar Climate Change Alliance (2017). <http://myanmarccalliance.org/en/about-mcca/>.