

## **SUMMARY of the Article “COP in Pakistan,” Aisha Khan, Dawn, August 19th, 2024**

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The article addresses the pressing need for effective climate governance in Pakistan, emphasizing the challenges of policy implementation after the 18th Amendment. Despite the existence of comprehensive policies like the National Climate Change Policy 2021 and the National Water Policy 2018, there is a significant gap between policy formation and implementation due to weak institutional structures and unclear responsibilities. The 18th Amendment has decentralized climate governance, leading to each province developing its own climate policies, but without a strong mechanism for the federal government to enforce these at the provincial level. The Pakistan Climate Act 2017, which aimed to enhance the capacity of the Ministry of Climate Change and foster coordination between the center and provinces, has been slow to operationalize, raising concerns about procedural inefficiency. The article highlights the lack of human capital and merit-based recruitment as major obstacles to effective climate action, leading to a critical capacity crisis. To address these challenges, the writer proposes the establishment of an annual Conference of the Parties (COP) within Pakistan, modeled after the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. This domestic COP would facilitate coordinated climate action, enhance transparency, and hold stakeholders accountable. The article also stresses the importance of judicial and parliamentary oversight in ensuring that climate policies are not undermined by vested interests, urging Pakistan to move beyond mere policy formulation to actionable implementation to combat the escalating climate crisis.

## ***Easy/Short SUMMARY:***

The article discusses the need for better climate policy implementation in Pakistan. Despite having good policies, there is a big gap between making these policies and actually putting them into action. The 18th Amendment made it difficult because climate governance was decentralized, and now each province has its own policy. The Pakistan Climate Act 2017 was supposed to help with coordination but has been slow to get started. The article suggests having a yearly COP (Conference of the Parties) in Pakistan to bring everyone together to talk about climate issues and make sure actions are taken. The writer also mentions that the government and courts need to keep a close watch to ensure climate policies are followed.

## ***SOLUTIONS of The Problem:***

### **Strengthen Institutional Coordination**

Enhance collaboration between federal and provincial governments to ensure that national climate policies are effectively implemented across all provinces.

### **Implement Merit-Based Recruitment**

Prioritize merit in hiring processes to build a team with the technical expertise required for effective climate governance.

### **Establish a National COP**

Organize an annual domestic COP in Pakistan to bring together all stakeholders, discuss climate issues, and monitor progress on provincial and national commitments.

### **Enhance Monitoring and Reporting**

Develop a robust system for monitoring, reporting, and verification of climate actions to ensure accountability and transparency in policy implementation.

## **Increase Judicial and Parliamentary Oversight**

Strengthen the role of the judiciary and parliament in overseeing climate governance to prevent policy derailment by vested interests.

## **Leverage International Frameworks**

Adopt and customize international frameworks like the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to guide national climate action.

## **Build Human Capital**

Invest in capacity-building programs to develop the necessary human capital for effective climate governance.

## **Foster Public-Private Partnerships**

Encourage collaboration between government agencies and private sectors to leverage resources and expertise for climate action.

## **Strengthen Local Governance**

Empower local governments with the tools and resources needed to address climate challenges at the grassroots level.

## **Promote Civic Engagement**

Engage civil society in climate governance to ensure that policies reflect the needs and priorities of the communities most affected by climate change.

## ***IMPORTANT Facts and Figures Given in the article:***

- The National Climate Change Policy 2021 and other sectoral policies exist but are not effectively implemented.

- The 18th Amendment has decentralized climate governance in Pakistan, leading to provincial climate policies.
- The Pakistan Climate Act 2017 was delayed in operationalization.
- The lack of human capital and merit-based recruitment is a significant obstacle to climate action.
- The article suggests an annual COP in Pakistan to improve coordination and accountability.

## ***MCQs from the Article:***

### ***1. What amendment made climate policy implementation difficult in Pakistan?***

- A. 14th Amendment
- B. 18th Amendment
- C. 21st Amendment
- D. 25th Amendment

### ***2. Which policy aims to address climate change in Pakistan?***

- A. National Water Policy 2018
- B. National Food Security Policy
- C. National Climate Change Policy 2021
- D. Disaster Risk Reduction Policy

### ***3. What year was the Pakistan Climate Act enacted?***

- A. 2015
- B. 2016
- C. 2017
- D. 2018

### ***4. What is proposed to improve climate governance in Pakistan?***

- A. Increase taxes on carbon emissions
- B. Create more policies

C. Establish a domestic COP

D. Build more dams

### **5. What is a significant challenge to climate governance mentioned in the article?**

A. Lack of resources

B. Lack of merit-based recruitment

C. Overpopulation

D. Political instability

## **VOCABULARY:**

1. *Escalate* (verb) (تصاعد): To increase in extent, intensity, or magnitude.
2. *Sectoral* (adjective) (صنعتی): Relating to a distinct part or sector of society.
3. *Amendment* (noun) (تصحیح): A change or addition to a legal or statutory document.
4. *Robust* (adjective) (مضبوط): Strong and healthy; vigorous.
5. *Affix* (verb) (چسبانے): To attach, stick, or fasten something to something else.
6. *Procurement* (noun) (خرید): The action of obtaining or acquiring something.
7. *Ostensibly* (adverb) (ظاهری): As appears or is stated to be true, though not necessarily so; apparently.
8. *Sub-national* (adjective) (ذیلی قومی): Below the level of the national government.
9. *Modalities* (noun) (طریقہ): A particular mode in which something exists or is experienced or expressed.
10. *Convene* (verb) (ملاقات): To bring together for a meeting or activity; assemble.
11. *Vigilance* (noun) (نظر): The action or state of keeping careful watch for possible danger or difficulties.
12. *Mitigation* (noun) (کٹوتی): The action of reducing the severity, seriousness, or painfulness of something.
13. *Adaptation* (noun) (تکامل): The process of change by which an organism or species becomes better suited to its environment.

14. *Compliance* (noun) (مطابقت): Conforming to a rule, such as a specification, policy, standard, or law.
15. *Stakeholders* (noun) (مشاركين): A person with an interest or concern in something, especially a business.
16. *Respective* (adjective) (متميز): Belonging or relating separately to each of two or more people or things.
17. *Equitable* (adjective) (عادل): Fair and impartial.
18. *Inclusive* (adjective) (شمول): Including all the services or items normally expected or required.
19. *Derail* (verb) (خارج المسار): To cause to fail or become deflected from a purpose.
20. *Vested* (adjective) (مستثمر): Secured in the possession of or assigned to a person.

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**COP in Pakistan**  
**Aisha Khan**

AS the climate crisis continues to escalate, the pressure to implement sectoral policies will also increase. It is often said that climate change is multi-sectoral therefore making it difficult to implement policies after the 18th Amendment. However, beyond that no mention is made of how to bridge the gap between policy and implementation, affix responsibility, monitor progress and make systemic functions robust and accountable. It has become common practice to identify problems and attribute inaction to lack of finance, capacity and technology without examining the core issues responsible for slow progress or taking action to make policy implementable.

All the major sectors affected by climate change have a policy that serves as the guiding document for coping with emerging threats. The National Climate Change Policy 2021, National Water Policy 2018, National Food Security Policy and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy are comprehensive documents that outline the challenges and provide a roadmap for action. The implementation frameworks provide targets and timelines but fall short of sharing means of implementation or any mechanism for monitoring, reporting and verification.

The institutional arrangement in climate governance after the 18th Amendment raises many questions. The fundamental question of responsibility stands diluted. Every province has developed its own climate change policy with place-based and people-centred priorities. While ostensibly sub-national policies feed into the National Climate Change Policy, there is no mechanism under which the centre can demand timely implementation from the provinces.

The Pakistan Climate Act, 2017, was designed to strengthen the technical capacity of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, build capacity of provincial stakeholders and provide a forum for discussion between the centre and the provinces for coordinated action. After a delay of seven years, the notification for operationalising the Climate Authority was done at the behest of the Supreme Court but questions about procedural due diligence still remain.

The country can no longer afford inaction on climate.

The lack of human capital and short-changing the system in procurement are two



big hurdles. Recruitment routinely ignores merit. This has caused a steady decline in functions and now reached a point where we are confronted with a critical capacity crisis. In climate governance, the world has moved into a domain where technical qualification, subject specific knowledge and quality research is needed to address challenges. This was the fundamental objective of creating a provision for setting up a 'Climate Authority' under the Climate Act. However, if roles are not assigned on merit, it will become another white elephant providing people with high salaries for low performance.

In order to improve coordination, build consensus, and enhance transparency and accountability, developing a customised model of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would be useful. An annual COP in the country will bring all stakeholders together to discuss country climate issues and how best to agree on an agenda of solutions. The Paris rule book can serve as the toolkit for steering the process.

The modalities and responsibilities of the parties can be developed once the concept is actualised and representative bodies identified. Hosting an annual COP in Pakistan will allow for a systemic review of policies and compliance with 'Pro-vincially Determined Contributions' that feeds into the Nationally Determined Contributions. The issues of mitigation, adaptation, finance and means of implementation can also be discussed at this annual convening, making the process both tra-nsparent and accountable with 'Com-mon but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities' for developing an equitable and inclusive roadmap that leaves no one behind.

In 2016, Pakistan had also signed the Open Government Partnership at the Paris Summit but that agreement, too, fell by the wayside. The OGP offered the perfect tool for strengthening good governance by co-creating policies with agreement on priority actions between civil society and sector-specific government agencies. This parti-

cipatory approach to development would have made it possible to create collective ownership and a transparent mechanism for monitoring progress.

However, with mounting threats, the cou-ntry can no longer afford inaction on climate.





## SUMMARY of the Article COP in Pakistan by Aisha Khan, Dawn

The judiciary in Pakistan has always taken a proactive stance on climate justice, upholding human rights. The best way forward is to enhance parliamentary oversight and increase judicial vigilance to ensure that the system is not derailed by vested interest groups.

The writer is chief executive of the Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change.

aisha@csccec.org.pk

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