DOI: 10.51149/ROEA.1.2021.6

The Climate Crisis as a Global Challenge: Preliminary Remarks on the Big Powers' Perspective

Małgorzata Wilkowska

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW, EMAIL: MAWILKOWSKA95@GMAIL.COM ORCID: 0000-002-0325-0713

Abstract

This article focuses on the history of actions taken by various countries, organizations, and scientists from around the world. The most crucial part is to understand the beginning of the process called 'climate crisis' and the statements from world's biggest polluters and power leaders. One the one hand, countries like the United States and China are the ones who are the most responsible for the current situation that the world is in. On the other, it is necessary to look more closely at the EU's statements about climate change and the reason for the slow climate diplomacy followed by legal actions that never had any sanctions. Nevertheless, the importance of European Union and its role in the process of creating a place for discussion can't be denied. It is said by many climate researchers that the lack of punishment for countries who were not fulfilling obligations to key documents such as the Paris Agreement from 2015 is one of the biggest reasons for the overall failure of the joint actions to stop climate destruction. The main problem was, and still is, based around how to combine industrial growth with ecologically-friendly methods. There should be no higher value than the state of the world's health but clearly for some, money is the bigger virtue. By reading this article, the author encourages the reader to change their perspective on how to earn, spend, and invest money so that the environment can thrive.

Key words: climate change, climate, European Union, climate awareness, climate diplomacy.

Introduction

The climate has always been the biggest challenge facing all life on Earth. All living things needed to adapt to various temperatures in order to survive. For decades, Earth was able to handle hundreds of thousands of species until the moment when the human race started to develop more technologies with the usage of fossil fuels. At first it was a revolutionary moment for all of the manufacturing and production industries along with living mechanisms. However it was not so long ago that people realized its consequences. We, as the most intelligent creatures on this planet, surely cannot lead to Earth's destabilization and, furthermore, to human extinction. Many organizations, countries, and independent researchers warned societies of the dangers decades ago and very few have listened. Among those who did listen was European Union which decided to lead the process of climate action and also to be a remarkable leader in this regard. It has inspired many to fight for the climate and unite in order to secure the future of the coming generations. Some still do not accept the fact that we humans are the ones responsible for the extreme changes in the

Earth's atmosphere and have tried to deny this for as long as possible. Big companies have never been in a favorable position to accept the fact that the way they produce and/or transport things must be changed. Only because of the fact that many nations have united and started a dialogue about the climate can we could hope for things to improve. The only way to overcome this crisis and change for the better is for every country to collectively work on the same ground and generate important help for those who are not as big as others. Powers such as China, the USA, the EU, and India should be giving setting an example and, thankfully, most of them actually do so. This is a crucial moment which will decide the future of our planet and that is why it is necessary to look at the history of climate diplomacy and current actions in order to fully understand their roles for the human race.

The World's Action in the Fight Against Climate Change

In the year 2019, the world had the dubious pleasure of getting to know first-hand how dangerous rapid changes in the weather are. These were changes which brought record fires in Australia (Disaster Philanthropy 2019) and the second largest wildfires in history in the American west. As a result of the fires in the San Francisco area, this region was placed at the top of the list of places with the worst air quality in the world in early September 2020 (World's Air Pollution: Real-time Air Quality Index 2020). Last year was definitely not conducive to the development of climate diplomacy due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has prevailed around the world since the beginning of that year. For this reason, many climate events and summits, such as COP-26, were postponed to the following year. However, this did not slow down the work of international, regional, and non-governmental organizations which, in the first half of 2020 drew up a lot of documents and reports on the global climate situation (Yale Climate Connections 2020). It is crucial to mention that all of the climate negotiation meetings and summits have been postponed but not the work of subsidiary bodies such as the SBI¹ and SBSTA². The biggest of the documents and articles they created are:

- 1. The First National Flood Risk Assessment: Defining America's Growing Risk Created by Flood Modelers,
- State of the Climate 2019: Special Supplement to the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society, edited by J. Blunden and D.S. Arndt,
- The World Water Development Report 2020: Water and Climate Change, created by UN Water, UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization 2020,
- 4. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020: Transforming Food Systems for Affordable Healthy Diets, created by FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and the WHO,
- 5. The WHO's Global Strategy on Health, Environment, and Climate Change: The Transformation Need to Improve Lives and Wellbeing through Healthy Environments, published by the WHO,
- 6. The 2035 Report: Plummeting Solar, Wind, and Battery Costs Can Accelerate Our Clean Electricity Future, made by Sonia Aggarwal and Mike O'Boyle,
- 7. Defending Tomorrow: The Climate Crisis and Threats Against Land and Environmental Defenders, by Global Witness.

These are just a few of the most important documents issued last year that highlight the effects of greenhouse gases accumulated over decades from various sources of human activity. Scientist Henry Fountain (New York Times 2020) reported in many of his 2019 articles about the possibility of unpredictable storms, heat waves as well as melting glaciers and ice sheets, but he did not predict that these phenomena would accelerate rapidly in the first few months of 2020. According to him, the key point in understanding the effects of climate change is the Arctic, which was melting a few months ago (New York Times April 2020). This is

¹ SBI stands for Subsidiary Body for Implementation, and its work has been at the heart of all implementation issues under the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol, and more recently the Paris Agreement.

² The SBSTA is one of two permanent subsidiary bodies to the Convention established by the COP/CMP. It supports the work of the COP, the CMP and the CMA through the provision of timely information and advice on scientific and technological matters as they relate to the Convention, its Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.

not a completely unusual phenomenon, as since the mid-1990s this process has started to gain momentum faster than in other regions of the world. Last year, the air temperature was 1.9°C higher than the average from 1981-2010 in the Arctic region (Climate.gov).

Is this, then, an inevitable course of events? A kind of consequence of the ancestors of the Industrial Revolution? On one hand, yes, on the other, it is not quite like that. First of all, in those days, people were very focused on the development and continuous discovery of new, technological solutions in order to be able to develop as entire countries and nations. The problem arises when a person acknowledges the existence of consequences and decides not to do anything about them. According to many scientists, the vears of 1979-1989 were the decade when mankind first understood the causes and effects of climate change. At that time, every effort had to be made to ensure security against the destabilizing effects such as extreme weather events that are inherent in climate change and avoid what all countries have to struggle with on a daily basis. Climate-change-based talks really started much earlier then several decades ago and its original name is considered to be "global warming". Discovered over 100 years ago by the Swedish scientist Svante Arrhenius³ and described in his work from 1896, he made independent calculations which show that human activity can, through carbon dioxide emissions, significantly contribute to the warming of the Earth, However, the scientists of the time did not look favorably on Arrhenius' accomplishments; only Thomas Chamberlin publicly confirmed the calculations of his work. Moreover, in the 1940s it was confirmed by research findings on the influence of the Earth's orbital shifts on the appearance and disappearance of ice ages. Others, on the other hand, have refuted the theory that human behavior contributes to climate change by arguing with astronomical and geological forces. At all costs, efforts were made to dissuade humanity from understanding the impact of its destructive activities on the Earth. It has also been claimed that all of Earth's oceans have a kind of "super capacity" to equalize the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and thus that it is able to absorb pollutants generated by humans.

This type of narration lasted until the 1940s, when infrared research was used to measure long-wave radiation. Until then, it had been believed that CO² was blocking the transmission of long-wave infrared radiation that is emitted by the Earth⁵. Based on this claim, it was believed that even a small amount of CO² could completely block that type of radiation, and any additional amount of carbon dioxide would not change anything. At the same time, a similar study ranked water vapour as having the same "blocker" position as CO².

It was only during WW2 when a significant improvement in technology came about and thus a revision of the approach to the old measurements of capturing radiation by carbon dioxide. Consequently, it was proved that an increase in the CO² level translates into an increase in radiation absorption, and therefore the theory of the "good" CO² effect was refuted. Then, thanks to this research, it was found that water vapour is absorbent, but to completely different types of radiation than carbon dioxide, and thus the stratosphere was found to be completely devoid of water vapour. This change shows that climate issues were not a fashionable movement, but a science-based result to the changing environment.

Towards the end of the 1950s, Charles Keeling contributed to the next big step in the debate on global warming. He measured the CO² concentration in the atmosphere in Antarctica and Mauna Loa. His research showed that from 1958 the CO² curve rose alarmingly, making it a symbol of global warming. Back then, the climate was misinterpreted by scientists in that it was supposed to cool rather than warm up. During this period, interest in the subject of climate change grew significantly for many important reasons. Firstly, scientists had continually improving equipment thanks to which they could take measurements that their

³ Svante Arrhenius Swedish chemist and physicist, one of the founders of physical chemistry. In 1896, Arrhenius completed laborious numerical calculations that suggested that halving the amount of CO² in the atmosphere could reduce Europe's temperature by about 4-5°C, that is, by the Ice Age.

⁴ S. Arrhenius knew that if the industry continued to burn fuel at the current rate (1896), it could take around three thousand years for CO² to be high. The oceans were the one thing that held back growth. By a simple calculation, seawater would absorb 5/6 of each additional gas. (This is roughly true for a long period of many thousands of years, but Arrhenius did not realize that if the gas was emitted faster than expected, ocean absorption could be delayed.) Another highly respected scientist, Walter Nernst, even fantasized about setting fire to useless coal seams to release enough CO² to intentionally warm the Earth's climate.

predecessors had no chance to take. Among other things, sediments from the bottom of the seas and glacial cores were studied. The General Circulation Model (GCM) was created and finally began to take into account the effects of aerosols and clouds on the global climate.

- Firstly, the first environmental movements began to occur in the 1960s, especially in the US, Canada, and Great Britain in opposition to the consumption economy. One particular event at the end of that decade contributed hugely to an increase in environmental awareness: the now-iconic image of the Earth as seen from space in 1969,
- 2. The Club of Rome Limits to Growth report from 1972,
- 3. The nuclear reactor accident at Three Miles Island in 1979,
- 4. The 1986 Chernobyl nuclear reactor accident,
- 5. 1989's ExxonValdez oil tanker spill,
- 6. Reports by the British Antarctic Authority in 1985 on ozone depletion over Antarctica.

These events gave rise to what can be recognized today in those legal consequences established to prevent the excessive consumption and destruction of the Earth by humans. The dates of the conclusion of international agreements in the field of environmental management are the moments that formed the next stages of the fight against climate change. It was carried out using documents such as:

- 1. The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, 1985,
- The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer in 1987 with the 1990 London Supplements and the 1992 Copenhagen Protocol.

It was not until the 1980s that the world's temperature curve began to rise so rapidly that the global glaciation theory could no longer be pushed through. It was then when the concept of global warming really took off. If one wants to set a date for the birth of the climate movement, its very beginning should be taken as the moment when the issue entered the public's mind and could no longer be ignored, which was 1988. However, the beginning of official talks at the political level is recognized as early as 1972, when the United Nations conference on the human environment was held. It was the first major UN conference on this issue and was a turning point in the development of international environmental policy. It should be noted that the first scientific breakthroughs proving that the burning of coal warms the planet were made in the late 1950s. However, one should look at the chronology of these events and the level of commitment from different sides.

The Important Role of the European Union

The European Union is recognized as one of the most important global actors if we consider this creation as a whole, because if the Member States were taken into account individually, it would not be such an impressive counterbalance to the other global powers which are, namely, China, the USA, India and some also include Indonesia and Brazil. However, the EU was the first of all the players mentioned which decided to fight climate change, and it all started in the 1990s and climate change has since become the main point of the European Union's policy in international relations. The changing climate is the greatest threat to the existential coherence of all possible societies around the world, as was already proved at the Fourth IPCC Meeting in 2007.

At the European level, climate change has become the main topic regularly discussed by the European Council of EU Heads of State and Government. In the international arena, this problem has become one of "high politics". In 2007, it was the highest priority of the G8 Summit, and the UN Security Council itself and the UN General Assembly included this important thread in their plans. Overall, there are hardly any high-level political meetings conducted without these issues being discussed.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the European Union has gained a leading position in the area of combating greenhouse gas emissions, global environmental management (including paying special attention to the protection of the ozone layer), biotechnology, biodiversity, and other United Nations agencies. The European Union will, unfortunately, lose its leadership on this issue to China over time (more on this below). Between 1990 and 2012, the EU reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 19%, while economic growth

reached 45%. As a result, the intensity of greenhouse gas emissions (the ratio of emissions to GDP units) has decreased by almost half here in the EU. All Member States have seen a remarkable disappearance of the link between economic growth and emissions growth (Europe Direct).

Since the start of negotiations on a climate change convention in 1991, the EU has secured its position as an international leader committed to a rigorous policy of shared commitments. During the negotiations of the convention, the EU (unsuccessfully) supported binding emission reduction targets for industrialized countries. In the negotiations for the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, the EU proposed the deepest cuts in emissions and accepted the highest reduction target of any major industrialized country (-8 percent) (S.Oberthür, 2008). The EU also supported a call to ensure the "environmental integrity" of the protocol, calling for priority for national action and limits on the use of forests and other carbon sinks. Then, based on the independent commitment of the European Council in March 2007 on reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 in the European Union by 20% compared to 1990 levels, the EU was the main driving force behind the launch of negotiations on a post-2012 global climate agreement agreed by the parties to the Framework Convention of the Nations United States on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Bali in December 2007 (Research Gate).

Despite its efforts, the EU has had a relatively limited influence on the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. For example, the architecture of the Kyoto Protocol was heavily influenced by the United States, but the EU's leadership achievements were more impressive in the 21st century. After the Bush administration announced its opposition to the Kyoto Protocol in March 2001, the Union played a vital role in saving it. In particular, the EU ensured an agreement on The Marrakesh Accords of 2001, which contain implementing provisions for the Protocol, and played a key role in ensuring the Protocol's entry into force.

On one hand, the Union points to the advantages of its climate assistance programs and shows how the data on the graphs change, while on the other hand, it decides to continue activities that clearly contribute to increasing climate change. Moreover, at no point in the entire report does it mention how much France's energy policy differs from the rest of the Union's and how 75% of France's energy comes from nuclear power plants. It does not bode well for reaching an agreement on this issue and creating a common voice on energy in the European Union.

The USA and the Climate

The United States has always aspired to be the greatest power in the world. After the collapse of the USSR in 1991, there was still no new rival on the horizon, thanks to which the USA became the undisputed world leader. At the beginning of the 1990s, there was no indication that this position could be endangered in any way.

During this period, the European Union was just beginning its path to integrating almost the entire continent while Russia was undergoing a huge political and economic transformation, and China was only treated as an outside player in terms of being a superpower. The times in question coincide with the publishing of "The End of History and the Last Man" by Francis Fukuyama (Fukuyama, 1991), who proclaimed in his book the victory of the American vision of democracy and liberalism. Conversely, the American columnist Charles Krauthammer referred to this state as a unipolar moment, i.e. a unipolar moment which was expressed by the fact that the United States, despite the existence of second-rank powers (such as Germany, France, Great Britain or Japan, which were not taken into account at the time) has become an undisputed superpower and the center of a world power in a unipolar order.

In later years, America was subjected to numerous trials, such as the First Gulf War, the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11th, 2001, and the US aggression against Afghanistan and Iraq under the common slogan of the "war on terror." These events definitely undermined the position of the US as a superpower, but one of the factors which, it can be assumed, contributed significantly to the loss of face of the world's only superpower was the withdrawal of the United States from the Kyoto provisions, announced by then president George W. Bush on June 11th, 2001.

A clear declaration of non-cooperation on an issue that had become the most global, unifying theme for all countries since the 1990s, was an obvious and inevitable collapse in the role of a superpower. Not much

has changed since then in America's approach to the fight to protect the climate. Barack Obama's tenure as president aside, we can speak of a clear denial of the problem which nowadays is beginning to become more aggressive and unpredictable in its consequences. The United States, despite being one of the signatories to the Kyoto Protocol, has never really ratified it. In 1997, the US Senate voted unanimously that the country should not be a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol. The protocol is non-binding until the party decides to ratify it, which the last 4 presidents of America have not done. Some had greater ambitions for the fight for the climate, others strongly opposed it.

In the case of the United States, as already mentioned, we can say that there was a definite period of stagnation in the early 1990s, with a temporary awakening during the Obama presidency, to the very recent past in which no one pretended to be interested in the problem, in which no one pretends to be interested in the problem anymore. America has had many presidents, but not all of them paid due attention to climate protection. A brief look at how the past presidents of United States governed over the climate issue is needed.

Most of the previous Commanders-in-Chief took some measures to try and prevent further crises, including Theodore Roosevelt who established the United States Forest Service (Forest Service). Roosevelt actually became the patron of the national park that bears his name and which is home to the Grand Canyon. The first-ever Earth Day was celebrated during Richard Nixon's second term (American Library), just days before he signed the Environmental Law requiring federal agencies to submit environmental impact statements. Its executive orders established the EPA, i.e. the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and NOAA - the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - and Nixon also signed the Clean Air Act of 1970 (Science History) which regulates emissions from industrial and mobile sources. Jimmy Carter installed solar panels on the White House and, in the final days of his presidency, he finally pushed through two major accounts: one protected 104 million acres of land in the Alaska Wasteland; the second created the Superfund program, which cleaned up nearly 400 toxic sites. The Commander-in-Chief most associated with fighting for the climate is Barack Obama who, during his presidency, set a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 26 to 28 percent below levels up to 2025. Donald Trump, however, almost made all the effort worthless; his biggest "contribution" was the fact that he initiated the process of withdrawing the US from the Paris Climate Treaty (Carbon Brief 2020), an agreement signed by nearly all nations to reduce fossil fuel emissions.

China and the Climate

The greatest power in the world, which has undoubtedly had a huge impact on compounding the climate change issue and, at the same time, was able to reverse their effects in its country in the most expedient of ways is, of course, China, which, thanks to its rapidly developing economy, has gained the status of a superpower.

China's transformation over the last four decades has meant not only unimaginable economic growth for China, but also a complete change in the balance of power in the world and a huge contribution to the emission of CO² and methane to the atmosphere (Góralczyk, 2018). It is the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, responsible for approximately 27% of global greenhouse gas emissions (Climate Tracker, China, 2020). The actions taken by China have a huge impact on the the entire globe's situation precisely because of the considerable size and location of the country. Its huge size covers over 9 million square meters of land, and is inhabited by almost 1.4 billion people (The World Bank, China, 2020). The United States is not much larger than China, but in terms of population the difference is stark; China's population is almost 4 times greater in size.

However, with its tremendous development came many side effects and problems that nobody wanted to face at first. In addition to a high level of social stratification, a very high level of corruption and a very low level of per capita income, there is the fundamental problem of environmental devastation. Major development is associated with high energy consumption from various sources. It is an age-old problem: how do we reconcile economic development with respect for the environment and energy, or rather the sources from which it is derived? However many negatives have quickly arisen from the rapid construction of the Chinese economy, it is apparent that China is trying to fix those issues just as quickly. Chinese scientists and rulers are aware of the consequences of their actions and the need to change as quickly as possible which, arguably, makes them rather a rare group on the global stage.

It is also known that what is happening in China affects the whole world, such is the scale of the actions of this world's largest superpower (WorldOMeters 2020). For this reason, China undertakes many initiatives to reverse the effects of the climate's transformation as effectively as possible. In 1990, the National Coordination Group for Climate Change was established. In the following years, China participated in global negotiations aimed at establishing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In 1992, Prime Minister Li Peng attended the Rio Earth Summit and signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (United Press International 1992). The tenth edition of the fiveyear plan, covering the period 2001-2005, was the first to mention climate change, and was the Chinese government's commitment to tackling climate change and other global environmental problems (Y. Qi, 2013). In 2002, China ratified the Kyoto Protocol. In the following years, they began to actively participate in Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects. In 2005, the National People's Congress passed the Renewable Energy Act, which set national targets for renewable energy and established feed-in tariffs for renewable energy (Setnsdal, 2014). The next edition of the five-year plan for the period 2011-2015 was the first to include clear targets for climate change. This plan contained a whole separate chapter on climate change. PM Peng called for a 17% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions per unit. Chinese leader Xi Jinping in September 2020 pledged that his country want to be a "responsible stakeholder" in the fight against climate change. What's also notable is that at the Climate Ambition Summit held in December 2020, he spoke of his goal for China to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060 (CNBC 2020).

Conclusions

At the moment, there are two major projects in the world which are pursuing a low-carbon economy. On December 1st, 2019, the authorities in the EU structures changed. Charles Michel, former Prime Minister of Belgium, and Ursula von der Leyen, the new Head of the European Commission, became the new faces of EU leadership that has come up with two most important projects. On 4th March 2020, the Commission adopted its proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 (European Climate Law) (Discussion Paper on European Climate Law, 2021). The proposal aims to set into legislative stone the objective of a climate-neutral EU which was endorsed by the European Council in its conclusions of 12th December 2019. The European Union encourages its own members and other global actors to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. This means that the amount of greenhouse gases emitted will be zero, or they will be collected so that the overall balance is zero. The second important project comes in the form of the European Green Deal. It provides a necessary action plan to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a green economy. One of the main aspects is to restore and preserve biodiversity as well as to cut pollution (European Commission). A similar type of green deal has been proposed by the Democrats in the United States and is called the Green New Deal (New York Times). This proposal calls on the federal government to wean the United States from fossil fuels and curb planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions across its economy. It also aims to guarantee new, high-paying jobs in clean-energy industries. Both initiatives place particular emphasis on the development of solar energy technology. According to the calculations of UN agencies, solar energy is very efficient and logically feasible for everyone to adopt. The latest initiative to fight climate change, just announced in January 2021, is called the "New European Bauhaus" (European Commission). The New European Bauhaus is an environmental, economic, and cultural project, aiming to combine design, sustainability, accessibility, affordability, and investment in order to help deliver the European Green Deal. This initiative has a completely new format. It encourages people to find new solutions for everyday problems while preventing climate change from worsening.

One of the most important declarations was made at the United Nations General Assembly⁵ (UNGA) in September 2020 via a video conference. China's leader Xi Jinping announced that, as mention above, China is to become carbon neutral by 2060. He called for a so-called green revolution and testified that his country would achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement of 2015. This is undoubtedly a great achievement, which is also intended to motivate other countries to intensify their actions in the fight to save the climate. Xi Jinping said the coronavirus pandemic has shown that "humanity can no longer afford to ignore nature's repeated warnings." He called on countries to continue the "science and technology revolution and industrial transformation" in order to achieve "green healing of the world economy in the post-Covid era" (CNN). This news did not go unnoticed by other world powers. As it is fashionable today, sentences and statements were published on the social networking site Twitter. Frans Timmermans, vice president of the European Green Deal wrote in a tweet that "we need decisive action from every country to keep the temperature under control, fight climate change and keep our planet habitable. (Twitter)"

On the other hand, Donald Trump was not so optimistic about China's declaration. On his Twitter he wrote: "Those who attack America's exceptional environmental record while ignoring China's rampant pollution are not interested in the environment." The divergent speeches of the two biggest polluters on climate action precede next year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 26) in Glasgow, Scotland, which is seen as key to ensuring global cooperation in order to reduce global warming emissions. Before the summit, all countries will need to increase their emission reduction commitments to stay on track to meet the Paris 2015 targets.

The current world has to face many difficulties but even now, people are not relenting in their climate change action. There are many social movements like Fridays For Future, Extinction Rebellion, and school strikes for the climate. Many were inspired by Greta Thunberg and her important speech at Cop 24 in Katowice (CNN). This was a culmination point for those who were hesitating. It also showed how crucial it is to act now as well as highlighting the intense demand from young generations to secure their future.

The latest Climate Ambition Summit from December 2020 gave many a vision of the common success in the form of NET 0 declarations. Many countries such as Great Britain announced very ambitious targets of reducing its emissions by 68% by 2030. 45 NDCs, 24 zero net commitments, and 20 adaptation and resilience plans were announced during the event. There were also some new initiatives presented by the speakers, such as the "Alliance of the Americas for Climate Transparency" by Laurentino Cortizo Cohen. In 2021 many leaders will announce big changes in their climate policies. However, only the common and fair work of all can change the world's situation.

Bibliography

Source documents and texts:

Chinese Climate-Change Policy 1988–2013: Moving On Up, Iselin Stensdal, Asian Perspective. 2014

Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report Summary for Policymakers, IPCC, 2007

Council Directive 96/61/EC establishing a M9 system for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the M9 Union and amending European Parliament and of the Council of 13. 2003. Directive 2003/87/EC of the October 2003.

Wójcicki A., PIG-PIB & Zespół Projektu. 2013. Krajowy Program "Rozpoznanie formacji i struktur do bezpiecznego geologicznego składowania CO² wraz z ich planami monitorowania". Warszawa.

Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Federal Register Division, National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, 1971

Komisja Europejska. 2001. Final Report, ECCP Working Group 1 "Flexible Mechanisms". Bruksela.

Komisja Europejska. 2019. Sprawozdanie Komisji dla Parlamentu Europejskiego, Rady, Europejskiego Komitetu Ekonomiczno-Społecznego, Komitetu Regionów i Europejskiego Banku Inwestycyjnego. Bruksela 9.4.2019.

Komisja Europejska. 2019. The European Green Deal, Communication from the Commission. Bruksela. Traktat o Funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej, "Dziennik Urzędowy UE", 2012.

⁵ The General Assembly of the United Nations, GA, also known as the Parliament of Nations - one of the six main organs of the United Nations, established under the Charter of the United Nations. It is based in New York, United States.

Monographs and book works:

Fukuyama F. 1991. *Koniec Historii*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Pomost. Góralczyk B. 2018. *Wielki Renesans*. Warszawa: Dialog. Maslin M. 2018. *Zmiany Klimatu*. Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego. Popkiewicz M., Kardaś A., Malinowski Sz. 2019. *Nauka o Klimacie*. Warszawa: Sonia Draga.

Scientific analyzes:

Krauthammer Ch. 1990. The unipolar moment, Foreign Affairs, Council on Foreign Relations. US-China Business Council. 2013. China's Strategic Emerging Industries: Policy, Implementation, Challenges, & Recommendations. Nordhaus W. 2020. "The Climate Club, How to fix a Failing Global Effort". Foreign Affairs, Vol. 99, No 3 May/June 2020. Ye Qi, Tong Wu. 2013. The Politics of Climate Change in China, WIREs Climate Change.

Internet resources:

www.obserwatorfinansowy.pl www.peta.org www.science.sciencemag.org www.climatechangenews.com www.bbc.com www.theguardian.com www.europa.eu www.foreignaffairs.com www.foreignaffairs.com www.climateactiontracker.org www.climateactiontracker.org www.climateactiontracker.org www.climateactiontracker.org www.climateactiontracker.org www.climateactiontracker.org www.climateactiontracker.org www.climateactiontracker.org www.climateactiontracker.org