



General Assembly

Chairs:

Pranathi Adhikari

Alex Pomeroy

Committee Topics:

1: Using the Olympics As a Tool for Sustainable Development

2: The UN's Role In Reversing Habitat Loss

Upper Mohawk Valley Model United Nations Conference - December 14, 2019

State University of New York Polytechnic Institute, Utica, New York

Chair Biographies

Welcome to the General Assembly committee at UMVMUN 2019!

My name is Pranathi Adhikari and I am currently a senior at Jamesville-DeWitt High School. I have been in Model United Nations for all four years of high school. This will be my third time chairing. I love to play *Just Dance*, look at memes, and watch *The Office* in my free time. In case you have any questions, please do not refrain from contacting me through my email, pranathiadhikari2@gmail.com. I look forward to chairing this committee and seeing what everyone brings to the table!

My name is Alex Pomeroy and I am currently a senior at Jamesville-DeWitt High School. I have been in Model United Nations for all four years of high school and this will be my second time chairing. I enjoy playing soccer, lacrosse, and destroying the competition in ping-pong. Please feel free to contact me at apomeroy02@gmail.com with any questions you have. I look forward to chairing this committee and getting to know all of you!

Social Media

UMVMUN makes a conscientious use of social media to promote attendance at our conference, share news and resources, and engage with delegates who plan on attending. Additionally, UMVMUN will have a Snapchat filter for use during lunch breaks. We strongly encourage all delegates to follow our Twitter and Instagram handles [@UMVMUN](#), make use of the #UMVMUN hashtag, and confirm your attendance on our Facebook event page [Upper Mohawk Valley MUN 2019](#). In the weeks leading up to the conference we will even have our chairs post valuable resources that will serve to guide delegates in their committee research!



Committee History

The General Assembly was established in 1945 under the Charter of the United Nations, and serves as the central position of chief deliberation, policymaking, and representation in the United Nations. The committee is composed of 193 Members of the United Nations and plays an integral role in the codification of international law. Each of the 193 Member States has one vote. Recommendations on peace and security, the election of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council members and budgetary questions require a two-thirds majority, while other questions can be decided by a simple majority.

The General Assembly is empowered to advise states on international issues. With the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, member states work to reach specific goals to attain peace, security, and disarmament while eradicating poverty. Furthermore, the General Assembly commits to safeguarding human rights, protecting the environment, meeting the needs of developing nations,



and to ultimately support the ideals expressed in the Charter of the United Nations. Additionally, as of September 2015, the General Assembly agreed on a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which further expanded its power by allowing the General Assembly to approve the United Nations budget and elect temporary members of the Security Council.

[Special Committee Notes](#)

At UMVMUN 2019, the General Assembly plenary will be run in resolution style. This means that, in order to qualify for an award, delegates must prepare pre-written resolutions for both topics. We anticipate that delegates will need to bring approximately seventy-three (73) copies of each resolution, however, we ask that you consult the *Country/Committee Matrix* on our website to determine the number of delegates that have been offered seats in our committee and to print that quantity plus three additional copies for the committee chairs.

To limit the amount of paper used on conference day, we ask that the resolutions be composed using Garamond font (size 11), that the resolutions be printed on both sides of the paper, and that the resolutions for each topic are stapled together into a single packet. In addition, the Chairs at UMVMUN 2019 look favorably upon delegates sending their resolutions to their respective committee chairs via e-mail by December 9 so that the chairs can give more careful consideration to the preparation and thought that their committee members have given to the topics that will be discussed. Sending pre-written resolutions to the chairs is not required, only encouraged. Emailing resolutions does not replace the requirement for delegates to bring enough printed copies for their committee.

It should be known that, at UMVMUN, we strive to acknowledge the most outstanding delegates in committee by choosing the three delegates that exhibit the most well-rounded preparation for the conference and the best performance in committee. To learn more, we urge delegates to explore the *Awards Rubric* on our website. Delegates new to Model UN and/or UMVMUN should refer to the *Delegate Preparation Guide* found on the For Delegates page of our website to learn about: research, flow of debate, public speaking, rules of procedure, caucusing, writing resolutions, and dressing for success.

Note: As a main organ of the United Nations, the delegates of the General Assembly plenary should understand that they will not only be responsible for preparing to solve issues related to the topics of this assembly, but they will also be responsible for hearing the proposed resolutions of the committees under the umbrella of the GA. At UMVMUN 2019, the following committees, programmes, and funds will present their proposed resolutions to the GA plenary: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP). Please familiarize yourself with the topics of these committees and/or work with delegates at your school who are representing a country in them to learn more about their topics in advance of the conference.



Topic 1: Using the Olympics as a Tool for Sustainable Development

Introduction

Hosting the Olympic games comes with tremendous honor alongside profound adverse benefits when executed properly. To be chosen means putting a country through a deliberate process, beginning with an invitation from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to interested countries to entertain the idea of bidding. This comes with dialogue, information, and feedback about how hosting the Olympics fits in with the long term developmental needs of the country. The formal candidature process ensues following a National Olympic Committee's official commitment to become a Candidate City. The cost of bidding is very high, and the IOC goes through careful screening of countries to ensure the success of the games. Amidst the success of the Olympic games throughout the years, various countries, such as Brazil, were not able to reap the economic benefits of hosting the Olympics despite the investigations of the IOC. Brazil drained all of its money into building the venues, a new subway line, a doping laboratory, a renovated port, and a cleanup of Guanabara Bay. It seems to be a trend that without careful planning and consideration for the prolific legacy the games leave on a country, that countries may fall into disarray and instead find themselves in an unexpected deficit come time for the games.

Definition of Key Terms

International Olympic Committee (IOC): nongovernmental organization created in 1894 that organizes the modern summer and winter Olympic games

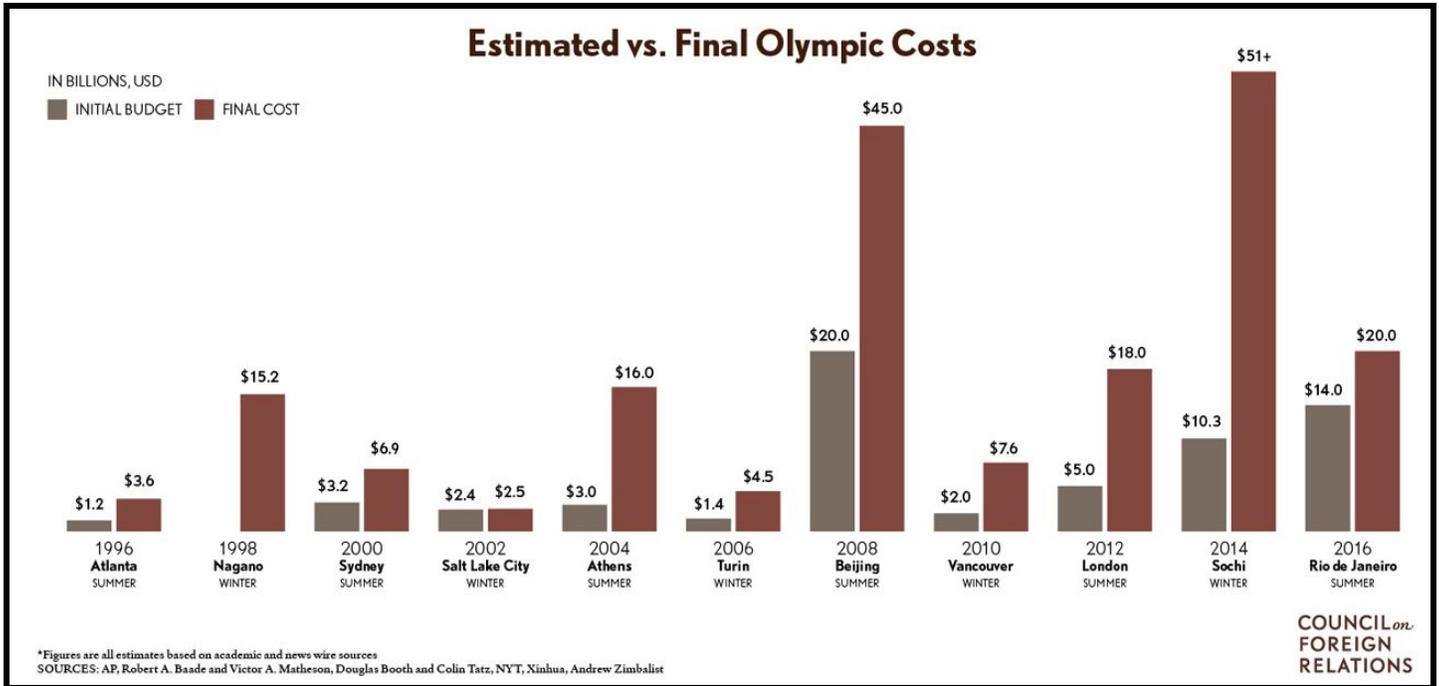
National Olympic Committee: committee that selects a candidate city for their respective country before they enter the formal bidding process

Barcelona Model: standard to host the Games and mega-sporting events. This model is used to prepare for an event and plan for long term growth from it.

General Overview

Since its inception, the costs of the Olympic games have increased drastically. From the high bidding costs to the safety protocol, infrastructure, and maintenance, the cost of the Olympic games is often higher than expected. Aside from this repercussion, counties are often tasked with overcoming obstacles when planning an event that shows economic longevity. Self aware of the high cost associated with hosting the games, Boston withdrew from bidding for the 2024 games, and Oslo and Stockholm withdrew from 2022 consideration. Cost assessment prior to evaluating, preparing, and submitting a bid itself proves to be a financial burden, going anywhere from \$50 million to \$100 million to hire, consult, and organize a bid. The high price of bidding leads to inaccessibility for less developed nations to host the Olympic games. This committee will focus on how all countries can access the bid for the Olympic games and properly execute the event in order to reap the benefits of the Olympic legacy.





The bidding process consists of hour long pitches consisting of celebrity endorsements, speeches, and commercial propaganda. The voting process itself is done through a secret ballot, eliminating countries during rounds until one country receives a majority of the votes. Despite the meticulousness and intricacies in place to uphold the integrity of this process, the IOC has been plagued with rumors of corruption such as corporate intervention by Atlanta Coca-Cola, or bribery scandals by voting members. These allegations have raised support for eliminating the bidding process altogether, arguing that it encourages wasteful spending and takes attention away from the host country executing considerable hospitality.

Upon official selection to host, the IOC requires that there is infrastructure in place to improve the accessibility of the event, including airports, roads, telecommunication, and housing. This may prove to be feasible but in Rio de Janeiro's case, it called for the construction of 15,000 new hotel rooms to meet the IOC's 40,000 requirement. If it were planned more thoughtfully, the new infrastructure built for the Olympics would have improved the overall economic state of Brazil, but instead the country found itself \$113 million dollars in debt.

In 2008 Olympics, hosted in Beijing, the famous "Bird's Nest" stadium was constructed for \$460 million. Now, China procures \$10 million a year to maintain the since untouched stadium. Though some countries may have the resources to maintain a stadium of that status, less developed countries cannot host an economically optimistic event and also bear such a burden for years following. In many circumstances, an unused stadium risks a large sum of deficit, reversing any positive economic growth from the games.



Major Countries Involved

Brazil: In 2016, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil was the host city for the 2016 Summer Olympics, but the Olympics didn't come with all the glory expected. Instead, economic, social, and political turmoil overshadowed the honor of holding this event. The expensive infrastructure and costs of operating the Olympics have left Brazil in crippling debt, and led to several violent protests after the games demonstrating the unstable relationship between the people and Brazil's government. Since the games in 2016, Brazil hasn't reaped any economic gains, but is still facing the civil unrest and economic recession that they were trying to escape, partly due to the Zika virus. The Olympics, however, generally play a role in improving the stereotype of more impoverished nations from one of disadvantaged to that of glory and cultural richness. Internationally, countries are typically viewed more favorably upon successful execution of the Olympic games.

England: After the 2012 London Olympics, England's economy experienced a GDP 9.9 billion trade and investment boost from hosting the Games. The construction industry had given the economy a 7.3 billion boost, while unemployment was reduced by 1.2%. From more jobs created, to increased tourism, England is still benefiting economically from the 2012 Olympics.

Greece: After hosting the Olympic Games in 2004, Athens faced a major financial deficit after investing in infrastructure such as a new airport, subway system, and tram service. However, after poor financial planning, and delayed construction, the expenditures cost twice as much as its budget. Athens depended heavily on public funding and unsustainable loans to build permanent facilities that have never been used after the games. As a result, Athens fell \$12 billion into debt.

Japan: Japan will be hosting the 2020 Summer Olympics and will be in the spotlight during our committee to consider the solutions discussed in committee. We will need to debate and find solutions to turn the Olympic Games into a path for Sustainable Development before the summer of 2020. However, there is already opposition to the idea of hosting the Olympics as people believe that is more necessary for the government to spend the money alternatively rather than spending it all on venues and facilities.

Spain: Barcelona hosted the Olympics with tremendous success in 1992. As a result, unemployment rates fell dramatically, and there was a boom in the construction industry. Furthermore, Spain was able to sustain their economic growth for more than a decade. Recording yearly growths in employment, investment, income, and standard of living, the "Barcelona Model" has created to guide all further Olympics and major events. Relying more on private investments, it raised enough money to afford expensive infrastructure upgrades, and to use the 1992 Games as a method for sustainable development.



Relevant Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Construction for Change: Construction for Change partners with nonprofit organizations in order to build spaces for people to become better educated, healthier, and more economically independent. This NGO could help host countries build smart venues and facilities that could be reused and transformed after the games, while giving the disadvantaged jobs and a chance to become economically stable by providing construction jobs.

International Institute for Sustainable Development: Their mission is to promote human development, environmental sustainability, deter social exclusion, and a changing climate. Often when a country hosts the Olympics the lower class population is abandoned and economically harmed, but with the help of this NGO, host countries could not only avoid this, but also allow the poorer class to help in preparing for the game by providing numerous jobs.

International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)- Governments for Sustainability: A global network of more than 1,750 local and regional governments devoted to urban development in more than one hundred countries. This NGO works to create sustainable cities with low emissions as well as circular development that could be tremendously helpful in advising countries set to host the Olympics create venues, facilities, and cities that will outlast the Games while still being beneficial to the country.

Timeline of Key Events

June 1894 Formation of International Olympic Committee.

1896 First Modern Olympic Games

1900 Women compete for the first time

1908 For the first time the Olympics take place in a purpose built stadium in London

1936 First locally televised Olympics in Berlin, Germany

1976 Montreal faces economic deficits after the country overspends on an Olympic village, apartment building, indoor and outdoor training facilities, and a velodrome.

August 1992 Barcelona's unemployment rate and overall economy prospers as a result of hosting the Games.

August 2004 Athens, Greece experiences financial deficit after hosting the Games.

August 2016 Rio De Janeiro, Brazil hosts the Summer Olympics, and experienced an economic loss and deficit due to the outbreak of the Zika virus and a lack of containment . Lack of overall security and planning by the Olympic Committee also played a contributing factor in lower yield compared to expected numbers for attendance, causing this deficit as a result.



Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Unforeseen spending, a lack of sufficient planning, and an excess of permanent and useless venues have all culminated into large economic problems for the host country.

In 1984, Los Angeles hosted the Summer Olympics. Their committee decided not to build new sporting structures, but instead they modified and upgraded existing venues. As a result, \$93 million was able to stay in Southern California.

As Barcelona was set to host the 1992 Olympics, its dynamic budget didn't rely on public funding, but instead private investments that accounted for 36.8% of the Olympic building work and focused mostly on housing, hotels, and business centers. Additionally, a part of the finance went to creating a "Olympic Organizing Committee" which prepared Barcelona to host the Olympics by maximizing on investments. From there, Barcelona significantly improved their urban infrastructure, which created jobs, and subsequently raised the economy and standard of living among the population.

In 2012, as London was set to host the Olympics, Britain created dynamic but temporary sporting venues and facilities. Furthermore, their Olympic Stadium itself is a permanent structure, but it was designed for a wide range of sports and its seating capacity can be reduced to nearly 25,000, making it a reasonable and practical arena.

Possible Solutions

Eliminating the bidding structure to be considered for candidacy could limit wasteful spending and allow resources to be used towards building infrastructure, even for underdeveloped countries. Additionally, NGOs and able countries can help build the world economy by loaning less developed countries money to finance the Olympics. Upon the end of the Games, developing countries are improved with infrastructure and new economic venture possibilities, while the direct revenue can be used to help pay off the games. With this in mind, it is essential that cost-benefit analysis and careful spending to decorate the Games be considered thoroughly to ensure the Games does not deter the inherent benefits of hosting the Olympics. Finally, it has been considered to make one country a permanent host of the Olympics, allowing for reuse of the infrastructure. Along with increased tensions between nations who would want to host the games, this eliminates the possibility of the Olympics being used as a tool for sustainable development in all areas of the world.

Appendix

1. [The Candidature Process](#)
2. [Analysis of Past Olympic Successes and Failures](#)
3. [Does Hosting the Olympics Actually Pay Off?](#)
4. [Why Developing Nations Shouldn't Host the Olympics](#)
5. [The Economics of Hosting the Olympic Games](#)

Questions Essential to Debate

1. Should developing nations be supported with finances and resources to host the games?



Topic 1

Topic 2

2. Should the IOC create a different nomination process for countries to host the games?
3. Can infrastructure be made in a way that it can be transformed into long term infrastructure years past?
4. Is it ethical to help underdeveloped nations host the Olympics, adversely building their infrastructure? If so, how should countries be chosen as candidates and chosen over one another?

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Topic 1

Topic 2

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Topic 2: The UN's Role in Reversing Habitat Loss

Introduction

As carbon emissions and commercial agriculture factor into climate change, ecosystems have been compromised. Since the Industrial Revolution, human interaction may have altered the trajectory of evolution among species, resulting in new pressures to undergo speciation and adapt to a changing environment. Aside from natural selection, humans have also built homes in natural habitats. Deforestation, poaching, pesticide use, desertification, and overfishing have led to drastic negative effects on the environment, including the extinction of species. To counteract this movement that some scientists call the Sixth Mass Extinction, experts have turned to the possibility of the process of de-extinction to reverse habitat loss, revitalize ecosystems, and rectify human mistakes.

Definition of Key Terms

De-extinction: started in the 1830s as translocation of existing species to fill the role of an extinct species in an ecosystem to preserve biodiversity. Now, technological advances make it possible to take cells from a preserved extinct animal and place it into a similar animal to revitalize a species.

Green Revolution: began in the 1960s when countries began producing a drastically greater volume of agricultural goods through the use of fertilizers, pesticides, etc.

Habitat loss: loss of natural land that organisms have diverse ecosystems within as a result of fragmentation, pollution, or other factors.

Poaching: illegally hunting animals in preserved lands meant to preserve species from being over hunted.

Carbon footprint: the amount of emissions caused by a person, organization, or event from the burning of fossil fuels.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN): serves as a global authority on the status of the natural world through collaboration of government and non-governmental organizations. Commissions of this alliance focus on species survival, environmental law, protected areas, social and economic policy, ecosystem management, and education and communication.

Invasive species: a species that is non-native to the ecosystem and can reproduce exponentially due to lack of natural predators in the area. An increasingly globalized world heightens the risk for the spread of such species.

Pacific 6: responsible for 80 percent of the annual catch of bigeye tuna, the Pacific Six consists of Japan, China, USA, Chinese Taipei, and South Korea are responsible for overfishing in the Pacific Ocean, adding them to the “shame list.”



General Overview

The diversity of nature is declining at unprecedented rates, and the rate of species extinction is accelerating to unseen heights. Despite the world becoming more fragile than ever, the current global response has been insufficient, and dire transformative changes are needed to restore, conserve, and protect the environment. With the entire world impacted by the frightful condition of the world, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) released a new landmark report that warns the world of its approaching fate.

The report states that not only are the health of our ecosystems deteriorating rapidly, but also that our economies, livelihoods, food security, and standard of life are all going down with it. According to the report, one million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction. Furthermore, since 1900, the abundance of native species in most major land-based habitats has fallen by at least 20%, and 40% of amphibian species, almost 33% of reef-forming corals and marine mammals are threatened.

However, the report claims that it is not too late to make a difference, but only if local and global efforts commence immediately. To pinpoint and streamline all courses of action, the report ranked the five direct drivers of change in nature: changes in land and sea use through mass commercialism, direct exploitation of organisms, climate change, pollution, and invasive alien species.

Due to high levels of commercial farming, fields are being overharvested and baratted with pesticides. Overharvesting fields not only leads to lower crop yields, but also severe erosion. Furthermore, since the Green Revolution in the 1960s, pesticide use has become very prevalent, resulting in extreme biodiversity loss with only a few species being resistant to the toxins included in chemicals that are used.

Since the 1980s, greenhouse gas emissions have doubled, raising average global temperatures by at least 0.7 degrees Celsius. With the global temperature gradually increasing, habitats are being drastically altered, leaving species to either adapt successfully, or to migrate to areas with more favorable conditions or go extinct. An interconnectedness in one ecosystem and the loss of biodiversity in another can have knock-on effects on surrounding ecosystems.

Lastly, as a consequence of globalization, people are not only transporting goods and products worldwide, but also wildlife to new environments. In many cases, the plant or animal doesn't have a chance of survival in its new ecosystem, but when they do, they have the chance to wreak havoc on their new home. The introduction of invasive species has led to drastic biodiversity loss due to their lack of natural predators, and ability to exploit a resource of the environment that native species can't.



Major Countries Involved

United States: is one of the top ten countries with biodiversity, due to the ecosystems in freshwater and marine biomes. In terms of fish species, the United States ranks very high on the list. The US has found success in its de-extinction efforts after reintroducing the wild turkey to the New England region via translocation 130 years after its extinction.

China: is a leading distributor of ivory, which is used for piano keys or billiard balls. It is considered a precious material in China, where it is used in jewelry, ornaments, and sometimes medicine. 30,000 African elephants are killed by poachers annually for their ivory in their tusks. Ivory can also be obtained from rhinoceros as well. This lucrative business has been banned by the Chinese government for a period of 12 months, and is under consideration for permanent banning.

Japan: over the past 20 years, Japan's volume of fish catch has gone from number one internationally headed towards a net capacity of 0 in 2050. This is due to decline in volume of sardines. Overfishing to blame, the cyclic pattern continued when younger fish became the catch and perpetuated the crisis. The Japanese government has issued quotas to promote sustainability within the industry. Revisions in the Fisheries Act in December of 2018 gave the government authority to regulate fishing.

Uganda: with a vast source of ivory, smugglers are active in Uganda. This past January, about 750 pieces of ivory and thousands of pangolin scales were confiscated by customs. Border security in Uganda works diligently to unveil contraband missions such as those. Between 2009 and 2014, authorities estimate that about 20 tons of ivory have been smuggled to Asia.

Relevant Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

African Wildlife Foundation: the leading international conservation organization created to protect Africa's wildlife and wildlands. AWF's programs and conservation strategies work to ensure a more sustainable future for Africa's people.

Greenpeace International: preserves, protects, and restores ecosystems in the world. In the past, they have exposed illegal practices related to fishing and the timber trade and politics and its role in climate change. Devoted to transparency between policymakers, companies, and the public, Greenpeace acts through advocacy and petitioning.

World Wildlife Fund for Nature: fundraises for worldwide conservation activities, petitions for change, studies climate change, and prepares communities for its effects. They bring attention to issues ranging from the food industry and its threat to wildlife to deforestation of the Amazon, which has removed 17% of its canopy cover. Drawing on science and its relationship with social systems, WWF uses science, advocacy, and donations to push its agenda.



Timeline of Key Events¹

1760 Industrial Revolution- between 1750 and 1850, England experienced a period of technological innovation that resulted in large scale production of goods and an increase in manufacturing goods, leaving a substantial footprint on the Earth. During this time period, naturally advantageous white peppered moths were selected against due to a better camouflage of dark moths on soot marked tree bark. This serves as a prime example of human interaction driving evolution. Ultimately, the technology made available due to the Industrial Revolution lead to the changes that harm our environment today. The rise of the middle class led to an increase in homes which began deforestation for property and materials.

1964 Green Revolution is made up of the transformation of agriculture to meet the demands of a large scale population and the following social and political reforms to adopt a system of sustainability in the industry.

August 1999 First speculation of a mass extinction underway due to steadily decreasing rate of biodiversity.

2003 The Pyrenean ibex was the first animal brought back from extinction, but died minutes later.

11 June 2010 In South Korea, international governments agree to establish a Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services(IPBES) to contribute to processes in place to strengthen science-policy communication for businesses.

22 April 2016 The Paris Agreement was ratified by 55 countries that make up at least 55% of the global carbon emissions, to undertake climate change. The G7 alliance focuses on biodiversity through workshops with leaders of respective countries. As of June 2017, the US withdrew from this agreement.

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

The Paris Agreement calls upon nations to undertake efforts to reverse the negative effects of climate change and to adapt to its effects, while ensuring that developing nations can do the same. The Paris Agreement's main goal is to strengthen the global response to the effects of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise to a minimum. Furthermore, the agreement aids countries to deal with the impacts of climate change effectively. In September 2015, the United Nations adopted the blueprints for a better and more sustainable future. Consisting of seventeen goals, the United Nations looks to eliminate poverty, inequality, hunger, and environmental degradation, in hopes of prosperity, peace, and justice. However with the loss of biodiversity, goals such as life on land, life below water, and climate action are all being threatened.

¹ As events unfold leading up to the conference, we will post important information on our Twitter page @UMVMUN. Please follow us so you don't miss out on these updates!

Possible Solutions

To undo the Sixth Mass Extinction, experts have turned to the possibility of the process of de extinction to correct human mistakes, and revitalize the ecosystems. With 30 to 159 species disappearing a day due to human involvement, the idea of de extinction has been in the minds of the scientific community, but with recent advances in CRISPR technology, the Jurassic World fantasy may now become a reality. However, the risks may outweigh any chance of ecological restoration. Releasing de extinct animals back into the environment may have uncontrollable consequences that can't be simply reversed. However even more worrying is the fact that our mindset might change to deforest, then reforest, and extinct, then de-extinct. Scientists are nervous that the public might justify their harmful interactions with the environment with the mindset that everything can be reversed back to normal despite human induced damaged.

Appendix

1. [Overview of the Paris Agreement](#)
2. [Business Contributions to Minimize Loss of Biodiversity](#)
3. [Climate Change and Biodiversity](#)
4. [Ethics of De-extinction](#)
5. [De-extinction](#)

Questions Essential to Debate

1. What progress has the United Nations made thus far in stabilizing the environment and combating the degradation of ecosystems?
2. How can developed nations support undeveloped nations in creating and carrying out better environmental practices?
3. What types of global regulation can be put in place to encourage industries to minimize the loss of habitat by sustainably enlarging their company's reach?
4. Is de-extinction ethical, and to what degree must it be regulated if implemented?

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