STUDENT REFERENCE SHEETS

These reference sheets provide a snapshot of the climate issues facing each country.

Divide the countries between your group, once you have finished reading, come together and discuss which issues you feel are most important.

AOSIS

BAHAMAS

The Bahamas confronts multiple challenges linked to climate change. Rising sea levels and saltwater intrusion threaten the low-lying islands. Difficulties in distributing energy across many islands exist due to geographical constraints. Land and habitats are being lost due to rising seas and hurricanes. A heavy reliance on food imports creates problems in accessing affordable food. Rising sea temperatures cause severe coral bleaching, harming marine life and coastal protection. These issues highlight the urgent need for climate action in the Bahamas to safeguard its environment and livelihoods.

CUBA

Cuba encounters difficulties in updating its carbon-dependent infrastructure and dealing with frequent extreme weather events like hurricanes. Outdated infrastructure and limited technical know-how pose challenges. The country also faces problems from hurricanes causing loss of life and damage, and outdated agriculture infrastructure leading to poor storage conditions. Additionally, urban areas suffer from poor air quality due to old industrial practices and vehicle emissions. These issues affect Cuba's ability to modernize, adapt to climate change, and maintain a healthy environment.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The Dominican Republic is grappling with several environmental challenges. Rising sea levels are causing coastal erosion, endangering communities. The country heavily depends on fossil fuels, which contribute to climate change. Deforestation and loss of biodiversity are worsened by extreme weather events, harming the natural world. Unsustainable farming practices lead to land degradation, impacting agriculture. To address these issues, the Dominican Republic must focus on sustainable practices, reduce fossil fuel reliance, protect coastal areas, and preserve its rich biodiversity. This will help ensure a healthier environment and a more resilient future for the country.

JAMAICA

Jamaica confronts more frequent extreme weather like hurricanes and floods, which damage infrastructure. They rely heavily on imported fossil fuels for electricity, causing supply chain issues and environmental concerns. Inflation is high, making food expensive for lower-income families. Deforestation and mining are destroying habitats, endangering unique plants and animals.

FIJI

Fiji, a small and scattered nation, is grappling with several pressing environmental challenges. Rising temperatures have caused the decline of vital natural carbon-absorbing resources like coral reefs and mangroves. This warming has also led to a loss of biodiversity, especially in coral reef ecosystems. Furthermore, Fiji is vulnerable to recurrent extreme weather events such as cyclones, which disrupt the availability of resources. Additionally, ocean acidification is harming marine ecosystems, particularly the crucial coral reefs. These issues highlight the urgent need for climate action and environmental protection in Fiji to safeguard its natural resources and biodiversity.

SURINAME

Suriname, a country in South America, confronts growing challenges like deforestation and land damage due to mining and logging. These activities compete with agriculture for land. Suriname lacks technical knowledge to manage these issues effectively. Deforestation also needs safeguarding from mining impacts. The excessive use of pesticides and fertilizers raises concerns about food safety and nutritional quality. Moreover, industrial emissions lead to acid rain, harming freshwater, and soil. In a nutshell, Suriname faces environmental problems from mining, deforestation, and pollution, affecting its land, food, and water resources, and requires better expertise to manage these issues sustainably.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Trinidad & Tobago's economy relies heavily on fossil fuels, making it tricky to switch to clean energy. They're also at risk from rising sea levels, flooding, hurricanes, and coastal erosion. Food stability is an issue due to wasteful storage practices, and saltwater intrusion is causing problems because of higher sea levels. These challenges highlight the need for the country to address its dependence on fossil fuels, adapt to climate change, improve food storage, and protect against saltwater intrusion to ensure a sustainable future.

SAMOA

Samoa is grappling with two major issues: rising sea levels and powerful cyclones, both linked to climate change. Unfortunately, Samoa lacks the necessary technical and financial resources to switch to cleaner energy sources. Rising sea levels are causing land loss and making people leave for neighbouring countries. Additionally, unsustainable farming practices are harming Samoa's land, and changing weather patterns are increasing the risk of diseases. These challenges highlight the urgent need for international support and sustainable practices to help Samoa adapt to and combat the impacts of climate change.

SINGAPORE

Singapore confronts saltwater intrusion and coastal vulnerability due to rising sea levels. Its dense population and energy needs pose challenges for renewable energy adoption. Coastal degradation and flooding impact supply chains, while heavy reliance on food imports makes Singapore vulnerable to global disruptions. Rapid urbanization threatens local biodiversity, leading to land and habitat loss. These environmental and sustainability issues require thoughtful solutions to ensure Singapore's resilience and sustainability in the face of climate change and urban development.

TIMOR LESTE

Timor Leste is struggling with a loss of carbon-absorbing forests due to deforestation and extreme weather events. Outdated infrastructure and a shortage of technical know-how hold back their potential for clean solar and hydro energy. Desertification and deforestation are causing problems by reducing the amount of usable land and harming the economy. Frequent droughts make it hard to find enough food. Unsustainable land use is further worsening desertification and deforestation. These challenges highlight the urgent need for sustainable development and climate action in Timor Leste to safeguard their environment and food security.