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.

G77 + CHINA

BRAZIL

Brazil is grappling with a complex dilemma: the need to safeguard the Amazon rainforest while meeting the demand for more farmland. This presents a significant issue as clearing trees for agriculture can harm the environment directly. Striking a balance between farming and rainforest preservation is challenging but vital, given its global impact Brazil must make concerted efforts to combat deforestation and prioritize environmental conservation, recognizing the critical role the Amazon plays in maintaining ecological balance worldwide.

CHINA

China is facing a major challenge due to its rapid industrialization. The use of coal for energy production is causing severe pollution. To combat this, China aims to transition to cleaner energy sources like solar and wind power, which is crucial to reduce harmful emissions. However, this fast-paced industrial growth is damaging the environment and threatening biodiversity. It's also leading to higher food prices, which particularly affects people with limited resources. Furthermore, many cities are struggling with poor air quality, negatively impacting people's health.

INDIA

India faces significant challenges linked to its fast-growing industries. These industries generate pollution and contribute to extreme weather events such as storms and floods. India aims to shift to cleaner energy sources like renewables, but a lack of knowledge poses a hurdle. The country is grappling with rising sea levels and increased extreme weather, causing various issues. Droughts are negatively impacting agriculture, making it harder to produce sufficient food. Additionally, excessive water use in farming is leading to land degradation.

MAURITIUS

Mauritius, a small island nation, faces several pressing challenges. Firstly, it's highly vulnerable to rising sea levels, putting its low-lying coastal areas at risk. Additionally, Mauritius relies heavily on fossil fuels, contributing to environmental issues. Geographical limitations hinder the use of wind and solar energy, limiting sustainable alternatives. Rising seas threaten coastal habitats, biodiversity, and the tourism industry, a key part of the economy. Reliance on food imports makes Mauritius susceptible to global price fluctuations and supply chain disruptions, affecting food security. Furthermore, coral bleaching, driven by rising ocean temperatures, harms marine ecosystems.

NIGERIA

Nigeria is contending with several critical challenges. Outdated energy infrastructure makes power sources unreliable. Balancing economic growth and social stability is a struggle. Desertification in the north and land loss in the Niger Delta force people to leave their homes, creating climate refugees. Food security is unstable due to inefficient agricultural practices, including poor irrigation and storage, leading to food wastage. Land and habitats are vanishing primarily due to desertification in the north and deforestation in the south.

PAKISTAN

Pakistan confronts multiple critical issues. It's highly susceptible to more frequent extreme weather events due to its dependence on carbon-based infrastructure. Outdated infrastructure and a lack of expertise hinder the development of renewable energy sources. Extreme weather events lead to land degradation, causing economic instability, especially in rural areas. Poor nutritional quality of food and excessive pesticide use affect food security. Additionally, urban areas suffer from poor air quality, primarily because of subpar vehicle standards, low-quality fuel, and industrial emissions.

PHILIPPINES

The Philippines deals with several pressing issues. It's highly vulnerable to extreme weather events, including destructive typhoons and rising sea levels due to climate change. Distributing renewable energy across its many islands is challenging, and the country relies heavily on fossil fuels. These frequent extreme weather events lead to loss of life and infrastructure damage, affecting food availability and overall stability. Furthermore, ocean acidification harms marine biodiversity, especially vital coral reef systems. These challenges emphasize the urgent need for sustainable energy solutions, disaster preparedness, and environmental conservation efforts to safeguard the Philippines' future.

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa confronts several critical challenges. It heavily relies on coal for energy, which harms the environment and hinders the shift to cleaner sources. Balancing economic growth with clean energy transition is tough. The country is losing biodiversity and land due to desertification and urbanization, impacting wildlife and green spaces. Land degradation and poor farming practices affect food availability and stability. Climate change and deforestation contribute to habitat loss, affecting various ecosystems. Addressing these issues is crucial for a more sustainable future, focusing on clean energy, responsible land use, and conservation efforts to protect South Africa's environment and well-being.

THAILAND

Thailand is grappling with several pressing challenges. Rising temperatures and sea levels pose a threat to its important tourism and agricultural sectors. The country also faces hurdles like a lack of technical expertise and an aging, carbon-dependent infrastructure. Rising sea levels result in the loss of coastal land, affecting local communities and the tourism industry. Heavy pesticide and fertilizer use negatively impact food quality. Moreover, coastal erosion and ocean acidification are harming the fishing industry and biodiversity. Thailand must address these issues by promoting sustainable practices, investing in modern infrastructure, and protecting its natural resources for a more secure and prosperous future.

VIETNAM

Vietnam faces significant challenges. It's vulnerable to rising sea levels and relies heavily on carbon-intensive industries, particularly coal-fired power plants. The Mekong Delta is disappearing due to sea-level rise, harming both land and biodiversity and endangering the livelihoods of many. Land degradation and frequent flooding affect food availability, especially in rural areas. Additionally, saltwater intrusion into the Mekong Delta harms agriculture and freshwater supplies. These issues highlight the urgent need for Vietnam to transition to cleaner energy, address land and water management, and prepare for the impacts of climate change to ensure a more secure and sustainable future.