



The time to limit global warming is melting away

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(Mains GS 2 & 3 : Environment-Conservation, Environmental pollution and degradation & Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting the Indian interests)

Context:

- This is an incredibly difficult time for the world as it is facing two momentous challenges: COVID-19 and climate change.
- Both need all stakeholders to come together globally to find a way forward and World Environment Day (June 5) is an important moment to take stock on climate change.

India's response to tackle climate change:

- India has a strong record on tackling climate change, including impressive domestic targets to have 450GW of renewable energy by 2030, and establishing the International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).
- India played a critical role in delivering the landmark Paris Agreement and working closely in the run-up to COP26, the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties, to be hosted by the United Kingdom in Glasgow.
- COP26 will be a moment to get the world on track to address the enormous threat of climate change and build a cleaner, brighter future for everyone.
- In 2015, the world signed the Paris Agreement, to limit global temperature rises to well below 2°C, aiming for 1.5°C, because the scientific research concluded that it would avoid the worst effects of climate change.

Emissions have to be cut:

- In terms of limiting warming, every fraction of a degree makes a difference.
- An average global temperature rise of 2°C, compared to 1.5°C, would see hundreds of millions more people affected.

- The Climate Action Tracker estimates that countries' current emissions reduction targets have on course for average temperature rises of 2.4°C.
- To limit warming to 1.5°C, stakeholders must halve global emissions by 2030.

The decisive decade:

COP26 is so critical and the world should be pressing for urgent action around four key goals.

Keep temperature within reach:

- First, to keep 1.5°C within reach, globally, we need to reach net zero by the middle of this century.
- To achieve this, countries will need to take strong action over the next decade.
- Countries should set ambitious short-term targets backed up by a net zero target for a low carbon future.
- India has an opportunity to be at the forefront of a new global green transition with all the benefits of jobs and cleaner air that it brings.
- India has already proved it has the innovation and political will to do this as India has quadrupled wind and solar capacity in the last decade.

Protect people and nature:

- Second goal is to protect people and nature from the worst effects of climate change.
- Even as the world has been dealing with the novel coronavirus pandemic, the dangers of global warming have continued to become more evident.
- The two cyclones, Tauktae and Yaas, that hit India last month, show that countries must act on the very real need for flood defences, warning systems and other vital efforts to minimise, avert and address the loss and damage caused by climate change.
- Thus India's CDRI (**Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure**) initiative is a great step forward towards developing disaster-resilience in ecological, social, and economic infrastructure.

Funding promise:

- Third goal should be for developed countries to deliver the \$100 billion they promised annually to support developing countries.
- COP26 needs to push all developed countries to increase their climate finance commitments to deliver the right flow of finance and technology to meet the needs of countries such as India in their transition.

Working as a team:

- Fourth priority will be to facilitate the world to come together and must work together to deliver on these goals.
- That includes building consensus among governments for an ambitious, balanced and inclusive outcome so that the negotiations in COP26, Glasgow are a success.
- Bringing businesses and civil society on board and building up international collaboration in critical sectors will be utmost important.

Conclusion:

- All stakeholders need to launch a concerted effort to reduce emissions throughout the next decade and use the COVID-19 recovery to reimagine our economies for building a better future.
- All countries need to step up efforts on these goals as COP26 is our last chance for keeping hopes of limiting global warming to 1.5°C alive, and our best chance of building a brighter future; a future of green jobs and cleaner air.