

## **Reworking Climate Agreements**

### **What is the issue?**

Setting common targets in climate agreements will undermine the concept of climate justice for developing countries like India.

### **What is climate justice?**

- It reframes global warming as an ethical and political issue rather than being purely environmental or physical in nature.
- When countries such as India were becoming major industrial and middle class nations, they should not pay the price for the pollution caused by the West.

### **How is climate justice undermined in treaties?**

- Firstly, inequity is built in the climate treaties which make India the 4<sup>th</sup> largest emitter even though India contributes 3% when compared to 26% in U.S. and 13% in China.
- According to UN, richest 1% of the global population emits more than two times the emissions of the bottom 50%.
- Secondly, in the climate negotiations longer term goals are set without any strategy to achieve them.
- The focus is more on physical quantities, emissions of carbon dioxide and increase in global temperature rather than the analysis of drivers, trends and patterns of resource use.
- Moreover the current framework considers symptoms which forces developing countries to keep the discussion away from the causes of the problem.
- Thirdly, global policy recommendations for developing countries are based achieving reasonable not comparable levels of wellbeing.
- This ensures that there is an early capping of energy use thereby not affecting the growth while ignoring the costs on the poor.

### **How does infrastructure contributes to climate change?**

- Firstly, infrastructure has a defining role in human well-being both in its provision of services to the outside market and in shaping the demand-manufacturing, lifestyle.

- Secondly, in the urbanised world, two thirds of emissions arise from the demand of the middle class for infrastructure, mobility, buildings and diet.
- There is no substitute to cement, steel and construction material, which require half the available carbon space.
- Thirdly, because of its young population and late development, much of the future emissions in India will come from infrastructure, buildings and industry.

### **What are the challenges for India?**

- India should highlight its unique national circumstances with respect to food, energy and transportation systems that have to change.
- Consumption of meat contributes to a third of global emissions and Indians eat just 4 kg a year.
- In European Union, a person eats 68 kg and twice that in the U.S. where a third of the food is wasted by households.
- India has abundant coal reserves and per-capita electricity use is tenth when compared to U.S.
- Now it is under pressure to stop using coal though U.S. currently uses more coal.
- India wants to eliminate the use of oil and replace it with renewable energy and hydrogen as a fuel for electrification.
- This acceleration requires international cooperation around technology development and transfer.

### **What can be done now?**

- Global goal-shaping national strategy requires a new understanding.
- Firstly reframe the global concern in terms of sustainable development for countries with per capita emissions below the global average and it should be in line with Paris Agreement.
- Secondly, the verifiable measures should be well-being within ecological limits.
- Thirdly, international cooperation should centre on sharing technology of electric vehicles and hydrogen as a fuel, as they are the most effective response to climate change.

**Source: The Hindu**



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