

COP25: DELIVER ON COMMITMENTS - EDITORIALS - HINDUSTAN TIMES

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Conservation, Sustainable Development, and EIA

Dec 11, 2019-Wednesday

-°C

Humidity

-

Wind

-

Metro cities - [Delhi](#), [Mumbai](#), [Chennai](#), [Kolkata](#)

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Despite climate scientists being vocal about the climate crisis, the political response to it has largely been indifferent. On December 3, the World Meteorological Organisation said the past 10 years were the warmest on record, with the global mean temperature about 1.1 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels between January and October 2019. This indicates that the 1.5 ° C threshold will be breached in the 2030s, much earlier than expected. The current mitigation pledges are likely to take us to a 3.2 ° C warming scenario by the end of this century. Inaction has already set off irreversible chain responses to ecosystems, such as marine heat waves and acidification; severe heat waves; and changes in the southwest monsoon pattern, among others.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP25) in Madrid that ends this week has shown no indication of progress on meeting the Paris Agreement goal of keeping the global temperature rise below 2 ° C, and pursue efforts to keep it under 1.5 ° C. Developed countries, including Australia, Singapore, Japan and the United States, have said they will not update their nationally-determined contributions (NDCs). About 51% of all NDCs have included carbon markets, which is an emissions-trading mechanism, as one of the means to achieve emission reduction. Developed countries have also not delivered on their pre-2020 commitments, the most important among them being mobilising \$100 billion per year by 2020 to support developing nations in mitigating and adapting to impacts. India, China, and Brazil, among others, have sought a stock-take on the implementation of pre-2020 commitments by developed countries at COP25.

There is also a logjam related to “corresponding adjustments” (where a country can sell emission reductions to another) on concerns related to the impact on indigenous communities from carbon-offset projects like plantations or hydropower, and on the carryover of unsold carbon credits from clean development mechanism. A draft decision on “loss and damage” has proposed that developed countries, private and non-governmental organisations scale up finance and technology support for vulnerable countries to compensate for loss. But this, too, is facing push back from developed countries. Developed countries must recognise it is an existential crisis for everyone on the planet and deliver on their commitments.

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