

NITI AAYOG PROPOSES DECARBONISING OF INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS

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Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage (CCUS), the technology for decarbonising carbon dioxide (CO₂) from high polluting sectors such as steel, cement, oil, gas, petrochemicals, chemicals and fertilisers, has a critical role to play for the country to halve CO₂ emissions by 2050, says a report on the policy framework of the CCUS prepared by the Niti Aayog and MN Dastur & Company. The report, released here on Tuesday by Niti Aayog Vice-Chairman Suman K. Bery, also said the CCUS technology would help in promoting the low carbon-hydrogen economy and in removal of the CO₂ stock from the atmosphere.

Mr. Bery said the key challenge would be to reduce the cost of the mechanisms to implement the technology. "Niti Aayog will try to develop a consensus with other Ministries on the matter," he said. He added in his message to the report that India's per capita CO₂ emissions were about 1.9 tonnes per annum, which was less than 40% of the global average and about one-fourth of that of China. "We need a sustainable solution for the decarbonisation of sectors that contribute to 70% of emission. CCUS has an important and critical role to play in it, especially for India to accomplish net-zero by 2070," he said.

Mr. Bery said CCUS could enable the production of clean products while utilising rich endowments of coal, reducing imports and thus leading to a self-reliant India economy. "CCUS also has an important role to play in enabling sunrise sectors such as coal gasification and the nascent hydrogen economy in India," he added.

Power Secretary Alok Kumar said the focus should be on research and development, particularly on cutting edge technologies. "NTPC has taken some R&D projects. Ministry has supported it," he said.

Niti Aayog Member V.K. Saraswat said that through the technology, CO₂ coming from various thermal power plants or industrial plants would be captured. "Using CCUS technology we will be able to make some valorisation of the CO₂. There will be an impact on the economy if we able to get value-added products such as green methanol, green ammonia can be produced from this

captured CO₂. We have huge potential for storage of CO₂,” Dr. Saraswat said.

The report added that the key to a successful CCUS implementation in India was to enact a policy framework that supported the creation of sustainable and viable markets for CCUS projects. “The private sector is unlikely to invest in CCUS unless there are sufficient incentives or unless it can benefit from the sale of CO₂ or gain credits for emissions avoided under carbon pricing regimes,” the report said.

On the policy framework, the report suggested that in the near term, CCUS policy should be carbon credits or incentives based, to seed and promote the CCUS sector in India through tax and cash credits. “Over time (probably beyond 2050), the policy should transition to carbon taxes, to enable reaching India’s net zero goals by 2070. The policy should establish early stage financing and funding mechanisms for CCUS projects,” the report said.

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