

INDIA MUST FOCUS ON RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Degradation - GHGs, Ozone Depletion and Climate Change

Pointing towards a rise in catastrophic weather events in India, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said that the year 2000 was a “tipping point” for the impact of climate change led warming in the country. The IMD’s report — ‘Statement on Climate of India during 2018’— has documented a gradual, significant rise in the annual mean temperature from 2000 and linked this trend to climate change because India’s warming trends are similar to the pattern of global warming.

In India, 11 out of 15 warmest years occurred during the past 15 years (2004-2018). The past decade (2009-2018) was also the warmest decade on record in the country. Reacting to the IMD report, scientists said India is projected to experience a temperature rise of 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2040 if measures are not taken to curb greenhouse gas emissions. This could have devastating impact on agriculture, coastal communities, and cost several animal species their natural habitat.

There is only one way to tackle such temperature variability. One must plan proper climate adaptation strategies and do everything possible to implement them without delay. Unfortunately, that is not happening at either the speed or scale required. For example, India may lead the Solar Alliance, but when it comes to the nation’s electric mobility policy, there has hardly been much movement beyond piecemeal strategies.

Or, for that matter, are our cities ready to tackle climate change? No. Most are yet to firm up resilience and adaptation strategies such as climate-resilient infrastructure, proper waste management and water harvesting to tackle this enormous challenge.

There are many reasons for this. Most city governments struggle to deal with other day-to-day development challenges such as education, infrastructure and health, and so climate resilience and adaptation figure low on their list of priorities.

Second, big cities such as Delhi and Mumbai have no city resilience plans because there is a multiplicity of authorities, which tend to work in silos whereas climate change cuts across several departments: public health, water, environment, energy, and social justice to name a few.

In a war as big as this, it’s important to use all knowledge resources available to tackle climate change. But there is a severe lack of interest among policy makers in using India’s wide repository of traditional knowledge in different sectors, such as water and waste management, to deal with the climate-induced disruption that is taking place. This is not just unfortunate but short sighted behaviour on the part of policymakers and citizens.

First Published: Jan 22, 2019 07:53 IST

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com