

'Health savings outweigh costs of limiting global warming'

Preventive steps: A file photo of tourists wearing masks to protect themselves from smog in New Delhi. | Photo Credit: [PTI](#)

The estimated cost of measures to limit Earth-warming greenhouse gas emissions can be more than offset by reductions in deaths and disease from air pollution, researchers said on Saturday.

It would cost \$22.1 trillion to \$41.6 trillion between 2020 and 2050 for the world to hold average global warming under two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), a team projected in *The Lancet Planetary Health* journal.

For the lower, aspirational limit of 1.5 degree Celsius, the cost would be between \$39.7 trillion and \$56.1 trillion, they estimated.

But air pollution deaths could be reduced by 21-27% to about 100 million between 2020 and 2050 under the 2 degrees Celsius scenario, the team estimated, and by 28-32% to about 90 million at 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Mitigation

"Depending on the strategy used to mitigate climate change, estimates suggest that the health savings from reduced air pollution could be between 1.4-2.5 times greater than the costs of climate change mitigation, globally," they wrote.

Health costs from air pollution include medical treatment, patient care, and lost productivity.

The countries likely to see the biggest health savings were air pollution-ridden India and China, said the researchers.

"The health savings are exclusively those related to curbing air pollution," study co-author Anil Markandya of the Basque Centre for Climate Change in Spain said. "Other health benefits are not included, which of course makes our figures underestimates of the total benefits."

The costs of limiting warming, Mr. Markandya explained, included higher taxes on fossil fuels like oil and coal, which in turn raise the costs of production.

The world's nations agreed on the 2 degrees Celsius limit in Paris in 2015, and undertook voluntary greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

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