

INDIA COULD SAVE TRILLIONS IN HEALTHCARE COSTS IF PARIS CLIMATE GOALS ARE MET: GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL OUTLOOK

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

The Paris Agreement aims to keep global temperature rise to below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. | Photo Credit: [Branden Camp](#)

India could save at least \$3 trillion (210 trillion approx.) in healthcare costs if it implemented policy initiatives consistent with ensuring that the globe didn't heat up beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius by the turn of the century, says the sixth edition of the Global Environmental Outlook (GEO), prepared by the United Nations Environment Programme.

"Damage to the planet is so dire that people's health will be increasingly threatened unless urgent action is taken....Unless environmental protections were drastically scaled up, cities and regions in Asia, the Middle East and Africa could see millions of premature deaths by mid-century," a press statement accompanying the report noted.

India's stated commitment is to lower emissions intensity of its GDP by 33-35% compared to 2005 levels by 2030; increase total cumulative electricity generation from fossil free energy sources to 40% by 2030, and create additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tons through additional forest and tree cover.

India is on track to achieve two of these goals — of emissions intensity and electricity generation — according to independent climate-watch site Climate Tracker.

However these actions are only enough — and provided other countries too live up to their commitments — to limit temperature rise to 2 degrees.

For India to leapfrog onto a 1.5-degree pathway it would have to "abandon plans to build new coal-fired power plants," said Climate Tracker's most updated analysis as of Dec 2018.

The landmark Paris Agreement of 2015 aims to keeping a global temperature rise this century well to "...below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius."

However there has been limited progress by countries since then in committing to greenhouse gas emissions cut since then.

Currently environmental ministers and delegates from around the world are participating in a UN conference in Nairobi to discuss issues such as stopping food waste, promoting the spread of electric mobility, and tackling the crisis of plastic pollution.

The GEO report, made public Wednesday, for its assessment on health benefits to India relied on a modelling study by group of scientists and published by *Lancet Planetary Health* in March 2018.

The report advises adopting less-meat intensive diets, and reducing food waste in both developed and developing countries, would reduce the need to increase food production by 50% to feed the projected 9-10 billion people on the planet in 2050. At present, 33% of global edible

food is wasted, and 56% of waste happens in industrialised countries.

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