

### **All Chandigarh schools are carbon negative, finds forest department study**

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All the 112 government schools in Chandigarh are carbon negative, a study conducted by the Union territory administration's department of forests and wildlife by measuring carbon footprint generation has found. An entity becoming carbon negative means it has a net effect of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere rather than adding it.

Chief Conservator of Forests Debendra Dalai told The Indian Express, "On a pilot basis, we are conducting studies of various departments and buildings. More carbon emission means a temperature rise. If there is more carbon emission, the earth will become warmer."

The study was conducted at all the government schools and the Burail jail to check carbon neutrality. Various steps had been initiated in these buildings as part of the mission to make Chandigarh carbon neutral by 2030.

The study stated, "The total carbon emission by all the government schools is 5,485 tonnes/year whereas the total carbon sequestration is 3,72,574 tonnes/year."

It also stated that the carbon neutrality capacity of schools in Chandigarh is 3,67,089 tonnes/year, indicating a negative carbon holding capacity.

"So all government schools in Chandigarh are carbon negative as per the current analysis," Dalai said. "You don't need to protect the environment, but you need to create an environment where the environment doesn't need protection."

"The city has already achieved a total green cover of 50 per cent. Efforts are also on making quantitative and qualitative improvements in the forest and green areas. E-buses are constantly being added to the fleet. Rooftop solar power projects are being installed under the solar city programme. People are being encouraged to adopt electric vehicles, with incentives. More than 200 km of cycle track is being maintained across the entire city," he said.

Dalai stated that carbon emissions cause climate change, and as the average global temperature rises, our climate inherently changes and warms.

"This warming causes extreme weather events like tropical storms, wildfires, melting of glaciers, rising of sea level, inundation of coastal areas, severe droughts and heat waves, which will affect the crops, plants, animals, alters our environment and natural habitats, which will further take a hit on different indigenous species. Carbon emissions directly affect humans causing more respiratory diseases from increased smog and air pollution," he said.

"Lowering the levels of atmospheric carbon is the need of the hour, meaning we have to be carbon neutral. Carbon neutrality means achieving zero carbon dioxide emissions by balancing carbon. For example, for an individual to be carbon neutral, any emissions they create must be offset by planting a tree or some other initiatives that negate the carbon that is being emitted," he said.

Source:<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/chandigarh-schools-carbon-negative-forest-department-study-8596340/>