

India finalising action plan to cut emissions, says environment minister

02 March 2022

Inter-ministerial discussions are underway to finalise India's revised nationally determined contribution (NDC) to be submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), environment minister Bhupender Yadav said on Tuesday.

"Normally, NDC can be submitted in October ahead of the Conference of Parties (COP). We are presently having inter-ministerial discussions on submitting the announcements Prime Minister Narendra Modi made at Glasgow during COP 26 last year," Yadav said at the Anil Agarwal Dialogue 2022 organised by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSC) here.

Confirming the same, a senior official at the ministry of environment said on condition of anonymity: "We can tell you that talks with the ministry of power and ministry of renewable energy are in advanced stages. Once they conclude, we can share the details on when the NDC will be submitted and its features."

According to United Nations, NDC is a climate action plan to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts.

Speaking at the Glasgow climate summit on November 1 last year, Modi announced that India's non-fossil energy capacity will reach 500 GW by 2030, meeting 50% of the country's energy requirements by then. He said that India will reduce its total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes by 2030, reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by 45% by the same year, over 2005 levels, and achieve net-zero emissions by 2070.

Modi also pointed out that such ambitious action will be impossible without adequate climate finance from developed nations, calling on rich countries to make \$1 trillion available as climate finance "as soon as possible."

Last month, the Prime Minister said that India's energy requirements are likely to double in the next 20 years. "Energy requirements of the people of India are expected to nearly double in the next 20 years. Denying this energy would be denying life itself to millions. Successful climate actions also need adequate financing. For this, developed countries need to fulfill their commitments on finance and technology transfer," he said during his address at the World Sustainable Development Summit on February 16.

"We firmly believe in fulfilling all our commitments made under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). We have also raised our ambitions during COP26 at Glasgow... I firmly believe, and I am sure you would agree, that environmental sustainability can only be achieved through climate justice. Sustainability requires co-ordinated action for the global commons," Modi said.

Under the Paris Agreement, India in 2015 submitted its NDCs with three quantifiable targets of reducing the emissions intensity of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 33- 35%, by 2030, from 2005 levels; to achieve about 40% cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030; and to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂eq (carbon dioxide equivalent) through additional forest and tree cover by then.

On Tuesday, Yadav reiterated that developed nations should be accountable for historic emissions and take up a major share of the global carbon budget. "They have to transfer climate finance to developing nations. Developed nations cannot shy away from their responsibility," he said.

Meanwhile, India on Monday welcomed the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s Working Group II report titled "Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability". The report has warned of catastrophic consequences for India and other parts of the world if emissions are not cut.

A delegation from India participated in the final discussions on the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of the report, held online from February 14 to February 27 (extended by two days over its scheduled duration).

"The report affirms that climate change due to historical emissions is leading to serious impacts which are already being felt globally, including in developing countries, with low contribution to cumulative emissions...the SPM underlines the need for climate action on the basis of equity and climate justice to ensure the well-being of humanity and the planet," a statement from the environment ministry said, adding that "it fully acknowledges the importance of losses and damages arising from climate change".

"Inadequate adaptation due to lack of financial and technological resources, capacity building and other constraints lead to losses and damages. Further losses and damages would increase as some limits to adaptation are being reached and more would be at higher levels of warming. Adaptation suffers from a tremendous lack of finance, with only a small proportion of climate finance devoted to it, while the overwhelming proportion goes to mitigation," the ministry added.

Sunita Narain, director general, CSE, said it is for the first time IPCC, which is a scientific body, has acknowledged that the burden of climate crisis is disproportionately high on the poor.

According to the report, the "vulnerability of ecosystems and people to climate change differs substantially among and within regions, driven by patterns of intersecting socio-economic development, unsustainable ocean and land use, inequity, marginalization, historical and ongoing patterns of inequity such as colonialism, and governance". "Approximately 3.3 to 3.6 billion people live in contexts that are highly vulnerable to climate change," it added.

"The takeaways from the report is that the threat of climate change is existential. The window of opportunity for the crisis is closing soon. Climate change impacts are devastating and half the world's population is vulnerable. It's a dire warning. This is the first time that IPCC has made such a categorical statement that the poor in the world are the worst hit. From our side, we have been arguing that the poor are the victims of climate change. They are not the cause of the stock of greenhouse gases that are in the atmosphere. For the first time, IPCC has acknowledged the need for equity and climate justice. This is also the first time that IPCC has talked about displacement," Narain said at the event.

Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-finalising-action-plan-to-cut-emissions-says-environment-minister-101646159624805.html>