Chapter 5
India's Path to Climate Resilience:
Policies and Progress Towards Sustainable Development

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ABSTRACT

This research paper examines India's high vulnerabilities to climate change and efforts to support climate-related actions for sustainable development, over the last decade. Addressing and minimizing the risks posed by climate change is integral to the successful implementation of SDGs. Paper highlights India's leadership role in amplifying the voice of developing countries to strike a right balance to achieve development, poverty reduction and climate resilience. It focuses on the India's national action plan on climate change, eight sub-missions and related policies, their objectives, implementation progress and challenges in meeting the climate commitments. Climate polices on solar energy development, energy efficiency, and climate resilient infrastructure development are showing good results, while those for supporting sustainable agriculture and urban climate-resilience are progressing slow.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

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The saying that change is the only constant in life can also be applied to environment and climate variation as well. The nature and extent of such change are critical while applying this theory of Heraclitus to environment and ecology and the pace and direction of such change. This means that it is very hard to have fixed solutions to environmental issues since most of them are dynamic in nature. However, dynamism should not be occasioned as a means of water down environmental rights and safeguards. Rarely, can the conflicting claims and interests be met efficiently without had environmental governance frameworks that are driven by strong institutions and democracy. Sustainable development and climate crisis are intertwined issues that the world is grappling with. Human wants and actions are affecting the environment, economies and societies. The global temperature is already 1.1 degree centigrade higher than the pre-industrial levels, not too far away from the tipping point of 1.5 degree centigrade (IPCC). There is an unprecedented rise in flooding, droughts, forest fires, rising sea levels, pollution, and their catastrophic impact on the earth's flora and fauna. Developing countries and poor are the worst affected bearing a disproportionately higher burden. The effects of climate change, issues climate experts opine may provoke serious political and social instabilities at the national, regional and international levels as more individuals and groups compete for scarce resources or respond to turbulence in the global markets, epidemic diseases, forced displacement due to effects of climate change such as flooding, etc. (Youdon & Bajaj,2021)

India has a unique geo-climatic region which comprises of Indo-Gangetic Plains and Central Highlands, the Deccan Plateau. lowlands, Thar or Great Indian Desert, Himalaya and Northeast Mountain Ranges, East Coastal Plains, West Coastal Plains and indexes. Countries of the bordering seas and islands having large fluctuations in conditions as well as regional and local weather conditions across the country. India is the second populous country in the world and is in a region which has variable climate. It is significant to know that the sustainable development agenda has shifted towards envisioning the future and in this regard, the United Nations (UN) initiated known as the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development has caught the pace and has become an important part of the recent Indian governance. The 17 SDGs with 169 targets of this agenda are interlinked and seek to address the three dimensions of sustainable development which include Economic, social and environmental sustainability. The SDG 13 specifically draws the attention of the countries to develop their own climate actions and low-carbon development pathways. India announced its National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) in June 2008 (after signing