

# NO CLIMATE JUSTICE WITHOUT EQUITY

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India has launched a new climate equity website called [climateequitymonitor.in](http://climateequitymonitor.in) and asked some critical questions about the 'net zero' approach. As the sixth largest economy and the fourth largest source of greenhouse emissions, India's concerns are critical to the future of the global warming debate.

And the country, one of the biggest investors in renewable energy in the world, from record solar installations to rapid electric vehicle rollout, and with a record of keeping to its Paris Agreement commitments, is asking some of the most important questions about how to tackle global warming.

In simple terms, India is asking why the burden of emissions should not be calculated historically, and the responsibility to mitigate it in the future allocated according to the cumulative history of emissions.

What this simply means is

that countries that have historically caused the maximum impact through emissions must proportionately carry the responsibility to ensure a rapid decrease in emissions.

Merely proportionately dividing future responsibility of emissions is not equitable because it ignores the highly unequal history. We should not forget the simple fact that developed countries have contributed to a vast majority of emissions for most of history, which triggered global warming.

India has announced 2070 as its net-zero cut-off, which is only fair considering the 2050 deadline by OECD (Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development) countries and China's 2060 target. If wealthier nations want a further reduction of timeline, they must contribute to the progress of countries like India—the fastest growing nation of its size in the world—to reduce poverty through wide-

spread development in them.

Without this kind of support, it is unfair and disrespectful to expect nations like India (per capita GDP at around \$2,000) to stall their growth process and condemn tens of millions to abject poverty. Funding the transition to a low emission economy while maintaining growth that provides development builds the mass buy-in for the journey towards such as economy. India has already made significant commitments towards this transition, pledging to boost its non-fossil energy capacity to 500 GW by 2030, and by that year ensuring that half of its energy needs are met through renewable sources. It will also reduce its



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net projected carbon emission by one billion tonnes by 2030 and bring down the carbon intensity of its economy by more than 45%. Proportional to its population, India only emits a small fraction of greenhouse gases. That number is rising swiftly and therefore assistance in transitioning its economy would be welcome in India as it would be in many other growing, developing nations.

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As the Climate Equity Monitor platform notes, "The concepts of equity and justice have been central to many debates on the nature of climate action since the establishment of the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). Article 3.1 of the UNFCCC states that: 'The parties should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future genera-

tions of humankind, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities'."

Positionality is an important idea in social science. In this debate, moving the contours to equity ensures that the positionality changes. History matters and the positionality of a country depends not only on the current situation but the long history that contributed to the making of the present scenario.

Climate equity is the first step towards climate justice, towards an era where a fair distribution in responsibility and resource-spending is allocated to countries that have contributed for a long time to global emissions and built their economies on that basis.

India, therefore, is right in using, and placing upon the table for conversation, the topic of justice and the fact that this can only be achieved if everyone acknowledges their share of responsibility according to their historic weight. There can be no real climate equity without considering the point of climate justice, which may have been delayed but must not be denied.

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