



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-first session

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Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by "ECO-FAWN" (Environment Conservation Organization - Foundation for Afforestation Wild Animals and Nature), a non- governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[17 August 2022]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **India's Progress Towards implementation of SDG 13 and ensuring the Right to a Clean Environment**

Climate change represents an acute challenge to the goals and aspirations of the human species. Any solution to this problem will, of necessity, be collaborative and global in nature. United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 calls upon member nations to take bold action to reverse the effects of climate change and arrest the trend of global warming. This goal is a natural expression of the human right to a clean and healthy environment.<sup>1</sup> This presents a significant challenge, particularly to developing nations which are often highly dependent on fossil-fuels for their energy needs, have high population density and are not in a position to sacrifice the lives and livelihoods of their citizens. Notwithstanding these difficulties, India has taken ambitious steps in its efforts to take climate action and move towards more renewable sources of energy. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid out ambitious targets for reducing India's carbon emissions at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland.<sup>2</sup> The following goals were announced: 1) India's non-fossil energy capacity is projected to reach 500 GW by 2030. This amount is larger than India's current total grid capacity and would allow 60% of India's power capacity to be fossil-free. This is well in excess of India's commitment of 40% under the Paris Agreement. 2) India has committed to 50% of its energy requirement in 2030 coming from renewable sources. In 2021, the figure stands at 12%. This is an enormous increase. 3) India's projected carbon emissions are to be reduced by 1 billion tons from its current figure of 2.6 billion tons. This is almost a 40% reduction in emissions over a short span. For a growing country, this is a significant commitment. 4) By 2030, India has committed to reducing the emissions intensity of its economy to less than 45%. This is a far more ambitious target than the previously existing goal of a 33-35% cut from the 2005 level of emissions. 5) By 2070, India has committed to achieving net zero emissions. This is an admirable long-term goal and experts believe that there is every possibility of India being able to switch to a carbon-free growth paradigm even earlier than this date.

Independent Report on India's Progress on Climate Initiatives: The Natural Resources Defence Council is a United States based non-profit environmental advocacy group headquartered in New York City.<sup>3</sup> The NRDC publishes an annual review on India's actions concerning climate change. The NRDC's latest review verifies that India is on track to meet, and in many areas exceed, its Paris Climate Agreement targets.<sup>4</sup> Some notable points in its review include the following: 1) Renewable energy sources are growing rapidly and currently stand at over 100 GW out of a total capacity of 387 GW. 2) The development of a new Hydrogen Mission exploring the utilization of green hydrogen. 3) Increasingly competitive Solar power sector with tariffs for solar energy power continually falling solar power tariffs. 4) Increases in electric mobility: India has allocated USD \$1.4 billion under Phase II of its Faster Adoption and Manufacture of (Hybrid and) Electric Vehicles (FAME) scheme resulting in greater electric mobility and creating the possibility of an earlier transition to electric vehicles. 5) Energy Efficient Buildings: As of July 2021, 18 States and 2 Union Territories have notified the Energy Conservation Building Code, ensuring energy savings in the construction and operation of buildings throughout India. 6) In August 2021, India committed to ratifying the Kigali Agreement, a global pact aimed at phasing down the use of HydroFluoroCarbons (HFCs) a pollutant commonly present in air-conditioning and cooling units. NRDC concludes that India has made robust progress on its climate commitments and remains in a position to fulfill and even exceed those commitments while maintaining growth on its current trajectory.<sup>5</sup> Implementation of SDG 13 and the human right to a clean environment requires member nations to maintain a delicate balance between taking bold climate action without compromising on the development, livelihoods and capabilities of its citizens. In the case of India, this challenge is particularly tricky owing to its enormous and growing population and developing economy. In the face of these challenges, India has committed to significant emission reductions and a prioritization of clean energy sources. To develop these capabilities India has mobilized and funded a number of initiatives bolstering its clean energy capabilities enabling India to meet and potentially exceed its commitments in this area.

1 <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/historic-move-un-declares-healthy-environment-human-right> 2 <https://www.mea.gov.in/SpeechesStatements.htm?dtl/34466/National+Statement+by+Prime+Minister+Shri+Narendra+Modi+at+COP26+Summit+in+Glasgow> 3 <https://www.nrdc.org/about> 4 <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/road-from-paris-202009.pdf> 5 <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/sameer-kwatra/indias-climate-journey-paris-glasgow>