Why India shouldn’t sign on to Net Zero

What is the issue?

The net zero campaign has been gaining momentum as a number of countries and non-state actors are pushing for the world’s carbon dioxide emissions to reach net zero.

What targets have been set by the countries towards net zero emissions?

> *IPCC AR6 emphasised that to keep temperature rise within 1.5°C, global emissions should be reduced by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, on the way to net zero 2050.*

- **Developed countries** – Countries such as the U.S., UK and Australia have committed to to achieve the goal of net zero GHG emissions by 2050.
- **Developing countries** – Countries such as China have pledged to achieve net zero emissions by 2060.
- India hasn’t set any net zero target so far.
- Non state actors - **Race To Zero** is a UN-led campaign is asking cities, businesses, universities, and more to hit net zero emissions.

Can net zero contain the global temperature rise within 1.5°C?

- The stringent limits on future cumulative emissions post 2020, amounts to less than a fifth of the total global carbon budget.
- The top three emitters of the world — China, the U.S. and the European Union — even after taking account of their net zero commitments will emit more than 500 billion tonnes of CO2 before net zero.
- These committed emissions will undermine the basic purpose of net zero.
- The failure of the developed world to meet its pre-2020 obligations provides little confidence.
- Neither the Paris Agreement nor climate science requires that net zero be reached individually by countries by 2050.
- Less than a fifth of the world has been responsible for three-fifths of all past cumulative emissions.

- But the current net zero campaign pushes the developing countries for emission reduction despite their already low emissions.

What India must do?

> *India's per capita emissions are less than half the world average and less than one-eighth of the U.S.'s.*

- India's contribution to global emissions, in both stock and flow, is so disproportionately low.
- India's commitment to net zero would endanger the future of its own population allowing the developed countries to continue the exploitation.
- India should enable the responsible use of coal, oil and gas to come out of lower middle-income economy status and for its socio-economic development.
- India's small industries sector which provides employment and livelihood to the majority of the population outside agriculture, needs expansion and modernisation.
- The agriculture sector, the second largest source of GHG emissions for India after energy, needs to double its productivity and farmers' incomes and build resilience.
- Infrastructure for climate resilience in general is critical to future adaptation to climate change.
- India cannot sign on to net zero, without the big emitters taking their fair share of the global carbon budget.

> *Carbon Budget is the estimated amount of carbon dioxide the world can emit still having a likely chance of limiting global temperature rise to 2°C above pre-industrial levels.*
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> *The budget is estimated to be around 1 trillion tonnes of carbon. The Global Carbon Budget is produced under the umbrella of Global Carbon Project (GCP).*

References

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