



**Published Date:** 17 Mar 2016

## **Global warming: Not just another economic or political crisis**

**Asadulla Iqbal**

Teaching and Research Associate, Gujarat National Law University

aiqbal@gnlu.ac.in

Scientists believe that our planet is warming up because of an increase in greenhouse gases – which trap heat from the sun, in the atmosphere. To respond to this threat, in November-December of 2015, world leaders from 195 nations gathered in the suburbs of Paris for a United Nations Climate Change Conference called COP21 or CMP 11 and the historical Paris Climate Pact was adopted. It was a culmination of four years of negotiations on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Records show that despite fluctuating naturally, during the last 50 years, global temperatures on average have increased on a rate which is the fastest-ever in history. If this is for real, then we are definitely going through a phase of climate crisis. And whether we choose to acknowledge this as an individual or not, this unquestionably is one existential threat to all living beings.

Air pollution is a situation which India is apparently already facing. Billions of tons of greenhouse gases and particle emissions cloud the sky every year. These gases trap sunlight, and an increase in this is slowly warming up the atmosphere, which in turn is resulting in climate change, ablation, and change in pattern of precipitation. Apparently, these problems are not visible in our daily lives, but eventually, they will bring nature's wrath upon us. Even a rise in the sea-level by a meter will flood major coastal regions of India. Nations across the globe are identifying this problem and taking steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit its threats. The point, here, is that the pollutants do not identify national boundaries and affect the atmosphere globally. This is the reason why nations are indulged in negotiations. Truth is that developed nations contribute the most to greenhouse emissions, and therefore, their responsibility doubles when speaking on a 'climate change' deal. Hence, the representatives at the Paris deal agreed upon limiting global warming temperatures by 2 degrees Celsius when compared to pre-industrial levels. However, the deal is not legally binding yet as it will require a minimum of 55 countries that account for over 50 percent of global greenhouse emissions to make it so. In the adopted agreement, parties agreed to pursue efforts to limit temperature increase at 1.5 degree Celsius. The scheme appears to be convincing, but on other hand, many scientists believe that this goal will require zero greenhouse gas emissions between 2030 and 2050. And if this were indeed the case, then just capping emissions by a measly 2 degrees Celsius is conjecture as actual temperature increase will be 3-4 degrees Celsius, which scientists' term as dangerous.

Considered as a developing nation, India's emission of greenhouse gases does not equate with US or European countries, but eventually, we will reach that level if immediate changes are not incorporated. India did make all efforts during the Paris deal to grab little relaxation being a developing nation, but it still had to sign up with the 1.5 degree Celsius limit. It also failed to get a deal which obliged rich countries to provide clean technology, free of intellectual property rights, to poor ones, and thus, the Paris deal did not bring much for us in terms of global climate cooperation. On a national level, India made its first effort for the cause by releasing the National Action Plan on Climate Change in 2008. Apart from this, India has also made various efforts to promote sustainable development and for the introduction and use of clean-energy technologies by initiating the National Clean Energy Fund in 2014.

Global warming and climate change is not an economic or political crisis that will subside only by efforts from governments. It is a threat which all humans contribute to and it needs a collective effort to deal with. Our dependency on fossil fuel is the main contributing factor. We – as individuals, need to make efforts and minimise our contribution to green house emissions. At the moment, we are not considering the future, but if we do not change our lifestyle, the inevitable will happen. This is already evident from the rise in temperatures, change in weather patterns, water scarcity, droughts and numerous other signs.

Every time a harvest fails, farmers look up to the sky and hope to flourish next year and that next year will be unpredictable unless we stop interfering with nature. We have pushed nature to its limits and now it is pushing back.

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