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Govt Unsure Whether Copenhagen Target Safe for India or Not

India had committed at Copenhagen to keep temperature rise within 2C but RTI campaign reveals that the govt. has no knowledge whether that will keep Indian citizens safe from dangerous climate change or not.

Climate Revolution Initiative announced today that RTI applications filed with the Ministry of Environment and Forests show that the government does not know whether 2C is a safe target for India nor does it know what concentration of CO2 in the atmosphere or a cumulative CO2 budget would keep the world from exceeding 2C warming.

India has recently signed up to the Copenhagen accord which aims to limit greenhouse gas emissions in order to keep average global surface temperature rise within 2 degree C, the RTI replies show that the government has not done its homework. The Ministry of Environment and Forests could not cite any research conducted by it that validates that 2C is a safe target for India.

At Copenhagen, about half the world countries had demanded that the world agrees to a temperature limit no more than 1.5C. The proposal was made by Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), a group of 43 of the smallest and most vulnerable nations, and was backed by 48 of the least developed nations including several African nations.

A group led by Bolivian president Evo Morales went as far as demanding developed nations to agree to limiting temperature rise to 1C. However, more industrialised countries like the US, Japan and most European countries on the other hand preferred the 2C temperature rise limit.

India, along with other large developing nations chose to go with the developed world supporting 2C limit disregarding small and vulnerable countries plea who are most threatened

by climate change and perhaps disregarding unnumbered citizens of India threatened by 2C limit.

Two degree C is the upper limit that most scientists say must not be crossed in order to prevent dangerous climate change. However, this limit was determined in mid 90's first by European Union and formally adopted as the temperature limit to prevent dangerous climate change at a scientific convention in 2002.

Since then scientific understanding of processes driving climate change has increased dramatically and several scientists now say that 2C cannot guarantee a stable climate. James Hansen, Nasa's leading climate scientist, in a presentation to the US congress in 2008, called the 2C target "a recipe for global disaster, not salvation."

The RTI applications on climate targets once again reveal that the government has been playing blind at international negotiations as far as science of climate change is concerned.

The disclosure from these applications is part of a planned series of revelations Climate Revolution Initiative intends to make over the coming weeks from over 124 RTI applications it had filed with various government ministries. Previously, the group had revealed that Ministry of Environment and the Prime Minister's Office have no mechanism to monitor international developments in climate science and that MoEF and PMO are actively preventing release of crucial information regarding climate policy formation process.

About Climate Revolution

Climate Revolution Initiative is a series of ambitious proposals and initiatives that can potentially transform the social and political climate on climate change in India and be replicated in any part of the world. Unlike environmental groups, Climate Revolution Initiative argues that there is no possibility that the climate crisis can be addressed through the UNFCCC process. The ambitious initiative aims to educate and mobilise the public to force the governments to change. Climate Revolution Initiative was founded by Manu Sharma, an activist and renewable energy expert. Details about its RTI Initiative, including scanned replies from various govt. authorities, are available on www.climaterevolution.net/rti