

Essay and Slogan on the topic - Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) - Climate Actions

Slogan

Come together, Work together for a better future

Goal 13 : Climate Action

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 global goals designed to be a “blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all”. The SDGs, set in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and intended to be achieved by the year 2030, are part of UN Resolution 70/1, the 2030 Agenda. [1]

These goals are broad and interdependent. Each of the SDGs has a list of targets which are measured with indicators. The year by which the target is meant to be achieved varies between the year 2020 or 2030, or no end date is given. They have been built from upon decades of work done by the UN and various countries2 both developed and developing and they are essential for developing a world in which the future generations have access to all necessary resources and also for making our nation self-reliant in the near future. Achieving these goals as a nation will surely take us a long way in achieving our goal of becoming “Aatmanirbhar Bharat”.

Out of the 17 SDGs defined by the United Nations, I will talk about the 13th sustainable goal, called Climate Action and defined as

“Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts by regulating emissions and promoting developments in renewable energy.”[2] Some major aspects as to why this goal needs to be achieved as soon as possible can be seen from the facts that -

- 2019 was the **second warmest year on record** and the end of the warmest decade (2010- 2019) ever recorded.[3]
- Carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels and other **greenhouse gases in the atmosphere** rose to new records in 2019.[3]
- Although greenhouse gas emissions are projected to drop about 6 per cent in 2020 due to travel bans and economic slowdowns resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, this improvement is only temporary and still falls short of the 7.6 per cent annual reduction required to limit global warming to 1.5° C. [4][5] **Climate change is not on pause.** Once the global economy begins to recover from the pandemic, emissions are expected to return to higher levels.[3]
- Climate change is affecting every country on every continent. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives. Weather patterns are changing, sea levels are rising, and weather events are becoming more extreme.[3]

All these are evident from years of work done by atmospheric scientists working in different domains of the field, from oceanography to geology and atmospheric sciences. It is clear that saving lives and livelihoods requires urgent action to address both the pandemic and the climate emergency.

A healthy, progressive and economical strong nation can be fostered only in the best surroundings and to choose one between economic development and climate stability, by ignoring the other will be a great disservice to the future generations and by definition is against the very nature of Sustainable development and hence it is evident that climate action is the perhaps one of the, if not the most importance goals in the SDGs defined by the United Nations.

But how can the nations achieve this?

The United Nations Sustainable development goals report 2020 [6] states that only 85 countries have national disaster risk reduction strategies aligned to the **Sendai Framework** [7] and investment in fossil fuels continues to be higher than investments in climate activities. These things need to change and the **Paris Agreement** [8], adopted in 2015, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The agreement also aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change, through appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity building framework.

The UN Secretary-General has proposed six climate-positive actions for governments to take once they go about building back their economies and societies:[3]

1. Green transition: Investments must accelerate the decarbonization of all aspects of our economy.
2. Green jobs and sustainable and inclusive growth
3. Green economy: making societies and people more resilient through a transition that is fair to all and leaves no one behind.
4. Invest in sustainable solutions: fossil fuel subsidies must end and polluters must pay for their pollution.
5. Confront all climate risks
6. Cooperation – no country can succeed alone.

In addition to this, as a nation, India needs to focus on investments in alternate sources of energy, specifically in the sectors of Geothermal and Hydro energy that have shown a lot of promise. In addition to this, India can increase investments in the research and development of environment friendly technologies such as using Natural Gas instead of Diesel and promote car-pooling, etc. The biggest that India can take as a developing nation is to make policies and laws to create more awareness among the general public about climate change and its importance and how each individual can play a small role in helping save Mother India and mother earth.

Mitigating climate change is a question of survival and it is essential for Humans as a species to come together and work together and take the necessary steps of **Climate Action** to overcome this major hurdle that stands in front of a Sustainable Future and as a young aspiring atmospheric scientist, I am optimistic that we can surely get it done in this decade.

References

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