

## Press Release

### **CSEP Report Launch | Tracks to Transition: India's Global Climate Strategy**

*DG of International Solar Alliance Ajay Mathur says, "The report calls for the creation of a special envoy – I'll call it 'climate czar' because that's more neutral, it's both outside and inside – is essential for us to move ahead on the climate debate".*

The Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP) launched the report **Tracks to Transition: India's Global Climate Strategy** on October 19, 2023 at the Silver Oak Hall, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The report is edited by **Constantino Xavier**, Fellow, CSEP and **Karthik Nachiappan**, Research Fellow, National University of Singapore, and Non-Resident Fellow, CSEP.

The report features seven case studies by domestic and international experts who assess India's stance across four principal tracks of global climate cooperation. It maps both what has been done in the past as well as the avenues towards a comprehensive climate strategy for India. The report builds on greater policy coordination and expanded state capacity for India to engage externally with climate change. It offers research-based, actionable foreign policy options to accelerate India's green transition and facilitate the road towards the country's 2030 commitments and its 2070 net zero target.

CSEP President Laveesh Bhandari opened proceedings, saying that the report "emphasises that India has been more than a mere participant in the global climate discourse; it has been an innovator, contributing to novel solutions."

Director General of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), **Ajay Mathur**, provided the opening remarks. He commended the report, saying "This report very ably brings together, the strategy for pulling together the outreach agenda... we hope this report enables and stimulates conversation and enables us to create all kinds of initiatives that are necessary".

He further stated, "There is no doubt... the time when we were most effective was when there was coordination happening between internal and external stakeholders in the Prime Minister's office. And consequently, the report calls for the creation of a special envoy – I'll call it 'climate czar' because that's more neutral, it's both outside and inside – is essential for us to move ahead on the climate debate so that the external kinds of actions that we do are built on our internal strengths".

"There is a story to be told, there is an experience which other countries see as being applicable to them because the starting point of India 15-20 years ago and their situation today are very similar," he added.

This report by CSEP bridges two worlds: energy, power and climate with foreign policy, strategy, and global cooperation. Dr Mathur said, "As the position of India as a developing country, and then an emerging economy, and then a geopolitical bloc has occurred – so has our climate negotiation approach become a little more nuanced... the international negotiating strategy becomes more enmeshed with internal development goals and policies."

The launch of the report was followed by a panel discussion featuring **Shyam Saran**, Former Foreign Secretary of India and former Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Climate Change; **Navroz Dubash**, Professor, Centre for Policy Research; and **Dhanasree Jayaram**, Assistant Professor, Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, Manipal University. The event also featured a video message by **Adriana Abdenur**, Special Advisor in the Presidency of the Republic of Brazil.

**Shyam Sharan** acknowledged that the report made very important recommendations for the Ministry of External Affairs. "... we certainly need to have in the Ministry of External Affairs, a very strong focus on climate change... because at the end of the day, these negotiations are intensely political negotiations... what is being done on the negotiating floor is an intensely political kind of game being played. Therefore, while your technology aspect, your data aspect, the kind of concerns they have -- those are absolutely important but how they are then brought to the negotiating table and how you play the game is something which the Ministry of External Affairs has to be very, very closely involved."

**Navroz Dubash** added, "The foundational piece that we need to think about is what exactly are India's interests, for which we need a knowledge institution, that looks at synergies and trade-offs between low carbon future and development".

**Dhanasree Jayaram** stated, "I would like to add maybe another layer to the diplomacy -- which is like transnational diplomacy, which is beyond the state, beyond governments. Because what you see today is that you have a lot of sub-national actors including cities and you know many others who are also as much involved. States in India for instance are actually doing a lot more with the state action plans on climate change."

The entire report [Tracks to Transition: India's Global Climate Strategy](#) can be accessed on the CSEP website. A [video of the event](#) will also be available very soon.

*For any media enquiries, please get in touch with [Trishna Wahengbam](#) or [Anindita Sinh](#).*

## **About CSEP**

The Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP) conducts in-depth, policy relevant research and provides evidence-based recommendations to the challenges facing India and the world. It draws on the expertise of its researchers, extensive interactions with policy makers as well as convening power to enhance the impact of research. Our researchers work across domains including, but not limited to, Growth, Finance & Development; Energy, Natural Resources and Sustainability; and Foreign Policy and Security. All our research and policy recommendations are freely available to the public. CSEP is based in New Delhi.

