

New Delhi
November 10, 2014

To,
Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India
Prime Minister's office
South Block, Raisina Hill,
New Delhi 110 001

Subject: Urgent action needed to operationalize equity in the context of Climate Change

Honorable Prime Minister,

We congratulate you on your concern on the issue of the climate crisis and appreciate the fact that you have even written on the subject when you were the Chief Minister of Gujarat.

We are a Coalition of Organisations and Networks engaged in understanding Climate Change and its impacts globally. We are involved in articulating choices of action for ecosystem communities to adapt to the already deleterious impacts on life, livelihoods, private and common resources, health and well-being.

Our concern is the lack of global ambition on 'mitigation and the fact that time is running out to address mitigation urgently and adequately. Ineffective action might result in dire consequences as emphasized by the latest IPCC AR 5 synthesis report which presents stark and sharp warnings especially for developing countries. It states that "climate change impacts are projected to slow down economic growth, make poverty reduction more difficult, further erode food security, and prolong existing and create new poverty traps." This has extreme significance for our country like ours where achieving sustainable development has been an overriding national objective. We urge the Government of India to play a leadership role in pursuing ambitious global emission reduction commitments to respond to the climate crisis. We support the fundamental principle of 'common but differentiated responsibility', which in terms of equity puts primary responsibility on the Annex I countries. We support India's recently re-invigorated stance on equity in the face of fierce opposition mainly from Annex I countries. However, our concern is that in the contemporary context, equity needs to be strategically nuanced at the UNFCCC negotiations. India has been championing the equity agenda all this while but hasn't been able to propose a workable framework to operationalize equity. In our opinion this is a missed opportunity wherein India will be led by other countries to define equity agenda which might not be suitable for us. Let's not lose sight of the fact that Lima will be the last chance for us to ensure that the new agreement is 'equitable' and therefore effective and durable.

In making India's position stronger in these negotiations, we need to spell out creative and transformational trajectories for mitigation and adaptation, which takes into consideration the development needs of our country in the

context of our fair share of environmental space, while also spelling out obligations of Annex I countries for mitigation, technology and financial transfers.

A corollary to this is – credible domestic action on these very same fronts based on equity and capability. In our country, 2/3rd of our agriculture farms are rainfed making millions of people food insecure and malnourished, 2/3rd of our families depend on fire wood and biomass for cooking energy, whereas a small number of households enjoy huge LPG subsidies and more than 1/3rd of families do not have access to electricity!

Further in the light of the above and factoring in the recent finding of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), we urge you to consider adopting a new energy pathway for India, that is most suited to address the issue of providing clean energy access to all Indian households. This we believe will also help in reducing our oil imports due to lesser use of Kerosene and save the exchequer from the subsidies provided for kerosene, which could be used to for clean energy access solutions. Further, taking into consideration the country's long term energy security needs, we also urge you to put in place policies and programmes that will lead to fast scale up renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions, thereby phasing out the coal from the electricity generation mix over a period of time, and in tune with the IPCC recommendations".

This will enhance our credibility internationally, as well as domestically; and strengthen the Government of India at the UNFCCC negotiations with the backing of Civil Society and local communities as we go to Lima, and then on to the watershed COP 21 at Paris next year.

With Hope and in Solidarity,

All our signatures and logos here.....

Copy to:

Prakash Javadekar, Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, GoI

Piyush Goyal, Minister for Power, Coal and New and Renewable Energy, GoI