

Green Journalism: Environment And Media

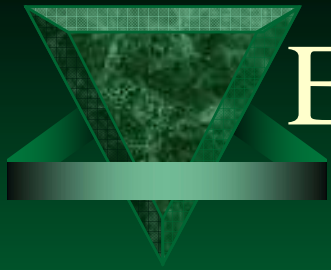


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Heat wave in India kills 1,000 people in 2002

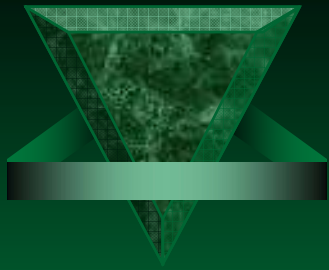
An intense heat wave in southern India has killed more than 1,000 people, making it the deadliest week on record for any heat wave in the country.

Authorities in Andhra Pradesh province said that at least 1,030 people, most of them elderly and poor, had died between May 9 and 15, while temperatures soared to 49 C along the Bay of Bengal.



Effects of Global Warming On India

- ✓ The effects of **global warming on the Indian subcontinent** vary from the submergence of low-lying islands and coastal lands to the melting of glaciers in the Indian Himalayas, threatening the volumetric flow rate of many of the most important rivers of India and South Asia. In India, such effects are projected to impact millions of lives. As a result of ongoing climate change, the climate of India has become increasingly volatile over the past several decades; this trend is expected to continue.



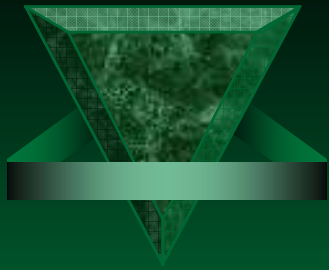
Greenhouse gases in India

- Elevated carbon dioxide emissions contributed to the greenhouse effect, causing warmer weather that lasted long after the atmospheric shroud of dust and aerosols had cleared. Further climatic changes 20 million years ago, long after India had crashed into the Laurasian landmass, were severe enough to cause the extinction of many endemic Indian forms.
- The formation of the Himalayas resulted in blockage of frigid Central Asian air, preventing it from reaching India; this made its climate significantly warmer and more tropical in character than it would otherwise have been.



Effects of global warming on India and Bangladesh

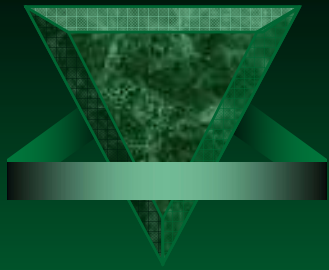
- ✓ Several effects of global warming, including steady sea level rise, increased cyclonic activity, and changes in ambient temperature and precipitation patterns, have affected or are projected to affect India. Ongoing sea level rises have submerged several low-lying islands in the Sundarbans, displacing thousands of people. Temperature rises on the Tibetan Plateau, which are causing Himalayan glaciers to retreat.



Environmental

- ✓ The first among the countries to be affected by severe climate change is Bangladesh. Its sea level, temperature and evaporation are increasing, and the changes in precipitation and cross boundary river flows are already beginning to cause drainage congestion. There is a reduction in fresh water availability, disturbance of morphologic processes and a higher intensity of flooding and other such disasters.

Bangladesh only contributes 0.1% of the world's emissions yet it has 2.4% of the world's population. In contrast, the United States makes up about 5 percent of the world's population, yet they produce approximately 25 percent of the pollution that causes global warming.



Environmental

- Increased landslides and flooding are projected to have an impact upon states such as Assam.

Ecological disasters, such as a 1998 coral bleaching event that killed off more than 70% of corals in the reef ecosystems off Lakshadweep and the Andamans, and was brought on by elevated ocean temperatures tied to global warming, are also projected to become increasingly common.



Economic

- ✓ The Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research has reported that, if the predictions relating to global warming made by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change come to fruition, climate-related factors could cause India's GDP to decline by up to 9%; contributing to this would be shifting growing seasons for major crops such as rice, production of which could fall by 40%. Around seven million people are projected to be displaced due to, among other factors, submersion of parts of Mumbai and Chennai, if global temperatures were to rise by a mere 2 °C (3.6 °F).
- ✓ Villagers in India's North Eastern state of Meghalaya are also concerned that rising sea levels will submerge neighbouring low-lying Bangladesh, resulting in an influx of refugees into Meghalaya—which has few resources to handle such a situation.

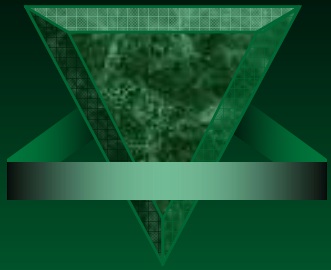


Economic

- ✓ If severe climate changes occur, Bangladesh will lose land along the coast line. This will be highly damaging to Bangladeshis especially because nearly two-thirds of Bangladeshis are employed in the agriculture sector, with rice as the single-most-important product.

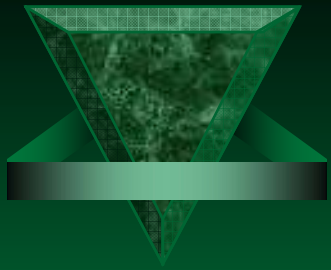
The economy has grown 5-6% over the past few years despite inefficient state-owned enterprises, delays in exploiting natural gas resources insufficient power supplies, and slow implementation of economic reforms.

However, Bangladesh remains a poor, overpopulated, and inefficiently-governed nation. If no further steps are taken to improve the current conditions global warming will affect the economy severely worsening the present issues further.



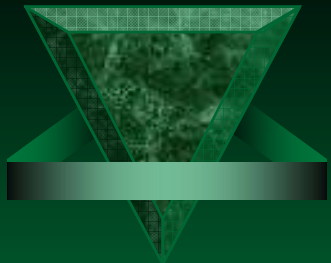
Social

- ✓ Climate Change in India will have a disproportionate impact on the more than 400 million that make up India's poor. This is because so many depend on natural resources for their food, shelter and income. More than 56% of people in India work in agriculture, while many others earn their living in coastal areas.



Social

- ✓ Indian journalist, Praful Bidwai, argues that the Indian Government's climate policy does not address the interests of the majority of these peoples for whom climate change will mean hunger, food insecurity, and destruction of livelihoods but is instead focused on maximising Indian elite's freedom to consume by maintaining high emissions-intensive GDP growth.



Past climate change

- ✓ However, such shifts are not new: for example, earlier in the current Holocene epoch (4,800–6,300 years ago), parts of what is now the Thar Desert were wet enough to support perennial lakes; researchers have proposed that this was due to much higher winter precipitation, which coincided with stronger monsoons. Similarly, Kashmir, which once had a warm subtropical climate, shifted to a substantially colder temperate climate 2.6–3.7 mya; it was then repeatedly subjected to extended cold spells starting 1 years ago.

Thick haze and smoke along the Ganga In
North & West India.





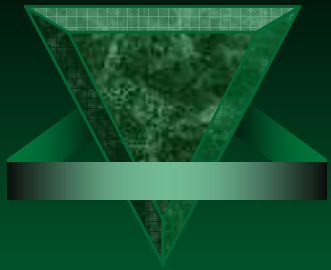
Pollution

- ✓ Thick haze and smoke, originating from burning biomass in northwestern India and air pollution from large industrial cities in northern India, often concentrate inside the Ganges Basin. Prevailing westerlies carry aerosols along the southern margins of the steep-faced Tibetan Plateau to eastern India and the Bay of Bengal. Dust and black carbon, which are blown towards higher altitudes by winds at the southern faces of the Himalayas, can absorb shortwave radiation and heat the air over the Tibetan Plateau. The net atmospheric heating due to aerosol absorption causes the air to warm and convect upwards, increasing the concentration of moisture in the mid-troposphere and providing positive feedback that stimulates further heating of aerosols.



Awareness

- ✓ Tribal people in India's remote northeast plan to honour former U.S. Vice President Al Gore with an award for promoting awareness on climate change that they say will have a devastating impact on their homeland.
- ✓ Meghalaya -- meaning 'Abode of the Clouds' in Hindi -- is home to the towns of Cherrapunji and Mawsyngram, which are credited with being the wettest places in the world due to their high rainfall.



Awareness

- ✓ But scientists state that global climate change is causing these areas to experience an increasingly sparse and erratic rainfall pattern and a lengthened dry season, affecting the livelihoods of thousands of villagers who cultivate paddy and maize. Some areas are also facing water shortages.



Copenhagen

✓ The **2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference**, commonly known as the **Copenhagen Summit**, was held at the Bella Center in Copenhagen, Denmark, between 7 December and 18 December.

The conference included the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 5th Meeting of the Parties (COP/MOP 5) to the Kyoto Protocol. According to the Bali Road Map, a framework for climate change mitigation beyond 2012 was to be agreed there.



Copenhagen

✓ The conference was preceded by the Climate Change: Global Risks, Challenges and Decisions scientific conference, which took place in March 2009 and was also held at the Bella Center. The negotiations began to take a new format when in May 2009 UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon attended the World Business Summit on Climate Change in Copenhagen, organised by the Copenhagen Climate Council (COC), where he requested that COC councillors attend New York's Climate Week at the Summit on Climate Change on 22 September and engage with heads of government on the topic of the climate problem.

Copenhagen



✓ The Copenhagen Accord was drafted by the US, China, India, Brazil and South Africa on December 18, and judged a "meaningful agreement" by the United States government.

It was "taken note of", but not "adopted", in a debate of all the participating countries the next day, and it was not passed unanimously.

The document recognised that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of the present day and that actions should be taken to keep any temperature increases to below 2°C. The document is not legally binding and does not contain any legally binding commitments for reducing CO₂ emissions.



Copenhagen

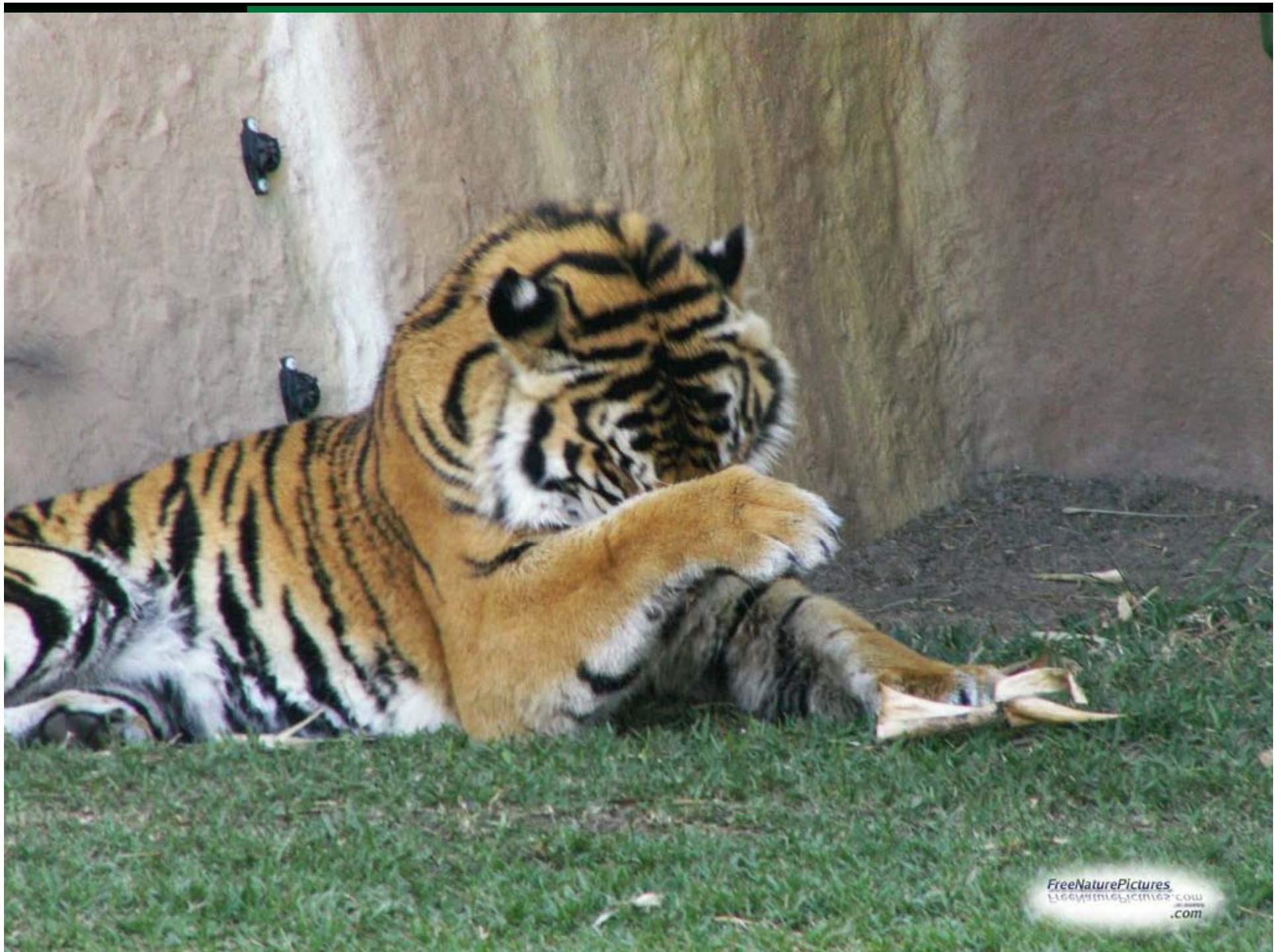
✓ Many countries and non-governmental organisations were opposed to this agreement, but, as of January 4, 2010, 138 countries have signed the agreement.

Tony Tujan of the IBON Foundation suggests the perceived failure of Copenhagen may prove useful, if it allows people to unravel some of the underlying misconceptions and work towards a new, more holistic view of things.

This could help gain the support of developing countries.

Uttarakhand's Valley of National Park









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Namaste
And
Thank
you very
much.