



For a healthy planet

Posted at: 21/03/2019

We must think of context-specific solutions for India to play its part in reducing global warming

- Last week in Nairobi, governments welcomed the Global Environment Outlook 6: Healthy Planet, Healthy People (GEO-6) report.
 - GEO-6 argues that in a business-as-usual scenario, the world will exhaust its energy-related carbon budget in less than 20 years to keep the global temperature rise to well below 2°C; it will take even less time to exhaust the budget to keep the global temperature rise to below 1.5°C.
 - India could save \$3.3-8.4 trillion in a 1.5°C world.
 - It is in India's interest to aim for 1.5-2°C.
 - This would mean investing in not new fossil fuels but in renewables and better batteries.
 - Investing in inappropriate infrastructure has costs in terms of climate change and stranded assets — decommissioning oil and gas infrastructure in the Netherlands, a small country, is €6.7-10 billion.
 - If India's universities develop tomorrow's technologies, it could provide cutting-edge and frugal technologies.
 - This could change energy geopolitics and remove the excuse of rich countries of postponing carbon neutrality.
 - Developing countries can change - Costa Rica, for instance, has pledged carbon neutrality by 2021.
-
- As GDP grows at the cost of the environment and does not reflect an increase in everyone's well-being, India should reconsider how it calculates its GDP.
 - A healthy planet is a public good and governments should take responsibility for it.
 - Investing in water and sanitation will bring returns — a \$1 investment

in water and sanitation could bring \$4 in returns; a green investment of 2% of global GDP could lead to similar growth rates by 2050.

- We must mobilise think tanks to work out context-specific solutions for India.
- Investing in education for sustainable development, vertical and compact cities, public transport with cheap parking facilities, renewable energy, removing single-use plastics, and reducing food waste are the way to go to reduce global warming.

The Hindu

