

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 57
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.12.2021

Global Methane Pledge

*57. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that India is not a signatory to the Global Methane Pledge, if so, the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether Government is aware that India is the 3rd largest emitter of Methane in the world; and
- (c) whether Government is planning to implement any programme to harness energy from the large amount of Methane released from its animal husbandry related activities, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI. BHUPENDER YADAV)

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (c) of Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. *57 to be answered on Thursday, the 2nd December, 2021 on ‘Global Methane Pledge’ raised by Shri Md. Nadimul Haque.

(a) Yes, Sir. India is not a signatory to the Global Methane Pledge. The Pledge was proposed by the European Union and the United States of America at the Major Economies Forum (MEF) on Energy and Climate on September 17, 2021 targeting at 30% reduction in global methane emissions from 2020 levels by 2030. India is a Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement. India remains steadfast in its commitment to the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement in framing and implementing its actions to combat climate change. The Pledge is outside the ambit of the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement. Under the Paris Agreement, India has submitted its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in 2015, which do not include sector or gas specific emissions reduction targets. In exercise of its right of sovereign, national determination of its climate actions, and as per the assessments by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the Government decided not to sign the “Global Methane Pledge”. The salient reasons and related information are as below:

- The two predominant sources of methane emissions in India are enteric fermentation and paddy cultivation. These emissions result from the agricultural activities of small, marginal, and medium farmers across India, whose livelihood stands threatened by the aforesaid Pledge. In contrast, agriculture in developed countries is dominated by industrial agriculture.
- In the context of food security, the methane emissions are ‘survival’ emissions and not luxury emissions. In addition to impacting farmers’ income, this can impact agricultural production, especially that of paddy. India is one of the largest producers and exporters of rice. Therefore, this Pledge also has the potential to affect India’s trade and economic prospects.
- Agriculture was not included in the emission intensity target as per India’s pre-2020 voluntary commitments.
- As per the 6th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the predominant gas responsible for climate change is CO₂ which has a lifetime of 100-1000 years. This Pledge shifts the CO₂ reduction burden to methane reduction, which has a lifetime of just 12 years.
- Also, India has the largest cattle population in the world, which is a source of livelihood to a large section of population. The contribution of Indian livestock to global pool of enteric methane is very low, as Indian livestock utilizes large volumes of agricultural by-products and unconventional feed material.

(b) Different databases rank countries differently in respect of their methane emissions. As per the Global Methane Initiative (GMI) website, China, Russia and USA are the top three methane emitters. India ranks fourth, and its methane emissions are nearly one-third that of China. As per India’s third Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC, methane emissions accounted for 409 million tons CO₂e i.e. 14.43% of India’s total Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in 2016. The agriculture sector in the year 2016 registered a decrease of 2.25 % since 2014.

(c) Yes, Sir. Through initiatives like 'The Gobar (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources) – Dhan' scheme and New National Biogas and Organic Manure Programme, cattle waste utilisation is being incentivised, in addition to production of clean energy in villages. Gobar Dhan scheme supports biodegradable waste recovery and conversion of waste into resources, reduction of GHG emissions, reduction in imports of crude oil, boosts entrepreneurship and promotes organic farming. The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying is implementing National Livestock Mission, which *inter alia*, includes Breed Improvement and Balanced Rationing. Feeding livestock with superior quality balanced ration is helping to reduce methane emissions from the livestock.
