

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST, AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1010
TO BE ANSWERED ON 15.12.2022

Pledge to reduce Methane gas emissions

1010. SHRI NARAIN DASS GUPTA:

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

- (a) whether India refused to sign the pledge to reduce Methane gas emissions by 30 percent by 2030 at COP 27 held in Egypt;
- (b) if so, whether Government is not prioritizing Methane gas reduction to combat warming in India;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) if so, the steps taken in that direction?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) to (d) India has not signed the Global Methane Pledge proposed by the European Union and the United States of America to target 30% reduction in global methane emissions from 2020 levels by 2030. In exercise of its right of sovereign and nationally determined nature 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 of India decided not to sign the "Global Methane Pledge". The salient reasons and related information are as below:

- i. 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.
- ii. 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.
- iii. Agriculture was not included in the emission intensity target as per India's pre-2020 voluntary commitments.
- iv. 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.

- v. 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.
- vi. India is a Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement. The Pledge is outside the ambit of the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement.

Under the Paris Agreement, India has submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), which do not include sector or gas specific emissions reduction targets. India remains steadfast in its commitment in framing and implementing its actions to combat climate change. The ongoing measures to reduce methane gas emissions are as follows:

- i. The National Mission Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), implemented by Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, involves climate resilient practices including methane reduction practices in rice cultivation. These practices contribute to substantial reduction of methane emissions.
- ii. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) project has developed several technologies with mitigation potential for methane from rice viz. System for Rice Intensification – The technique has potential to enhance rice yield from 36-49% with about 22-35% less water than conventional transplanted rice; Direct Seeded Rice – The system reduces methane emissions as it does not involve raising nurseries, puddling and transplanting. Unlike transplanted paddy cultivation, standing water is not maintained in this system; and Crop Diversification Programme – Methane emissions is avoided due to diversion of paddy to alternate crops like pulses, oilseeds, maize, cotton and agro forestry.
- iii. Capacity building programmes are conducted through Krishi Vigyan Kendras across the country for creating awareness on climate resilient practices.
- iv. The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD) 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.
- v. Government of India promotes green fodder production, silage making, chaff cutting, and total mixed ration under National Livestock Mission with a view to reduce methane emission from livestock.
- vi. 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. The Gobardhan scheme, inter alia, supports biodegradable waste recovery and conversion of waste into resources and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
