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India's Strategic Engagement in Global Climate Multilateralism and COP Negotiations

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Abstract: *India has transformed its attitude towards global climate multilateralism, becoming an active actor balancing its developmental concerns with its obligation to reduce and regulate emissions. The revolution implies changes in the national priorities, foreign policy, and environmental requirements. The analysis determines the strategies India has employed through multilateral arenas, including the UNFCCC Conferences of the Parties, its leadership in other multilateral initiatives, such as the International Solar Alliance, and its membership in coalitions like BASIC and G-77. It is based on the idea of promoting equity in India through common but differentiated responsibilities, negotiating climate finance and technology transfer, and aligning national policies with national commitments through the National Action Plan on Climate Change and nationally determined contributions. The research article examines the Indian diplomatic strategies in major COP negotiations, development/reduction, domestic politics, and feelings of marginalization. It also analyses how to enhance implementation, develop regional leadership in South Asia, and change how diplomats work in a polycentric governance system. The results indicate how moral commitments and pragmatic variables can affect India's climate diplomacy and how they could influence future global climate laws.*

Keywords: *Climate Diplomacy; Multilateralism; COP Negotiations; India's Climate Policy; Climate Finance and Equity*

1. Introduction-

Over the last decade, India's role in global climate multilateralism has changed substantially. Although it was initially regarded as a reluctant actor, India was put under pressure from the international community that could derail its developmental plans. Over the last few years, however, it has re-entered the climate negotiations as an open and participating partner. Such a change is due to shifts in the country's priorities and the growing significance of global environmental problems. The intensification of the connection

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between ecological policy and economic and geopolitical factors is also considered an influential factor (Guha, 2022). India has thus managed economic growth and its obligations to reduce emissions while retaining its strategic independent stance in international relations.

Energy security, poverty, and industrialization determine India's climate policy. India aims to be an active climate diplomat by leveraging technological collaboration and focusing on the interests of developing economies (Munge, 2023). In a bid to enhance its geopolitical power, it is involved in world climate governance. This is evident in its leadership of the International Solar Alliance and its participation in major summits, such as the UNFCCC COPs.

To continue demonstrating this development, India's diplomatic strategy since COP15 has undergone significant changes. Alliances and changing group politics now determine its negotiating position. Though India still follows the same concept as the BASIC countries: Brazil, South Africa, and China, it has assumed more flexibility of policy, focusing more on the issue-related partnerships than on traditional affiliations (Savorskaya, 2016). India employs economic lingo to explain the importance of climate policy to the public, and most of the time, the focus is on how clean energy, economic growth, and employment can coexist. The same can be observed among other world leaders, such as the United States, which is establishing a climate action mitigation foundation (Luo and Yu, 2024). Government policies in India have promoted the use of renewable energy in support of a low-carbon path. Such initiatives, such as energy-efficiency retrofits and the widespread use of LED lights, reflect this concentration (Tripathy and Barik, 2024).

Based on these diplomatic approaches, India employs technology to enhance climate action. It protects its niche in development by promoting low-cost climate technologies internationally. India, being a consumer and provider of climate finance and technology, influences climate policies by the BASIC bloc (Hochstetler, 2012). India's collective accountability is essential, as developing nations are repeatedly encouraged to reduce emissions associated with goods used in other parts of the world (Climate Change et al., 2022).

In addition to these formal negotiations, India also shapes climate policies through multilateral groupings and South-South cooperation within a polycentric system of governance (Corbett et al., 2020). This approach demonstrates the policy of Indian diversification of influence and suggests that it has reached the margins of institutional participation. Now, however, India is focusing on developing a low-carbon sector and green-skilled labour to enhance international climate policy, as discussed in the next section. As global emissions increase, there is a need for balance within the country and on the international stage. The success India has in achieving this balance will determine its future participation in climate governance (Munge,

2023). A combination of these factors demonstrates India's changing approach to multilateral climate negotiations.

2. Theoretical Foundations of Global Climate Governance

2.1 Defining Climate Multilateralism and Justice

Multilateralism in climate change is defined as cooperation among states based on the principles of fairness and shared responsibility, particularly in the Indian context. Climate justice is associated with socio-economic development, as India encourages vulnerable populations and requests financial and technological aid from industrialized countries. India manages the structural imbalances within the global climate control by establishing strategic coalitions and promoting the energy-development finance nexus, particularly due to the increasingly polycentric governance. India supports flexible pathways to address emissions, equity, and the responsibility of high-emission states to make the fight against climate change fair and just.

2.2 Evolution of International Climate Regimes

The history of international climate regimes is an essential context for the current climate negotiations India is holding on the global stage and for the country's evolution over the past 50 years. Environmental issues also entered international law with the 1972 Stockholm Conference (Mathur & Raman, 2024). It was further reinforced in 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit, which recognized climate change as a distinct policy domain and helped shape the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Another initiative taken in this step was by India, which collaborates with developing countries to offer equity through common but differentiated responsibilities (Kumari, 2020). This first lobbying laid the basis for India's current negotiating position.

The assistance of the following agreements, in particular, the Kyoto Protocol of 1997, contributed to the development of this regime. Outside the USA, in Europe and India, as well as in the European Union, the COP1 in Berlin issued demands stronger than those made in the USA (Mathur and Raman, 2024). The Kyoto framework, on the other hand, established a dichotomous categorization of Annex I and non-Annex I nations. This congruence with India's need for a bit of space in the emerging economies also created rifts in future negotiations. As scientific evidence mounted on the urgency of climate change, the 2015 Paris Agreement at COP21 offered greater flexibility, requiring all parties to make nationally determined contributions (NDCs) that are to be reviewed periodically (Kumari, 2020). This weakened the legal equality

of CBDR, and India upheld its own developmental agenda through having capacity-related clauses and commitments on finance (Guha, 2022).

Climate talks have also been contentious over matters of finance and technology transfer. India has once again consistently lobbied for adequate, consistent climate funding so that it does not interfere with the economic transition (Obergassel et al., 2021). Also, India endorses technology and intellectual property reform frameworks that have binding deadlines (Mattoo and Subramanian, 2013), open-access green technologies, and capacity-building, particularly in Africa (Mishra and Verma, 2024).

Political processes that influence the global climate regime beyond the UNFCCC have also been witnessed. The forums (as in the OSCE) and trade agreements (as in the RCEP) have helped India incorporate environmental issues into more holistic security and economic initiatives (Munge, 2023; Mishra and Verma, 2024). This transformation has led to new opportunities and accountability challenges, as the polycentric form of governance has been broadened to encompass non-state actors, cities, and civil society (Ahmad et al., 2024). India has been using the approach of linking local wins, such as urban solar projects, to national discourse. The given strategy also contributes to further strengthening of climate action and puts pressure on high-emission countries (Kumari, 2020).

India has a complicated role in these new regimes. On the one hand, the nation juggles between sovereignty and interests; on the other, it is more oriented towards global priorities. Through its international agreements, India has outgrown consensus-making, participating in agreements from Stockholm to Paris. Nowadays, it acquires more flexible and politically porous forms. This has seen it transition from a rule-taker to a norm-shaper, combining claims to justice with future-focused climate policies without sacrificing developmental goals (Shao, 2023).

3. India's Role in Global Climate Governance

3.1 Transformation to Climate Leadership

India has shifted from a passive role in climate negotiations to an active participant in multilateral talks. Such a change shows that the country's strategy has been recalibrated, and it is both internationally normed and influenced by domestic developments. Going beyond its original defensive line, which is based on shared but differentiated responsibilities, India is currently involved in integrating climate goals with sustainable development (Tripathy & Barik, 2024). India is a member of the International Solar Alliance

and has become a provider and facilitator of access to renewable power in the Global South (Mishra and Verma, 2024).

The crux of the specified change is that India turned towards a pragmatic approach to climate justice. India has instead underlined the burden of mitigation on historical emitters to promote justice and everyday work towards solutions that can provide viable alternatives for other partners at different levels. This is what happened with the Sweden-India alliance, where Sweden brings high technology and sustainability, and India brings scale, market penetration, and local-level improvement. The given joint venture demonstrates that the concept of equality can be implemented in practice without negatively affecting competitive advantage, thereby benefiting both parties (Mathur and Raman, 2024).

The fact that India has been doing well as a nation at home, as evidenced by reductions in poverty, the embrace of low-carbon energy sources, and other positive developments, makes it more believable as a state at the international level. India has already shown that job creation and clean energy targets can be combined, demonstrating that climate change can also promote socio-economic stability (Tripathy and Barik, 2024). Still, it is an issue that continues to face opposition at the multilateral level, particularly when transparency mechanisms or ratcheting might threaten national sovereignty (Aykut et al., 2021). India addresses these challenges by negotiating based on differentiated timelines and flexibility, depending on capacity, and such mechanisms have led to finance and technology transfer agreements.

One of the major issues in Indian leadership strategy is finance. Concentrating on the need for predictable long-term funding, India and other countries and small island nations, whose demands are most critical, leverage their economic power to bargain (Mattoo & Subramanian, 2013). The Indian leadership has also contributed to the idea of polycentric governance, which implies the engagement of municipalities, government, and civil society (Pattberg et al., 2022). However, specific challenges complicate perceptions of domestic and global attitudes toward Indian leadership on climate change, e.g., the use of coal as a source of energy (Chhibber, 2022).

Its ability to sustain its coalition politics and to introduce climate action and developmental co-benefits in the future will determine India's success in pushing the world to be ambitious about global targets (Mathur and Raman, 2024). Lastly, the Indian government can prioritize equity advocacy and deliver concrete projects that serve the country's best interests and meet global climate goals.

3.2 Domestic Climate Policy Evolution

The domestic climate policy in India is considered an expression of the intricate interplay between national development goals and India's changing role in global climate governance. Since adopting the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) in 2008, India has also focused on solar energy, sustainable agriculture, water management, energy efficiency, and ecosystem preservation. These missions are the pillars of national climate policies, which support the commitments of the Paris Agreement and other international agreements. The Clean India Mission, initiated in 2014, is not merely about reducing emissions but about promoting sanitation and waste disposal to enhance the population's resilience to environmental stressors (Mishra and Verma, 2024).

Nevertheless, the local level continues to be challenged by the lack of resources and administrative capacity to implement effectively. The gaps will be tackled through initiatives such as the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP), which will need to raise competition and peer learning in the less-developed districts (Chhibber, 2022). Indian ways of financing climate change are through green bonds and climate funds. These include developing domestic and foreign capital to finance mitigation projects and policies, such as subsidies for renewable energy projects, which will help decarbonize without affecting industry competitiveness.

India's policy can be described as a set of mission-oriented schemes, including the National Green Hydrogen Mission, which will help achieve the objective of increasing hydrogen production and its use in transport and industry. Equally, the goals of the electric mobility programs are associated with NAPCC goals not only as technology goals, but also as an economic restructuring vehicle. The workforce is prepared for the low-carbon industries through training on clean energy, green building, and green agriculture (Mishra and Verma, 2024). Public awareness campaigns can also foster sustainable consumption by encouraging people to adopt renewable energy and to use a bus or train to reach their destination.

However, the fact that coal remains an ingredient of energy security remains a challenge in India, and gradual transition models will be more appropriate than phase-outs because they will not create an unstable energy balance or employment (Chhibber, 2022). Urban climate justice is also problematic, as cities have difficulty implementing adaptation strategies equally due to differences in capacity. India's leadership in renewable energy, as evidenced by its solar and wind power capacity, enhances the country's credibility in international negotiations (Tripathy and Barik, 2024).

India's changing climate policy balances the country's domestic goals with global sustainability, positioning it as a front-runner in climate diplomacy while addressing the complex realities of its domestic environment.

4. India in Key COP Negotiations

4.1 COP-3: Kyoto Protocol

The commitment to equity and development was the foundation of India's participation in COP-3 in 1997 in Kyoto, as part of its long-term climate policy under the UNFCCC. India's position was based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR), grounded in historical responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions. This image was behind India's refusal to impose binding reduction targets on developing countries. Indian negotiators insisted that the developed countries (which have contributed disproportionately to global emissions) must be at the forefront of emissions reduction; moreover, they must assist developing countries in reducing emissions through financial support and technological transfer (Santos, 2017).

The only countries that were members of Annex I were parties to the Kyoto Protocol; non-Annex I countries, such as India, were not. India perceived this as a fair and practical decision, as it required the government to focus on poverty elimination, increased energy supply, and industrialization (Mishra and Verma, 2024). India also defended the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), which it promotes as one of the solutions to increase investment, transfer technology, and use cleaner energy solutions without treating the reductions as binding. The Indian strategy was founded on its overall position in the G-77 group, where it leveraged collective bargaining power on matters such as targets of reduction, verification, and financial commitments (Hochstetler, 2012).

India also supported the intellectual property law reforms to remove any barriers to accessing the latest environmental technologies at affordable costs. Besides that, the country also pointed out that developed countries need to make quantified commitments of climate finance. In that regard, it is not just a matter of aid, but a political obligation, since they are the ones who have led the issue with their past emissions. The Kyoto negotiations were but an antecedent to India insisting that finance and technology be tied to its climate commitment, which will come into the limelight in subsequent negotiations.

4.2 COP-15: Copenhagen

The long-standing negotiation principles used by India shifted with the changing global landscape at COP-15 in 2009, as developed countries urged emerging economies to sign emission commitments. India remained on CBDR but recognized that new economies were a key contributor to global emissions. India was not interested in committing to the restrictions on emissions. Still, it would involve some voluntary home decisions related to energy conservation and the development of renewable energy (Mishra and Verma, 2024).

The Indian policy was founded on the formation of coalitions, especially within the BASIC group, which consisted of Brazil, South Africa, and China. The collective planned the fight against the balanced mitigation responsibilities and institutionalized the idea of nationally determined actions, which were modified to the particular conditions. In India, there was also a demand to finance climate change more significantly, reflecting the fact that many of its efforts, such as renewable energy and afforestation, required predictable external support (Guha, 2022).

The Copenhagen Accord, a non-binding pact, was the last to recognize that global temperatures must be curbed, and it proposed a mechanism for pledges and reviews. India was able to maintain some flexibility in the domestic policy convergence and shape its climate activities as a subset of its overall development agenda. An issue that raised concerns was climate finance, which India wanted to be open and explicit, requiring developed countries to observe their financial commitments.

4.3 COP-21: Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement talks in 2015 marked a shift in India's strategy, transitioning to a more decentralized structure of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) rather than legally binding targets. India was happy with this change, as it was in a position to prioritize developmental needs and was ready to undertake many mitigation efforts. The NDCs of India involved a 33-35 percent decrease in emissions intensity by 2030, 40 percent of electricity from non-fossil fuels by 2030, and 2.5-3 billion tonnes of CO2 sequestration through afforestation (Ahmed, 2023).

India's policy in Paris was founded on the same principle of CBDR, but with a realistic approach to possible national objectives. India demanded significant financial support for climate action, as developed countries had an obligation to meet their commitments and fund climate initiatives in developing nations. It also supported the idea of technology transfer and collaboration, especially in the implementation of renewable

energy projects, such as the National Solar Mission. It was also instrumental in the formation of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) with France.

India played on how it would impact the rural population, which relies on agriculture, and on the need to distribute resources for mitigation and adaptation equally. India also won on the mechanisms for loss and damage at Paris and subsequently promoted funding mechanisms to address the effects of climate change. The new agreement was founded on a compromise in which countries were formulating NDCs and advancing ambitious cycles, but without strict enforcement. India had maintained a lead in meeting its climate targets and had indicated that ambition should be accompanied by adequate funding and technology transfer (Santos, 2017).

4.4 COP-26: Glasgow

India's position at COP-26 in Glasgow in 2021 was a combination of experiences from previous COPs and new, more serious commitments. It is a strategic move towards making climate action a national development priority. The fact that India has announced its 2070 net-zero target is a significant move, as it is among the few major emerging economies to have dedicated its efforts to long-term decarbonization, while recognizing the need to transition more slowly to address energy access and growth (Guha, 2022).

The new Indian commitments were intermediate goals, such as 500 GW of electricity by 2030, 50 percent of its electricity production from renewable energy, and a 45 percent cut in emissions intensity per unit of GDP by 2030. They are conditional offers in the guise of long-term support by developed nations through financial and technology transfers, which has been the case since the Kyoto Protocol. Again, the economic aspect played a key role, as India demanded that developed nations meet their pledge of $100 billion a year and pay more attention to helping emerging economies achieve a low-carbon future (Hochstetler, 2012).

India also restated its agenda for adaptation finance, emphasizing the need to balance investments in mitigation and adaptation. Moreover, it has underlined the relevance of collaboration with technology, where green hydrogen and other clean technologies could spur worldwide carbon cuts and national economic growth. India was instrumental in ensuring that the language of switching to unabated coal power was used as a phase-down, not a phase-out, because such a process involves a slow transition (Karim & Pratama, 2022).

The formulation of the Indian policy statement at COP-26 included national sovereignty and discretion in meeting climate targets, even though India is a key player in global climate models. Its ability to maintain

parity on equity issues and to take active, measurable actions points to the country's attempts to influence the international climate negotiations. It advocates viable solutions to meet its development and climate goals.

5. India's Climate Diplomacy: Instruments and Global Contexts

Indian climate diplomacy has now taken the form of a sophisticated strategy that involves strategic relations, global action, and alliances, with a view to developing its own leadership in international climate governance. The contributions of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), the country's active involvement in negotiating blocs worldwide, and its focus on climate financing diplomacy are among the main aspects of this change. Such and other initiatives are Indian efforts to address climate change without compromising its developmental interests and to leverage the newfound strength within the Global South.

5.1- International Solar Alliance (ISA)

The ISA is one of the most essential tools in Indian climate diplomacy, which was already disseminated in 2015 by India and France. It brings together countries with significant solar potential, located between the Tropics of Capricorn and Cancer, to scale up solar technology and accelerate the transformation to renewable energy. The ISA is the Indian variant of utilizing climate action to promote international co-operation and increase its leadership position. The ISA also encourages the installation of solar technologies and energy savings done through collective purchasing and technology transfer to the developing countries. The ISA has more than 90 signatories and, beyond becoming the agenda for renewable energy in India, has become one of the key observers in the global transition to clean energy (Guha, 2022).

The overall objectives of the alliance resonate with India's diplomatic focus on fairness and distinction in climate action, especially in the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. India can emerge as a leader in South-South cooperation by promoting the adoption of solar energy, thereby opening the way for regional development and eliminating the use of fossil fuels. The mobilization of significant investments is one of ISA's achievements, and it is projected that, based on investment needs, solar projects worldwide will reach USD 1 trillion in 2030. Despite these successes, the ISA is having difficulty securing financial contributions from member countries, resolving regulatory misalignments, and overcoming geopolitical tensions that inhibit consensus. Still, the ISA can be considered one of the main branches of climate diplomacy in India, as it is a subset of its broader goal of facilitating global energy transitions through its developmental agenda (Mishra and Verma, 2024).

5.2- Coalitions and Negotiating Blocs

India's climate diplomacy is closely linked to its membership in alliances and bargaining blocs, such as the BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China) and the G-77, which enhance India's bargaining power in the multilateral arena. The alliances assist India in advancing the concept of common but differentiated responsibilities, under which the developing world does not have to make a significant cut in its emissions compared to the developed countries. India is a member of BASIC, and this is a key reason why other emerging economies are being mobilized. A collective stand is being taken on matters such as climate finance and technology transfer (Hochstetler, 2012).

India has a defensive and offensive diplomatic policy towards such coalitions. It protects the terrain. It also encourages the growth of the Global South and, at the same time, promotes recommendations aligned with its home climate agenda, including affordable renewable energy technologies. Bloc, India might be at a stage to mobilize additional financial resources against developed nations to help fund adjustment efforts, especially in the world's most vulnerable regions, such as South Asia. This coincidence in BASIC was evident at the 2009 Copenhagen summit, when India, alongside China, resisted a binding emissions cut-off for developing countries (Karim & Pratama, 2022).

5.3- Climate Finance Diplomacy

The focus on climate finance is a vital aspect of Indian climate diplomacy, and it can be considered both a defensive and an offensive measure. India feels that the developed countries need to honor their historic pledge to finance climate action by providing predictable and adequate climate finance, as it is not charity but a responsibility under the UNFCCC. This focus on finance goes beyond the fact that mitigation projects require funding and also indicates that adaptation financing requirements are high, particularly in rural communities and vulnerable areas hard hit by climate change (Climate Change et al., 2022).

India has measures of climate finance that include a demand for explicit, quantifiable pledges and an incentive to mobilize USD 1 trillion in financing to developing countries by 2030. The next issue India stressed is concessional financing to reduce the indebtedness of developing nations. Second, capacity-building initiatives within financial frameworks are also promoted in India to enable developing countries to apply climate actions in practice. This would lead to India's increased role as a bridge player, enabling the developed and developing countries to reconcile their interests by advocating just and transparent financial mechanisms (Hochstetler, 2012).

5.4- Geopolitical and Regional Dimensions

India's climate diplomacy is shaped by its involvement in international alliances and broader geopolitical processes. Bargaining policies of the Indian state are influenced by the country's strategic participation in international relations with superpowers such as the United States, China, and the European Union, particularly in technology cooperation and financing. India has turned to forums such as the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate, where the global climate agenda is formulated beyond the narrow parameters of formal COP discussions (Leal-Arcas, 2011).

On the regional scale, India contributes significantly to promoting climate cooperation in South Asia through its Coalition on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the Indo-Bhutan Green Grid Initiative, which aims to create cross-border climate resilience infrastructure. These regional programs are also aligned with India's broader climate goals, integrating climate action into development, improving regional energy security, reducing emissions, and promoting economic cooperation. The case of Indian and South Asian climate diplomacy points to a mutually beneficial orientation that does not aim for aid-based approaches but rather for collaboration and the establishment of mutually beneficial relations (Mishra and Verma, 2024).

6. Challenges, Criticisms, and Policy Pathways for Strengthening India’s Climate Diplomacy

The tension between developmental goals and minimum-emission requirements primarily shapes Indian climate policy. It is complicated in terms of its socio-economic system, having a high ratio of agrarian activity, an informal labor market, industrial production, and even an energy-seeking industry. This puts the country in a dilemma: achieving reasonable economic growth rates while, at the same time, compelling other countries worldwide to act decisively on climate change. The concept of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) holds that India maintains that demands oriented toward development must not be sacrificed to pursue emission reductions without taking into account nations' historical emissions (Mishra and Verma, 2024).

6.1. Balancing Economic Development and Emissions Reduction

India's policy is oriented towards energy security, and coal is the primary fuel for power generation due to its cost-effectiveness and robust infrastructure. Instead of banning coal, the country has implemented a decarbonization policy that would allow renewable energy to grow more, without reducing the energy supply (Guha, 2022). This is supported by the fact that renewable energy development has been accelerated,

primarily through projects such as the National Solar Mission, which aims to reduce emissions and diversify the economy (Tripathy and Barik, 2024). However, heavy industries, e.g., steel and cement, cannot easily decarbonize due to technological limitations (Climate Change et al., 2022). The agricultural sector is not left out either, and there is a need to create policies that balance emissions reduction with the rural population's livelihoods. For example, water-saving technologies such as microirrigation have both adaptation and mitigation benefits (Mathur and Raman, 2024).

6.2. Policy Contradictions and Domestic Challenges

A gap between economic growth and environmental sustainability characterizes India's climate policy. The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) has set targets for mitigation and adaptation, but sector-specific demands largely conflict with these targets. It is important to note that, despite efforts to increase the share of renewable energy, the impact is minimal, as coal investment continues to grow at the expense of efforts to reduce emissions (Guha, 2022). On the same note, ongoing investments in traditional infrastructure undermine the push for electric mobility by exacerbating transport-sector emissions.

These contradictions can also be observed in the agricultural sector, where subsidies for crops that consume large volumes of water do not align with programs to enhance water-use efficiency (Mathur and Raman, 2024). Furthermore, land-use changes associated with infrastructure development tend to slow reforestation (Tripathy & Barik, 2024). Existing institutional fragmentation and the inability to coordinate between national and state agencies further complicate these internal policy misalignments, making it hard to take any meaningful action on climate change.

6.3. Strengthening India's Climate Leadership: Policy Pathways

India needs to strengthen its institutional capacity and multi-level governance to intensify its climate leadership. The policy framework between the national and local levels needs to be more coherent, with robust State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs) aligned with the NAPCC. This ought to be coupled with outcome-monitoring systems, as proposed in the budgetary processes, to incentivize climate-friendly investments at both the central and state levels. Furthermore, India must encourage technology transfer through a fair intellectual property framework for green hydrogen and electric mobility, which are new sectors (Hochstetler, 2012). The creation of cheaper, context-based technological solutions is one aspect of South-South cooperation that India can leverage to become a leader in global climate action (Tripathy and Barik, 2024).

India needs to improve its financial absorptive capacity for climate finance. They include optimizing the pipelines of domestic projects to meet international financing requirements and applying blended finance modalities, as well as financing large-scale renewable energy and adaptation projects (Karim and Pratama, 2022). This will also increase financial cooperation, enabling India to increase its renewable energy potential and address its development needs.

6.4. Regional Leadership and Global Diplomacy

At the regional level, India must use its diplomatic resources and knowledge-sharing mechanisms to enhance its leadership in climate action in South Asia. With intercontinental networks of renewable energy, such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA), India will have an opportunity to negotiate for disaster-resilient infrastructure and become an essential participant in regional climate cooperation (Mishra and Verma, 2024). India has also shown interest in South-South cooperation through the provision of concessional finance, capacity building, and technology transfer to enhance countries' development and access to cleaner energy (Hochstetler, 2012). In addition, power and infrastructure to neighbours in India have been more easily attained through regional green investment platforms where resources are combined to initiate shared projects, e.g., sustainable transportation schemes and water management. These types of partnerships are developing robust regional climate governance systems, in line with developmental agendas and the pursuit of low-carbon transitions.

7. Conclusion

The Indian policy in global climate multilateralism combines a subtly played set of developmental priority relations, values of equity, and strategic diplomacy. The country has been redefining its defense posture over the decades, focusing on differentiated positions on international cooperation. It has adopted an extreme stance by striking a balance between domestic transformation and global collaboration. It is necessary to mention that the change is observable due to active participation in multilateral negotiations, organizing events such as the International Solar Alliance, and advancing climate finance and technology transfer systems in line with socio-economic interests. The fact that the home policy systems of India, including the national action plan on climate change and the national determined contribution, are all reflections of the foreign policy strategies of the country is a positive sign that it has a well-coordinated approach of balancing between economic growth and emissions cuts without trespassing into sovereignty and developmental space.

The Indian form of climate diplomacy is defined by the formulation of coalitions within other organizations, such as BASIC and G-77. Through such alliances, India will be positioned to acquire greater power and can selectively collaborate with developed countries on innovation and finance. Such a coalition diplomacy, in addition to focusing on renewable energy development, adaptation funds, and capacity building, makes India a powerful force in negotiations among diverse parties. Its normative system promotes shared responsibility, procedural fairness, and collaboration between countries, as demonstrated by the case of the country. This system seeks to incorporate the concepts of justice and mutually beneficial cooperation into global climate regulations.

Furthermore, its practicality in the strategic expression of its climate commitments, including the net-zero goal of 2070 and the gradual shift to a fossil-free future, is a sign of India's realism and its genuine interest in the international process of mitigation. But there are still some challenges, especially in balancing domestic policy objectives, trade-offs between sectors, and the criticism that may arise when India insists on differentiated schedules and conditions. Such pressures are why the bigger fight is over the emerging economies' efforts to cope with growth rates and environmental sustainability. It is necessary to strengthen implementation mechanisms by developing a more effective multilevel governance system, improving the financial system, and implementing new technologies to turn diplomatic promises into practice. The domination of South Asian nations over India in joint infrastructure development, disaster resilience, and knowledge sharing offers a practical approach to building power and scalable examples of equitable, low-carbon change.

The role of India in the multilateral environment may also be improved in the future through new forms of innovation in climate diplomacy, such as hybrid negotiation frameworks, digital instruments for scenario-making, and the retelling of narratives with consideration of cultural and normative backgrounds. With domestic transformation and international advocacy aligned, India will be in a position to enhance the credibility and leverage of its initiatives in future climate governance. Finally, but not least, the changing role of India provides an example of how developing countries can become leaders by balancing national development goals and environmental concerns within the complex international system.

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