

Climate summit hosts press India on emissions

February 5 2015, by Etienne Fontaine



France's Foreign Minister, Laurent Fabius (C), during a delegate meeting in New Delhi on February 5, 2015

The French hosts of a UN climate summit later this year insisted Thursday that combatting global warming would not undermine efforts to fight poverty as they lobbied for India's support in cutting emissions.

Speaking in New Delhi, France's Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said

he was confident India would play a lead role in efforts to create a low carbon economy, adding to pressure on the right-wing government after similar calls last week from US President Barack Obama.

"Taking action against climate disruption and for poverty reduction should not be regarded as two separate and contradictory goals," Fabius told a [climate conference](#) in the Indian capital.

"We all know that we need a signal that all countries are embarking on a low carbon economy based on their national circumstances.

"No doubt, no doubt that India will play a leading role in this effort. And no doubt that it will do it under the leadership of Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi who is really dedicated to this common goal," he added.

India, third largest emitter of greenhouse gases, has resisted pressure to commit to a timeline for capping emissions after China and the United States announced a bilateral pact in November.

'Finding a balance'

Later in an interview with AFP, Fabius emphasised that India needed to strike the right balance between curbing emissions and development for its 1.2 billion people—a discussion, he said, he would have with Modi during his visit.



India's Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar (L), during a meeting in New Delhi on February 5, 2015

"We must find a balance between the necessity of limiting [greenhouse gases](#) and the necessity of development. Our discussions will be within that framework," he said.

He added that he was confident that the Indian leader would provide valuable contributions in December which would make the Paris talks "a success".

Modi's government maintains that the burden of reducing the amount of carbon emitted lies with industrialised countries, and has opposed any move to shift the onus to developing nations.

In a speech in New Delhi last week, Obama said the world does not "stand a chance against [climate change](#)" unless developing countries such

as India reduce their dependence on fossil fuels.

But during Obama's visit, Modi stressed that India did not feel itself under pressure on climate change from other countries, while insisting it was responding to the challenges presented by global warming.

Speaking at the same conference as Fabius, Indian Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar reiterated his government's commitment to battling climate change, highlighting ambitious plans to increase renewable energy.

"We are doing it on our own commitment, our own conviction, our own volition," said Javadekar.

While India still relies hugely on coal, Modi has pledged that [renewable energy](#) will play a key role in bringing electricity to more than 300 million poor people currently without power.

In his AFP interview, Fabius acknowledged that it may not be easy for India to introduce greener forms of energy but he said that Modi understood that [global warming](#) could ultimately impede development.

"What I call climate disruption, which is more than climate change, is a reality for anybody," he said.

"If you have climate disruption, you have development disruption and India has fully understood that."

Fabius, who travelled to India with French Ecology Minister Segolene Royal, said he hoped all countries would announce what they intended to propose at the Paris climate conference in December as soon as possible.

The Paris conference should culminate in a deal among 195 countries on

how to curb fossil-fuel gases.

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