

Corruption fuels carbon dioxide emissions in Asia: Study

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Widespread corruption is preventing Asian countries from effectively implementing measures to reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions that are known to contribute to global warming, new research suggests.

According to the Center for Global Development, a think tank based in London and Washington, developing countries are now responsible for 63% of yearly carbon emissions. Industry, power and wealth, long monopolized by a handful of developed countries, are now expanding quickly in developing countries, it says.

Increased carbon emissions are a consequence of economic growth in the developing countries of Asia which also appears to be at greater risk than other regions from climate change impacts, owing to social, geographical and economic reasons, the researchers say.

In the study, the researchers showed that with respect to cutting down carbon emissions, corruption is a concerning factor. If corruption is increased by 1%, [carbon emissions](#) will also increase by 0.19%, it said.

The research, which has been published in the upcoming December issue of the journal *Utilities Policy*, assessed data between 1960 and 2020 from 47 countries in Asia including Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar and Nepal.

Carbon dioxide is a major heat-trapping, greenhouse gas that warms the Earth, leading to climate change. The US Environmental Protection Agency says the emission of CO₂ occurs mainly due to the use of fossil fuels for heating, the production of electricity and transport. An estimated 1.5 billion tons of CO₂ is also released by deforestation each year, while agriculture-related land clearing and soil degradation are also contributors.

In 2021, the Asia-Pacific region was responsible for nearly 17.8 billion tons of CO₂ emissions, and the figure was greater than the total emissions from all the other regions that year. Also, corruption levels, on an average, were higher than other regions, the researchers say adding that corruption hinders the execution of measures to tackle CO₂

emissions.

Khosrul Alam, co-author of the study, tells us that "Corruption encourages mismanagement of overall development process without addressing the environmental concern properly. The corrupted peoples and bodies perform their activities in desperate and unregulated ways for their own gains and put less emphasis on environment which increases [carbon dioxide](#) emissions."

Alam, an assistant professor at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University, Bangladesh, says that globalization has led to different developmental activities that increase CO₂ emissions.

"Technological innovation also exacerbates [carbon dioxide emissions](#), if it does not adopt green methods," says Alam. He adds that "effective and comprehensive policies on corruption control" are needed alongside environmentally-friendly technological innovations to address carbon dioxide emissions.

Chiranjib Chakraborty, professor at the School of Life Science and Biotechnology at Adamas University, Kolkata, tells us that CO₂ emissions and related environmental concerns can be dealt with by adopting resolutions made at the 2021 COP26 climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland.

Scientists and policymakers agreed at COP26 to reaffirm the Paris Agreement target to limit [global average temperature](#) to 1.5 degrees Celsius and sought to arrange funds for the reparation of pollution to be given by rich countries to poor ones and encourage the use of renewable energy while cutting fossil fuel-based energy.

Parties gathered for COP27 in Egypt's Sharm El-Sheikh this month failed to reach an agreement on strengthening these targets.

"Researchers should prioritize solutions to carbon dioxide emissions that consider [poverty reduction](#) and income generation in developing countries," says Chakraborty.

More information: Mohammad Mafizur Rahman et al, Effects of corruption, technological innovation, globalisation, and renewable energy on carbon emissions in Asian countries, *Utilities Policy* (2022). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jup.2022.101448](#)

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