

A Plea for Realism and Proportionality in role of India in Combating Global Warming

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Thanks to sun for the warmth radiated from a sizzling hot surface at 5500°C. Thanks to the distance of 150 million km between the sun and the earth for not making earth too an inferno. Thanks to the atmosphere which keeps the earth's temperature at 15°C average instead of at – 18°C. This raising of the earth's temperature by 33°C by certain gases present in the atmosphere was aptly named green house effect by Jean-Baptiste Fourier in 1827. The main green house gases identified were water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane and nitrogen oxides which are more recently joined by chlorofluorocarbons. There is global concern, verging on panic, about the GHGs getting more prevalent and more potent. The concern is understandable but the panic is created by people who are proficient in panic mongerism, for whom exaggeration is more than a form of emphasis. I believe that the issue of global warming has been blown out of proportion and the wrong people are targeted as the perpetrators of the warming process. Environmental passion is infused into the easily gullible people, particularly in the developing countries like India, to make them feel unnecessarily guilty for a crime committed and being committed by the developed nations.

The gullibles are enthused to decry and give up development in their own land and are 'compensated' and 'encouraged' by the 'magnanimous' affluent to convert their land into forests for the sake of global environmental balance. Carbon credit is being distributed, sulphur credit and nitrogen credit are getting ready to be dished out. The agents in between reap huge profit.



When 6 euro is given to a project in India, that credit is sold to a polluter elsewhere for 20 euros. This is, to put it very mildly, swindling. We should refuse to be enticed by such pittance.

Global warming is, to some extent, a part of the phenomena in the 1500 year solar activity cycle. It is, to some extent, definitely manmade. It's impact is, of course, global. The sun's energy drives 13 trillion tonne of water vapour and 5.6 quadrillion tonne of air round and round in the troposphere. The green house gases thus move around and do not remain static. There is complete mixing of air all around every year. Hence no country can claim to be entitled to be a producer of GHGs and no country can be misled to remain a sink for the GHGs.

India ought to wake up and refuse to be a universal scapegoat. It has been said that Indian paddy fields produce most methane (21 times as potent as CO₂ as a GHG) in the world. But India is not the biggest paddy producer in the world. It is said that India has the highest number of cows in the world and the huge pile of cow dung causes most of the release of methane. One should not multiply the number of Indian cows by the dung laying capacity of a western cow. Moreover cow dung is not wasted in India.

I am not advocating shirking of responsibility by India in the subject of global warming. I am only pleading that India should wake up and realise that it is not more responsible, it is not equally responsible but it is only proportionately less responsible and hence bound – but only less bound – to make amends. Because Kerala is cent percent literate, more environmentally alert and less industrialised, this plea is particularly applicable to Kerala.

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