

'Need both steep reductions in short run & long-run action for net-zero emission'

'Without steep emission reductions across regions & sectors targets looks out of reach'
Navroz K Dubash, professor at Centre for Policy Research (CPR) and one of the coordinating lead authors of the IPCC report on mitigation of climate change, explains to **Vishwa Mohan** the finer points of its findings. Excerpts of the interview:

What are the key messages of the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)?

■ Emissions have continued to increase in the last decade, and without steep reductions across regions and sectors 1.5 degrees Celsius looks out of reach. Steep reductions in the short run as well as long-run action toward net zero emissions are needed to limit warming and damages as much as possible. There are several options to reduce emissions at low cost — 25% reductions globally are possible at under \$20 per tonne. And a growing range of policies are spreading around the

world and having an impact on emissions. Currently 53% of global emissions are covered by a climate law. Urgent climate action is critical to sustainable development, because of climate impacts. But development choices, like around urbanisation, energy and land-use also have mitigation options. Thinking about development and climate decisions together could maximise synergies across both.

Current net-zero commitments are highly inadequate. What's an option in the present circumstances when the countries are not forthcoming with higher



mitigation goals?

■ The report shows that long-term net-zero commitments are not enough. Short-term action to reduce emissions globally by 43% by 2030 to stay below 1.5 degrees or about a quarter for 2 degrees are needed. The Paris Agreement has worked to enhance national target setting, policy development and transparency of action and support, but there are shortfalls in availability of support, including finance. This may prove an obstacle to

TOI INTERVIEW

developing countries seeking to take on more ambitious commitments.

How far India can go to cut its emission without compromising on its development needs and growth trajectory?

■ Combining mitigation with policies to shift development pathways can open up more mitigation options while also achieving development goals. These include urban design to create walkable areas, expansion of renewable energy use that creates air pollution benefits, and

Times View:

The scientific report confirms our worst fears about global warming and the declining state of Planet Earth. The world must come together to prevent an impending catastrophe. We owe it to our children.

housing policies that bring work and living closer together. Mitigation at the scale necessary can also bring disruptive changes, including with implications for employment outcomes.

India at the current stage of development may not afford to shun coal or phase out fossil fuel infrastructure.

Do you think the country's entire energy requirements can be met through non-fossil fuel sources?

■ The report says that use of fossil fuels does have to decline sharply by 2050. This will require expansion of electrification plus renewable energy backed by storage. The costs of these technologies have fallen up to 85% for solar and wind energy, and batteries since 2010. Additional fuels such as hydrogen will also be needed.