National & State Action Plans

Approach to 12th Plan: Extract chapter on Climate Change

… the Twelfth Plan strategy will be so designed that there are significant co-benefits for climate along with inclusive sustainable growth.… we must have a national strategy for mitigation and adaptation of our own.

.. Expert Group on Low Carbon Strategies for Inclusive Growth has emphasized action on the following main fronts:
(i) *Power:* In the power sector, Expert Group has suggested action both on supply and demand side. On the Supply side, we need to adopt super-critical technologies in coal based thermal power generation as quickly as possible. Gas being in limited supply its best use is not in base load power, but in combined heat and power systems in large establishments. We need to invest in renewable technologies, particularly solar, wind and second generation bio-fuels. Development of hydro-power in a sustainable manner, is critical to maximising renewables which pose additional load curve problems on the supply side. On the Demand side, we need to accelerate adoption of super-efficient electrical appliances through a combination of market and regulatory mechanisms. We also need to enhance efficiency of agricultural pump-sets and industrial equipment using power by facilitating adoption of best available technology. Last but not the least, we need to modernize our transmission and distribution systems to bring our technical and commercial losses down to the world average levels, while at the same time universalizing access to electricity for the poor. This would not only require acceleration of power reforms, but also adoption of new and frontier technologies like the smart grids.

(ii) *Transport*: On the transport front, we need to increase the share of rail in overall freight transport. This is not possible unless we drastically improve the efficiency of rail freight transport, and also make it price competitive by bringing down the levels of cross subsidisation between freight and passenger transport. Completion of dedicated rail corridor must be taken up on top priority. We need to improve both share and efficiency of our public transport system; and also further need to improve the fuel efficiency of our vehicles through both market based and regulatory mechanisms.

(iii) *Industry:* The Expert Group has identified major sources of industrial emissions and made specific recommendation for sectors like Iron & Steel and Cement, which account for over 60 percent of industrial process emissions. It is important that green-field plants in these sectors can adopt best available technology; while existing plants, particularly, small and medium ones, modernize and adopt green technology at an accelerated phase. For this to happen, financing mechanisms will need to be tied up in an equitable and transparent manner.

(iv) *Buildings:* While efficient appliances can reduce demand for power to some extent, change in the design and structure of building itself can act as a multiplier in reducing overall energy demand. India is fortunate that most of our commercial buildings that will be extant in 2030 are yet to be built. We need both evolve and institutionalize Green Building Codes at all levels of Government: Centre, State and Urban Local Bodies.

(v) *Forestry:* Up to the Eleventh Plan our focus was on increasing the area under forest and tree cover. Given the scarce land availability and the trade-offs involved, achievement in this front has been limited. However, there is a tremendous scope for increasing the stock and quality of existing forests. "Green India Mission" is being designed to regenerate at least 4 million hectares of degraded forest; increase density of cover on 2 million hectares of moderately dense forest; and overall, increase the density of forest and tree cover on 10 million hectares of forest lands, waste lands and community lands.

The Expert Group's Final Report is likely to contain greater details of technology, policy and finance options that are necessary to pursue a low emission, inclusive growth trajectory in the future. Some of these will be built into the growth strategy for the Twelfth Five Year Plan.

… Finally, there is the broader issue of adapting agricultural practices to serious alterations in climatic conditions, and to managing our water resources in a more comprehensive and efficient fashion. There is an urgent need for developing agro-climatic zone specific water harvesting and management technology to enable rural communities to withstand the effects of climate change. Similarly, genetic improvement of agricultural crops to develop a flexible portfolio of plant varieties that can thrive in drier or wetter environments, survive flash floods, and resist pest attacks due to change in humidity, etc. is an important area of research that needs to be pursued in the Twelfth Plan.

In brief, all levels of Government need to act together to combat the challenge of Climate Change. The State Governments need to develop a State Action Plan for Climate Change that can be dovetailed to the National Action Plan for Climate Change, by identifying vulnerable areas and communities, and by developing a State specific action programme for the above mentioned areas that will facilitate mitigation and adaptation action against the challenge of climate change. Some State have already made a beginning; other States need to take similar action during the Twelfth Plan period.—Approach to 12th Plan, Planning Commission.

Much ado about the State Action Plans on Climate Change; its business as usual

…even after three years, not all mission plans are ready. .. The most worrying factor is that if the government is serious on NAPCC missions, it could have opened the process to have views from experts and civil society, and affected communities rather than developing the plans in ivory towers devoid of the ground realities.

Most of the initial documents and drafts does not have a target, timeline, financial implications and allocations and do not prescribe the period of operation. …Almost all the states are unanimous in their plans to earn carbon credits from the forests. ..Most of the state plans do not talk at all about increasing access and equity in energy, water or natural resources. They also remain equally insensitive to gender concerns in climate change. Furthermore, the rights of the forest dwellers and forest dependent people do not exist for these plans. Similarly, strategic knowledge missions have shown scant regard to the traditional knowledge and wisdom of people in understanding and caring for the environment and climate. Mission plans on energy do not pay any importance to bio-mass, which is actually the sole source of energy for more than 60% of the population.

.. Many of the states are being helped by World Bank, UNDP, DFID, GIZ etc. and have enough suggestions on how these state plans are being influenced by international climate change politics..

Most of the states have actually developed these plans without any mapping, vulnerability assessment of regions or sectors and does not seem to go beyond the generally prevalent bureaucratic lethargy. (http://www.fairclimate.com/library/docs/5/Much Ado about State Action Plan on Climate Change.pdf)

Further Reading:

The technical report to the Karnataka State Action Plan on Climate Change by the BCCI-K is available at http://www.cstep.in/node/260