

(Note: This resolution was presented as a draft at the Indian Social Science Congress in Mumbai on 30 December 2007, and finalized after discussion among and feedback from the audience there. Being a broad political resolution, it does not contain specifics, even though these are important – Delhi Platform)

RESOLUTION ON GLOBAL WARMING

1. We agree with the overwhelming body of evidence and the broad consensus arrived at within the global scientific community that large-scale human activities since the Industrial Revolution – industry, transport, power generation, deforestation, etc – are the primary causes of global warming and the resultant unpredictable climate change, through increasing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, beyond the Earth's natural capacity to absorb these gases.
2. There is an extremely urgent need to make sharp cuts in the emissions of greenhouse gases worldwide, starting immediately, since the world is potentially close to dangerous levels of global warming. Going beyond those levels – the so-called tipping point will minimize human capacity to intervene, and given the immense risks to human society and to other life forms, addressing global warming and climate change must be an overriding priority of all humanity.
3. We believe that the current crisis is a direct consequence of the pattern of capitalist development - with its inherent tendency of maximising profits and in the process, exploiting all natural resources on a world scale. This has created affluent minorities within each society, generating ever-increasing demands and un-sustainable levels of consumption that has led to this exponential rise of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere.
4. Historical emissions by western capitalist-industrial societies have been a key driver for the current alarming situation, and therefore ecological debt - between nations and within nations - must also be used to define current responsibility. Further, all the costs of preventing, mitigating and coping with any disasters caused by climate change must be met by the people who caused them – the over-consumers of the world, through suitable and fair mechanisms.
5. The global commons are the common inheritance of the global community. Therefore, accepting equal emissions per person as a guiding principle – based on the equitable distribution of the total natural absorption capacity of the earth – is a must. Instead of the current political posturing by nation states, the way out is for all of them to bring their affluent sections within the per person emission targets mentioned above.
6. The world must acknowledge what it owes to all sections of society who have lived in environmentally friendly ways – by not consuming any significant quantities of fossil carbon fuels, and particularly to those communities who have preserved forests, wetlands, grasslands and other natural ecosystems that serve as carbon sinks. There must be a transfer of resources, both material and political, from the carbon users to the carbon keepers. Forest communities must be given the right to decide how best forests will be preserved, for the good of human and

other species. Reckless cutting of forests by industry for mining purposes and wood and other forest resources must stop.

7. The Indian government needs to proactively do much more in terms of emission reductions and preventive intervention, along with a focus on adaptation, and help people - the poor in particular - to cope with the current and potential impacts of global warming. For a start, it needs to move away from the current unsustainable pattern of economic activity. This includes putting a stop to the takeover of agricultural lands for industrial use and SEZs, since as a rule, they are far more carbon-intensive than agriculture. A more equitable, less wasteful pattern of economic development is not merely a desirable end in itself, but it would actually help lower carbon emissions.
8. All solutions currently proposed in the context of global warming should be proven to be carbon-negative overall beyond reasonable doubt and take into account the hidden cost of externalities. Un-proven, anti-poor and potentially disastrous non-solutions, such as nuclear (fission) energy and ethanol /bio-diesel, should be immediately put on hold for large-scale application.
9. We, the people of the world, must force all governments everywhere to create systems and structures that will allow people to exercise their choice for a wiser course of humane development with far lower levels of consumption. We call upon people everywhere to compel their governments to adopt equity, including between generations and between species, and equal rights to the global commons, as the basis for all proposed solutions.

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