

BOOK REVIEW

Navroz K. Dubash, *India in a Warming World: Integrating Climate Change and Development*

(New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2019)

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India in a Warming World: Integrating Climate Change and Development

Navroz K. Dubash (ed.)

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In India climate change claims lives, spreads diseases and destroys livelihoods due to the country's geographical exposure and low preparedness. Extreme poverty and inequality further exacerbate these impacts. However, India is a country of 1.4 billion people, with a dependency on oil and gas imports for urgent developmental needs. It is a growing economy but its historical responsibility towards climate change is very low.¹ These features make India an invigorating case for studying climate change. *India in a Warming World: Integrating Climate Change and Development*, edited by Navroz K. Dubash, is an excellent book covering various aspects of climate change in an Indian context. It is an engaging book providing a rich discussion about the multifaceted features of climate change. As an open access book from Oxford University Press² and with a holistic approach incorporating science, politics, and the policy of climate change, it provides an accessible and valuable source for academics, policy-makers and students working on climate change.

The book is composed five sections and 29 chapters. Each section discusses a different dimension of climate change. The first section, entitled "Climate Change Impacts", includes three chapters on observed and future climate change impacts in India. It also discusses the association between climate change and specific events and sets out narratives regarding climate impacts on human and animal life (p.7). Since the scientific debate about climate change is not over, starting the book with what we know about climate change and how we know it is quite a useful introduction for the reader.

The second section, entitled "International Debates and Negotiations" comprises 10 chapters and forms a major part of the book. It includes discussions about global climate change negotiations and the Indian position in these talks. In addition to academics, it contains chapters written by leading Indian climate negotiators. This section showcases the uneven nature of the global negotiating process, the shifting positions of countries and country blocs, the reasons behind such position changes,

1 Our World in Data, "India: CO2 Country Profile", 2022, <https://ourworldindata.org/co2/country/india> (Accessed 4 May 2022).

2 See at <http://fdslive.oup.com/www.oup.com/academic/pdf/openaccess/9780199498734.pdf>.

and the unwillingness of developed countries to finance initiatives and provide technology transfer. It illustrates the fact that solidarity within the developing world is fragmenting while unity within the developed world is growing and how this creates less favourable conditions for the poor and vulnerable compared to earlier periods (p. 137).

The third section, entitled “Politics”, examines Indian domestic climate politics in four chapters. It assesses the role of key constituencies - civil society, business, and labour - in the climate change debate in India and studies the shifting discourse of the Indian media on climate change. Importantly, the section recognizes a shift in the domestic Indian position from one which views the climate issue from a rather geostrategic perspective to one looking equally at domestic climate priorities and actions (pp. 15, 302).

The fourth section, entitled “Policy” contains five chapters. Its chapters examine climate change institutions, policy, state climate change planning, technological change, and finance at a national and sub-national level in India. Global climate dialogue has been emphasizing the role of civil society and bottom-up actions in the battle against climate change. This section discusses the extent to which this recommendation has broadened and deepened the climate policy and institution making in India at various scales (p. 18).

The final section, entitled “Climate and Development”, embeds climate action into other development goals and addresses the climate issue on a sector-by-sector basis in six chapters. Since both climate stressors and objectives vary by sector (p. 20), the section leads the reader through the links between climate change and several sectors. The sectors covered are energy, urbanism, forestry, water, agriculture, coasts, and islands. The section clearly illustrates how important to stimulate internalization of climate change considerations in development planning in various sectors is.

The methodologies used in 29 chapters vary as with the topics. Examples include media discourse analysis, official document analysis, interviews, historical analysis, qualitative narrative analysis, and ethnographic analysis. The chapters are written by both academics and practitioners. Review chapters, written mostly by academics, lay out different opinions and analyse an issue before the perspective of the author is presented. The chapters written by practitioners generally present practitioners’ positions on an issue directly. These practitioners include leaders of Indian climate negotiation teams at various times, diplomats, businesspeople, labour activists, consultants, and civil society leaders.

One of the biggest strengths of the book is its comprehensiveness. Nevertheless, given the plurality of impacts of climate change and its interactions with multiple issue areas, there are a few other topics that could have been covered: Firstly, a chapter about the link between security and climate change in an Indian context could have further strengthened the book. For instance, how climatic changes impact agricultural outputs, farm incomes and prices, which in turn affect human dignity and security, is a vital topic in the Indian context, given the high agricultural suicide rates. Moreover, how climate change threatens the livelihood and houses of the urban poor; fosters internal and international migration; and how melting glaciers impact Indian foreign policy, are other security-related topics that could have been analysed in the book. Secondly, a screening of climate-related project funding in India received from international development banks, and its shortcomings, could provide a useful political economy analysis. Thirdly, responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions is discussed very much through a state-centric lens. Nevertheless, in a globalized world, share ownership of oil and gas companies

is internationalized through stock exchanges. Therefore, who benefits from and perpetuates climate crises is a topic requiring a global lens, even though the impact of climate change is felt locally through various weather catastrophes. Hence, a chapter about the transnational finance and ownership-related aspects of climate impacts in India could have been a very useful addition to the second section.

Overall, the book is a very engaging, valuable, holistic, and well-structured source about climate change in India. It assists in making cross-country comparisons about climate change from many angles. I hope that it will represent an example to other countries' scholars and that similar comprehensive accounts of climate change in other country contexts, including Turkey, will be produced. I enthusiastically recommend the book to all scholars and students of climate change and India, as well as to anyone who wants to deepen their knowledge about climate change in the region.

