



November 17, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States of America  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington D.C., 20500

**Re: U.S.-India Climate Change and Energy Cooperation**

Dear President Obama,

I am writing on behalf of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), in regard to the upcoming state visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India on November 24. We hope that your talks with Prime Minister Singh will focus on the need for our nations to work together to address the global climate crisis. India and the U.S. need to cooperate closely on the negotiations for an international climate treaty in Copenhagen and beyond. We also hope that you will use the occasion of the Prime Minister's visit to announce a major expansion of bilateral cooperation to find new energy solutions and move us towards a green economy.

India is the fourth largest emitter of greenhouse gases. Its economy is rapidly expanding. Its emissions could skyrocket with the projected growth of its middle class from 50 million to 500 million in the next few decades. At the same time, India needs to meet the needs of its poor majority, including more than 400 million people who do not have access to electricity.

The Prime Minister's Government recognizes that climate change is already having an impact on his country and people. His Government has taken a number of concrete steps to begin to mitigate India's emissions and to consider how best to adapt to climate change.

Last June, NRDC launched a new India Initiative. One of its key objectives is to encourage U.S.-India cooperation on climate change and energy. We have undertaken extensive research and consultations with officials, experts, and entrepreneurs in both countries to identify a number of key areas which we hope that the Prime Minister and you would agree have potential for collaboration between our governments:

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**Increase U.S.-India cooperation on energy efficiency.** India's infrastructure is rapidly expanding. It is estimated that 80 percent of the infrastructure that will exist in India in 2030 has yet to be built. India has an extraordinary opportunity to pursue truly sustainable development—growing its economy while curbing its emissions and creating clean-technology innovations. The U.S. can help India achieve this objective. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) have done very valuable work with their counterparts in India for many years. These efforts need to be expanded and broadened. **USAID's Energy Conservation and Commercialization program (Eco-III)**, funded at approximately \$2 million annually, has been instrumental in launching many high-impact energy efficiency projects, including India's first commercial building code. The U.S. Government should provide increased funding for ECO-III and should foster the development of a roadmap for an ECO-IV program.

**Assist in creating a new India "EPA."** India's Environment Minister has announced very encouraging plans to create a new environmental agency in India with real enforcement powers. The proposed National Environmental Protection Authority could play a critical role in constraining India's greenhouse gas emissions, in addressing India's serious air and water pollution problems, and in India's efforts to move towards cleaner energy, for instance in implementing requirements for cleaner transportation fuels and vehicles. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), with its decades of experience with environmental regulation and enforcement, could help the Indian Government work through structural and technical issues.

**Promote cleaner transportation fuels and vehicles.** Black carbon particle pollution harms the health of India's poor people and may accelerate the melting of Himalayan glaciers. Vehicles and small dirty diesel generators are major sources of this pollution. Given that the number of vehicles in India is projected to quadruple by 2020, expanding U.S. EPA's work with the India Clean Fuels and Vehicles Program to implement the Euro IV standards in India's largest cities next year is a critical step towards addressing this issue.

**Create a U.S.-India clean tech fund to accelerate technology scale-up.** India presents a global opportunity for expanded clean tech innovation and implementation. The U.S. and Indian Governments should provide \$150 million in total for the startup of a U.S.-India clean tech fund. The fund would provide capital for U.S.-India clean-technology cooperation, technology transfers, and licensing of patented technologies. A clean tech fund could be a stepping-stone to a more expansive U.S.-India trade agreement for clean tech goods and services.

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**Support India's effort to adapt to the anticipated impacts of climate change.** India faces the prospect of significant stresses on its food and water resources, as well as on its physical and health infrastructure, as a consequence of the impacts of climate change. U.S. support for climate adaptation efforts in India can play a critical role in ensuring the success of Indian adaptation efforts and in ensuring the stability of the region. The support can take the form both of helping fund adaptation efforts in India and of sharing U.S. experience with disaster and emergency management and planning, especially with ensuring the security of food and water resources, providing adequate health interventions, and in preventing the spread of infectious diseases.

**Cooperate to reduce lead contamination in India.** Initiatives aimed at constraining global carbon emissions are having the unintended consequence of increasing lead poisoning in India. The increased adoption of solar and wind power and electric/hybrid vehicles, especially in the United States, has increased the demand for lead batteries which often end up in India, one of the world's largest destinations for recycling and end-of-life disposal. We recommend that government agencies, industry, and non-governmental organizations in India and the U.S. create a taskforce to address this problem, including the adoption of a third-party lead battery certification program to reduce emissions and increase used battery collection.

All of us at NRDC are looking forward to Prime Minister Singh's visit and to the results of your discussions. We believe that you and Prime Minister Singh can lay the foundation for expanded bilateral cooperation to address climate change and energy, which will benefit not only our two nations, but the entire world.

Sincerely,



Frances Beinecke  
President  
Natural Resources Defense Council