

8th India-U.S. Track II Dialogue on Climate Change and Energy Enhancing Bilateral Cooperation Between India and the US

January 16-18, 2019
Boston, Massachusetts

India and U.S. Joint Statement

The India-U.S. Track II Dialogue on Climate Change and Energy held its eighth meeting in Boston, Massachusetts from January 16-18, 2019. The meeting was convened by the **Ananta Aspen Centre**, India, the **Aspen Institute**, U.S., and hosted by the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology Tata Center**. Since its inception in 2010, this dialogue has brought together a diverse array of thought leaders from India and the United States – including former senior government officials, industry leaders, and heads of civil society organizations – to inform and encourage India-U.S. partnership at a strategic level and on climate and energy issues. This meeting of the dialogue focused on key issues in the bilateral relationship, including climate and energy policy in the United States and India, air quality, short lived climate pollutants, shared and electric mobility, financing the energy transition, and new frontiers in science and technology, which can assist both countries in short-term monitoring of environmental and climate impacts and long-term solutions.

Dialogue participants agreed: (1) the world faces enormous and urgent responsibilities and challenges on climate change, including on the mitigation and adaptation fronts, and (2) the governments of India and the United States can and should lead the world on this challenge. Dialogue participants recommend the United States and India work together on the following high-level actions:

- We encourage both countries to ratify and implement the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol. We are encouraged by the creation of the India Cooling Action Plan.
- The United States and India should discuss the creation of a bilateral platform to expand bilateral cooperation on air quality monitoring and response.
- The United States and India should increase financial and technical contributions to their collaboration on assessments of electric mobility for passenger and heavy-duty vehicle policies and increase and accelerate their work on technical assistance for priority technology and deployment policy issues.

A summary of the discussions leading to these conclusions is below.

Short-Lived Climate Pollutants

There is enormous potential for significant mitigation of temperature increase with the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). Compliance with this agreement can avoid 0.5C of warming by the end of this century. With the recent launch of India's National Cooling Action Plan, the decision at the last Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol at Quito, Ecuador to open up the Multilateral Fund of the Protocol for cooling efficiency, and the upcoming determination of the focus of the next phase of the Kigali Cooling Efficiency Program, there appear to be several intersecting opportunities that could lead to raising ambition in both countries. Taking full advantage of these opportunities however requires both countries to ratify the Kigali Amendment.

Air Quality

The Indian and U.S. participants discussed three primary issues on air quality, reflecting both the larger technical and policy issues discussed during the dialogue and the broader interest in incorporating citizen science in work on air quality. On the technical issues, we discussed what resources exist for improving source apportionment studies as well as policy analysis on building enforcement capacity. There was interest in sharing experiences on building enforcement capacity and institutional design to help combat air pollution at the level of air sheds, in order to have maximum abatement potential. With respect to citizen science, we discussed how work needs to be done to investigate the current terrain of citizen science programs on air quality in India that are being supported by U.S. institutions, either academic or NGOs to see what can be done to improve these efforts.

Shared and Electric Mobility

Several areas of productive collaboration emerged from the discussion, despite the significant differences between the Indian and U.S. transportation systems (for example, with the Indian system being much less dependent on privately-owned four-wheel vehicles than the United States). There was interest between Indian and U.S. participants to consider cooperative research around electric vehicle supply chains and trade, as well as a potential joint research agenda around reducing battery costs, which would have added benefits, beyond electric mobility, as it would support the transition towards greater penetration of renewables. Policy and research around freight rail electrification and mode-switching is also an area where the United States and India could learn jointly from each other.
