

Transport in Climate Action: National Priorities and Global Expectations for COP 30

Roundtable Discussion

When: Friday 26th September 2025

Time: 10:00 HRS – 14:00 HRS (IST)

Where: The Ambassador Hotel, (Dome Hall), Sujan Singh Park, Subramania Bharti Marg, New Delhi, 110003, INDIA,
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I. Background

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), adopted in 1992, laid the foundation for global climate governance and enshrined the principle of *Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR)*—acknowledging historical differences in emissions between developed and developing countries and the need for equity in climate action. Building on this, successive negotiations culminated in the Paris Agreement of 2015, which committed countries to limit global warming to well below 2°C, with efforts to pursue 1.5°C.¹ Central to the Paris framework are *Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)*, which set out each country’s climate targets and are revised every five years, linking global ambition with national priorities.

Within this framework, the transport sector has emerged as both a challenge and an opportunity. Globally, transport accounts for nearly one-fourth of CO₂ emissions and is the fastest-growing energy-related sector.² According to TERI’s analysis, out of total 157 countries or country groups analysed, 72 countries have included transport-specific targets. Many of these are *conditional on international finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building*—highlighting the centrality of global support to enable low-carbon mobility in developing countries.

For India, transport is pivotal to achieving its net-zero target by 2070.³ According to the Fourth Biennial Update Report (BUR-4), 94% of India’s transport emissions arise from road transport, largely concentrated in urban areas.⁴ Responding to this challenge, the government has launched a series of initiatives: *CAFE norms* to improve vehicle fuel efficiency; *FAME I & II* and the flagship *PM E-DRIVE scheme* to scale electric vehicles across multiple segments; the *PM e-Bus Sewa* to electrify public transport in cities; the *Ethanol Blending Programme*, which achieved its 20% target ahead of schedule; and expansion of *Dedicated Freight Corridors* to raise the share of rail freight. Together, these efforts align with India’s updated NDC goals of reducing emissions intensity by 45% (from 2005 levels) by 2030.⁵

Yet progress is uneven. According to TERI’s analysis, transport coverage under the *National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) (2008)* and most *State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs)* remain fragmented. While urban mobility receives attention, areas such as freight decarbonisation, rural connectivity, demand-management strategies (e.g., congestion pricing, parking reforms), and robust monitoring frameworks are underdeveloped. Addressing these gaps will be critical to ensuring that

¹ [Paris Agreement \(Full Text\)](#), UNFCCC, 2015.

² [AR6 Working Group III Report](#), IPCC, 2022.

³ [Press Information Bureau](#), Government of India, 28 September 2023.

⁴ [Biennial Update Report \(BUR-4\)](#), UNFCCC – India, 2024.

⁵ [India’s Updated Nationally Determined Contribution \(NDC\)](#), Government of India, 2022.

transport action is fully integrated into India’s climate planning and contributes meaningfully to its long-term low-carbon transition. Finance remains a decisive factor. Although developed countries pledged USD 100 billion annually to support climate action in developing nations—a goal only met in 2022—the scale of need is far greater.⁶ At COP29, Parties adopted a *New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG)* of USD 300 billion annually by 2035, intended to replace the earlier target and reflect rising global finance requirements.⁷ However, *India, on behalf of the LMDCs, pressed for at least USD 1.3 trillion annually in grant-based, concessional finance by 2030, and rejected the USD 300 billion outcome as inadequate and procedurally flawed.*⁸ For transport in particular, where many developing country commitments are conditional, mobilising resources through multilateral development banks, private sector investment, and carbon markets will be essential.

As COP30 approaches, ***transport stands out as a litmus test for balancing ambition, equity, and finance.*** For India, it is both a domestic priority—central to achieving net-zero by 2070—and a strategic issue in global negotiations, where equity and CBDR-RC remain guiding principles. This roundtable seeks to deliberate on these challenges and opportunities, situating India’s experience within the wider global debate on transport and climate action.

II. Objectives

This roundtable, organised by TERI, will bring together policymakers, experts, industry, and financial institutions to deliberate on how equity, ambition, and finance can be better integrated into transport decarbonisation strategies in the lead-up to COP30. The discussion aims to:

- **Promote equity through CBDR:** Explore how the principle of *Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR)* can be leveraged within NDCs to balance sustainable mobility with economic growth in developing countries, while aligning domestic and global commitments.
- **Reflect on India’s progress and way forward:** Assess India’s recent achievements in transport decarbonisation—such as EV adoption, ethanol blending, and freight rail expansion—and identify opportunities and challenges for the road ahead.
- **Strengthen policy alignment:** Discuss how transport action can be more effectively embedded in climate frameworks by linking sectoral policies with NDCs, carbon budgets, and monitoring systems.
- **Identify financing pathways:** Examine the role of public-private partnerships, multilateral development banks (MDBs), and climate finance mechanisms in mobilising resources for a just and ambitious transition in transport.
- **Learn from global experiences:** Draw lessons from the strategies adopted by developed and developing countries to reduce transport emissions and assess their applicability in the Indian context.

The roundtable will be anchored around key questions pertaining to equity, technology pathways, sectoral integration, and finance—examining, inter alia, the role of CBDR in shaping transport action under NDCs, the effectiveness of Indian Railways’ freight corridors in advancing low-carbon mobility, and the potential of carbon markets and private sector investment in accelerating the transition towards sustainable transport solutions.

⁶ [Climate Finance Provided and Mobilised by Developed Countries in 2013–2022](#), OECD, 2024.

⁷ [COP29 agrees to triple climate finance to developing countries](#), UNFCCC, 2024.

⁸ [India’s Statement on Climate Finance at COP29](#), PIB, 15 November 2024.