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Policy styles and India's national action plan on climate change (NAPCC)

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ABSTRACT

This article assesses India's policy style, with respect to climate change particularly the launch of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). The NAPCC was India's first significant climate policy document that demonstrates a paradigm shift from the "structural conflict" policy paradigm towards "embedded liberalism". Policy ideas favouring "embedded liberalism" emerged from the Indian state were significant for the formulation of the NAPCC. The NAPCC was formulated due to a proactive and partially consensual policy style. The policymaking processes of "learning & puzzling" regarding a domestic climate policy involved relevant state and non-state actors and the policy idea was "powered" by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). This article explores interactions between state and non-state actors to find that the Indian government, in the context of the global aspirations of an emerging power facilitated and led the formulation of the NAPCC under an embedded liberal climate policy paradigm.

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India; climate change; policy styles; policy paradigms; NAPCC

Introduction

India's National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) of 2008 was the first important policy document guiding climate governance and action. The government understood that climate change would adversely affect natural resources, biodiversity, infrastructures, livelihoods and consequently the well-being of citizens (Dogra and Srivastava 2012; Dubash 2012; GoI 2008a; INCCA 2010). This would impact key areas of economic activity such as agriculture, water needs, forestry and health. Consequently, the budgetary allocation to the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) increased substantially in the 11th (2007–2012) and 12th (2012–2017) Five Year Plans, respectively.

The plan was the first serious (domestic) commitment undertaken by the Indian government towards addressing the global challenge of climate change. The NAPCC guides domestic actions through eight missions (discussed later) covering priority issues. The plan was designed to balance climate objectives with domestic priorities of growth, development and poverty reduction. It showcased India's domestic climate commitments and

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reiterated its position in global climate negotiations. At the time of writing, it is a little over a decade from its launch, yet the plan continues to serve as the main policy driving India's climate efforts.

The climate action plan was driven largely by the Indian state. A special position was created by the government to oversee and coordinate the formulation of the NAPCC. In addition, a high-level advisory committee comprising of national level state actors and select non-state experts was established to draft, review and finalise the plan. The government was actively involved in facilitating meetings with relevant actors and participated in technical deliberations over the NAPCC.

India's policy style with respect to the climate action plan was proactive and partially consensual. The NAPCC was a voluntary commitment of the Indian government to deal with climate change. The government wanted to be seen as an emergent and climate conscious global leader. We demonstrate that the pro-active and partially consensual policy style demonstrates an embedded liberal policy paradigm, which was a contrast from the earlier policy stance (structural conflict paradigm). Furthermore, the plan was an outcome of collective effort involving largely serving and retired national level civil servants and political executives (members of the Prime Minister's office) and select non-state actors such as experts from non-governmental & research organisations and media representatives. However, sub-national government officials and many other non-state actors were not involved in drafting the plan. Therefore, the NAPCC was proactively pursued by the Indian government however, it was partially consensual.

The article is divided into four sections. The next section discusses the materials and method used for the article. This section is followed by the conceptual framework of the article. With respect to the NAPCC, the Indian government's climate policy style was put to test to check whether it was a proactive or was it simply reactive. Was the policy style consensual or top-down/ imposed? Additionally, the role of different state and non-state actors was assessed by analysing the policymaking processes (learning & puzzling and powering). The materials and methods section discuss the data and collection method for the research. The empirical section discusses the transition in policy paradigms and unpacks the policymaking processes that led to the formation of the plan. This is followed by an analysis section that explains the policy style and the role of state and non-state actors in furthering the climate action plan.

Conceptual framework: Policy styles and the NAPCC

This article deploys the concept of policy style to understand India's response against climate change. The policy styles literature focuses on standard operating procedures employed by states to solve a particular policy problem. In doing so, the literature focuses on the policy making and execution process (Richardson, Gustafsson, and Jordan 1982; see Howlett 1991; Richardson 2013). The problem-solving approach can either be a proactive/anticipatory or a reactive one (Lampis 2013; Richardson 2018; Richardson and Jordan 1983; Richardson, Gustafsson, and Jordan 1982). In addition, policy styles examine the relationship between state and other actors in decision making processes. This helps assess whether decision making occurs in a consensual manner or is top down/imposed by states (Bovens, Hart, and Peters 2001; Richardson, Gustafsson, and Jordan 1982). The policy styles concept has been applied to understand the way different countries govern.

This approach was applied to understand climate related policy making. For instance, Howlett and Tosun (2021) discuss the influence of non-state actors, labelled as climate intermediaries,¹ in furthering climate measures. However, the policy style lens has been applied to Western liberal democratic states; the concept has not been widely applied to the Global South, especially for understanding India's climate policy-making process.

India's policy style with respect to climate change was identified by comprehensively assessing the policymaking process leading to the NAPCC. India's climate action plan was an outcome of learning, puzzling, and powering processes. Learning involves evaluating previous policies (Hall 1993), which helps define the policy problem. Puzzling comprises of collective deliberations over the policy problem & solutions (see Hecló 1974; Stock, Vij, and Ishtiaque 2020; van der Steen et al. 2016; Vink et al. 2013; Wood 2015), which leads to formulation of policy proposals. Policy proposals are adopted as policies when they are supported by relevant stakeholders who mobilize support for a policy (Hecló 1974; Mukherji 2014b; Mukherji and Zarhani 2021; van der Steen et al. 2016; Wood 2015). The empirical section discusses these policymaking processes along with the role of different actors.

India's climate policy paradigm is crucial to understanding the country's standard operating procedure with respect to climate change. The country's climate policy paradigm transitioned from a structural conflict mode to an embedded liberal one (details discussed later). Under a structural conflict² mode (Krasner 1985; Mukherji and Jha 2022) developing countries avoided domestically financed climate adjustments and demanded redistributive financial transfers or grants from developed countries. While an embedded liberal paradigm³ (see Ruggie 1982) comprised of making climate adjustments (aligning with the multilateral order) while accounting for domestic resource constraints and social imperatives. India's response to global climate developments is discussed in detail below to showcase the country's climate policy paradigm.

Empirical background

This section provides a brief overview of existing literature on the NAPCC. The policy style lens has not been employed to understand India's rationale of introducing its first climate action. More specifically, the causal mechanism behind the policy deliberations leading to the formulation and adoption of the NAPCC have yet to be unpacked.

Existing literature on the NAPCC has focused on what the plan entails and how it was operationalized (see Dubash et al. 2013; Pandve 2009; Saran 2019). Additionally, scholars have studied the consequences of the NAPCC on domestic institutions and schemes along with the implementation of the eight missions (see Doll et al. 2013; Dubash and Joseph 2015; 2016; Gupta and Purohit 2013; Negi et al. 2019; Pillai and Dubash 2021). The above-mentioned explanations do not shed adequate light on the policy context nor on the policymaking processes nor the role of different actors involved in formulating the NAPCC in 2008. Moreover, some of the scholarship attributes the formulation of India's climate action plan to exogenous factors such as international climate developments (see Dubash and Joseph 2016; Pillai and Dubash 2021). The following sections discuss the policy context and subsequently the policymaking processes by which the NAPCC was articulated. They will shed light on why we propose that, the NAPCC

validates the embedded liberal policy paradigm, which was driven by a partially consensual and proactive policy style of the Indian government.

Transition in India's climate policy paradigm: from structural conflict to embedded liberal order

India's climate policy paradigm has evolved overtime. In the initial years, India's resistance to global climate debates and action shows that it was following a structural conflict mode. This resistance shows that Indian negotiators did not succumb to international pressures to adjust and were strongly driven by domestic imperatives. Overtime, there was a transition in India's climate policy paradigm from a structural conflict mode to an embedded liberal mode whereby the country actively engaged in global climate debates and made domestic climate adjustments. This transition shows that India was willing to make climate adjustments but on its own terms thereby ensuring developmental aspirations were not compromised. India continued to resist conditionalities set by the developed countries. India's climate policy paradigm was predominantly shaped by domestic factors while international factors leveraged on-going domestic efforts, especially under an embedded liberal order.

India pursued a structural conflict mode of negotiating climate change through the 1990s till 2007. In the early days of climate negotiations, India and other developing countries suggested that developed countries should take full responsibility for historical emissions and support developing countries. This was based on the view that developed countries were responsible for the bulk of global emissions and that the emissions of developing countries were still very low. Moreover, they needed to grow to meet social and developmental needs (Ghosh 2011; Gupta, Kohli, and Ahluwalia 2015). Despite continued pressure from the developed countries, India resisted major domestic climate adjustments. For instance, during the period when the Kyoto Protocol (1997–2005) was being established, developing countries were asked to take responsibility for future emissions, however, this was strongly opposed by the G77 and China. India's approach was based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities. In global climate debates, Indian negotiators pushed for notions centred around justice and equity that required developed countries to take the bulk of the responsibility towards combating climate change (elaborated below), and support developing countries' pursuit of climate action (Mukherji and Jha 2022).

India was able to influence principles that form the basis of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the mechanisms under it (Rajamani 2017; Rastogi 2011). It was enshrined in the UNFCCC along with a formal agreement that developing countries would be provided with financial and technological assistance to address climate change (UNFCCC 1992).

Table 1 lists out some of the important events (1995–2009) that took global climate politics. Certain developments on the international stage influenced India's domestic response to climate action.

India's position in global climate negotiations changed from 2007. The climate policy paradigm moved towards an embedded liberal order⁴ which resulted in active participation and support for climate efforts. The country displayed willingness to make

Table 1. Important global climate developments and India's response (1995–2009).

Period	Event	Development	India's Response
1995	COP 1 held at Berlin	Developed countries called for developing countries to adopt mitigation targets (Gupta, Kohli, and Ahluwalia 2015; Sengupta 2019).	India, China and the Group of 77 countries (G77), strongly opposed any commitments (even voluntary) imposed on developing countries (Sengupta 2019).
1997–2001	Kyoto Protocol establishment and subsequent adoption		
2005	Kyoto Protocol (KP) enters into force	Global climate discourse shifted towards holding developing countries (like China and India) accountable for future emissions.	India's position remained clear that it would not accept any binding emission reduction targets.
2005–2007		Discussions focused on course of action at the end of 1st phase of KP (in 2012). Global discourse moved on to projections regarding how developing countries would contribute significantly to emissions and countries like India and China had to be held accountable. Mechanisms were put in place to discuss action post-2012 (Rajamani 2017; Sengupta 2019). A decision was made at COP 11 (in Montreal 2005) to launch two tracks to discuss the 2nd commitment period of the KP for Annex I (with legally binding emission reduction targets) countries; a parallel track on the Long-Term Cooperative Action for those countries that were not legally bound by the KP.	
2007	G8+ 5 Summit at Heiligendamm	Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh announced "India's per capita emissions would not exceed those of developed countries while pursuing policies of development and economic growth" (Singh 2007)	India was not ready to accept any legally binding emission reduction commitments (Gupta, Kohli, and Ahluwalia 2015; Rajamani 2017).
	Initial meetings held regarding the formation of BASIC- Brazil, South Africa, China & India.	Major developing countries were being asked to take responsibility for rising global emissions. BASIC came together for the 1st time as member countries outside of existing groups [G20, Major Economies Forum (MEF) & G77]. ^a China published climate action document	India as a part of BASIC, defended their shared interests- safeguard developmental interests; and avail access to finance and technology necessary for climate action from developed countries. This served as an impetus for India to formally communicate its climate commitments through the NAPCC
2009	COP 15 at Copenhagen	Negotiations held at Copenhagen did not come to a fruitful conclusion as Negotiations conducted by BASIC Group: played a crucial role here to ensure that differentiation between developed and developing countries would not be diluted; also focused on guaranteeing access to finance and technology from developing countries.	India and China accepted voluntary commitments to reduce their respective emissions intensity by 25 and 45 per cent, respectively (ENB 2009; Gupta, Kohli, and Ahluwalia 2015). India's position gradually shifted to making voluntary commitments to reduce emissions
	"MEF" held alongside the G8 summit in Italy (2009)	Countries present (including India) at this meeting signed a declaration that indicated that rise in global temperatures would not exceed 2 degree Celsius and signatories would "work together to identify a global goal to reduce global emissions by 2050" (Sengupta 2019)	

^aFrom interview with Mr Rajani Rajan Rashmi, Distinguished Fellow, TERI.

serious climate adjustments with domestic resources. For instance, the then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh made an explicit domestic climate commitment towards reducing per capita emissions.⁵ Similarly, India accepted voluntary emission reduction commitments at Copenhagen (see details in Table 1). India joined the liberal multilateral system by committing to address climate change, with or without resources from the developed world. However, equity and justice continued to shape India's negotiation stance in global climate debates. The emissions reduction commitments were reflective of India's developmental needs and priorities.

Beyond global climate commitments, India made significant climate adjustments domestically. For instance, a special post was created (special envoy on climate change) to oversee domestic climate actions and serve as chief climate negotiator. Additionally, the first domestic climate policy, the NAPCC, was launched in 2008. Under an embedded liberal climate paradigm, the launch of the NAPCC in 2008 shows India's proactive policy style. The NAPCC was introduced because the Indian government felt the need for a comprehensive plan to guide domestic climate action and showcase its commitment in global negotiations (e.g. limited its per capita emission contributions). The NAPCC was driven by domestic actors (discussed in empirical section) and cannot be attributed to any international pressure.

The Indian government was willing to take serious climate action both at the domestic (e.g. introduction of the NAPCC) and global level (e.g. commitment to reduce per capita emissions). This willingness to make climate adjustments shows India's proactive policy style towards an embedded liberal policy paradigm. This resonated with India emerging as a rapidly growing economy which meant making significant global engagements without compromising domestic imperatives. Therefore, India was responding to the need to protect its environment and simultaneously maintain its economic growth to ensure it was perceived as an emerging global power.

The events listed in Table 1 shows that India's climate policy paradigm gradually shifted from one of active resistance against reducing emissions (between 1990 and 2007) to one of participation in reducing emissions (2007 onwards). The NAPCC launched in 2008 was a result of proactive policy style being pursued under an embedded liberal order. From the beginning India resisted conditionalities set by the developed countries and strongly pushed for domestic imperatives. Therefore, India's climate policy paradigm was predominantly shaped by domestic factors (proactive Indian government), while international factors leveraged on-going domestic efforts, especially under an embedded liberal order.

Materials and method

The scale of analysis of the study is national. As the article aims to understand policy styles with respect to the NAPCC, data collection focused on tracing and identifying policy making processes.

The initial data collection process involved collating relevant literature including research articles, media articles and government press releases of the NAPCC. Research articles were identified using search engines such as google scholar and web of science. Additionally, information regarding the NAPCC was identified from other sources

such as newspaper, magazine and other media reportage and government press releases. The keywords used to identify relevant literature included “NAPCC”, “Climate action”, “Climate policy” and “India”. The literature review was conducted in 2018 (May- September), and in 2021 to identify scholarship on the NAPCC. This helped understand the overall context of the NAPCC, specific details with respect to implementation (through the eight sub-missions), and institutional restructuring to oversee the sub-missions. Analysis of the documentary evidence helped identify the processes and relevant actors involved in policy making. This illuminated the gaps in data such as policy deliberations driving the NAPCC. Understanding policy making processes require information that is not easily accessible and often undocumented. Primary interviews (seven) were conducted, some in person in 2018 and some online in 2021, to understand the policymaking process. Experts (five) who were involved in reviewing⁶ or had conducted extensive research on the NAPCC from The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and Centre for Policy Research (CPR), were interviewed between August and September 2018. These interviews helped understand (a) internal discussions with respect to climate change, (b) involvement of non-state actors with respect to the NAPCC and (c) identify information (e.g. meeting minutes of Prime Minister’s Council on Climate Change (PMCCC)) not available in the public domain. The authors were able to access minutes of the meetings regarding the NAPCC acquired through a right to information request to the government.

In November and December of 2021 a few members of the PMCCC were interviewed to trace and understand the policy discussions and processes that lead to the institutionalization of the NAPCC in 2008.

Empirical case study: domestic policy deliberations leading to the NAPCC

This section discusses the policymaking processes associated with the formulation of India’s climate action plan. As mentioned previously, the plan was proactively pursued by the Indian government. The policymaking process associated with the NAPCC is explained by the combination of powering (from the PMO) and policy learning and puzzling processes (involving PMCCC, special envoy and the PMO). Strong political support (powering) from the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) with active involvement of the Prime Minister was one of the key factors in pursuing the plan. Additionally, a Special Envoy on Climate Change who appointed by the PMO to deal with inter-ministerial coordination and facilitate deliberations to formulate the NAPCC. Furthermore, the plan was drafted in a partially consensual manner as select domain experts with technical and policy expertise were invited to draft and review the NAPCC over a period of one year (policy learnings & puzzling). Relevant state actors such as serving and retired civil servants (ministerial representatives) and PMO’s members (scientific officer) and a few non-state experts including representatives from non-governmental & research organizations and media personnel were invited to form the Prime Minister’s Council on Climate Change. The following section unpacks the NAPCC policymaking process and provides evidence of the country’s proactive yet partially consensual policy style.

About the NAPCC

The national climate action plan, first all-inclusive climate plan, was launched to guide domestic climate adaptation and mitigation actions. The plan focuses on priority issues through the missions' approach, targeting agriculture, energy, water, forests, cities, Himalayas and strategic knowledge (GoI, [undated](#)). Moreover, the NAPCC is designed to address India's climate and development concerns (Byravan and Rajan 2012; GoI 2008a; GoI, [undated](#); Gupta and Mandal 2015; Nachmany et al. 2015; Rattani 2018; Teri 2008; 2015; Venkataramani et al. 2015).

Measures under the plan are supported by domestic sources; domestic efforts would be leveraged if international support became available (Saran 2019). The climate action plan found that the Indian government was already spending more than 2.6 per cent of its GDP on largely adaptation measures concerning agriculture, water resources, health and sanitation, forests, coastal zone infrastructure and extreme weather events (GoI, [undated](#)). Unlike previous policies (e.g. Integrated Energy Policy 2006), the NAPCC is a comprehensive plan consisting of adaptation and mitigation strategies to address climate impacts and conserve the country's natural resource base (GoI 2008a; 2009; 2014).

It must be noted that India was already undertaking a range of measures spread across different sectors. For instance, a former member of the Ministry of Environment and Forest shared that, "the Indian government was investing close to 2.5 per cent of its GDP on adaptation action" (Interview 2021/22). But India's contribution towards mitigation measures was negligible as India was a major fossil fuel importer. The NAPCC has therefore prioritized mitigation measures by actively promoting transition towards solar energy and energy efficiency; both missions were described as being remarkably successful (Saran 2019). These measures would help India transition from fossil fuel-based growth to growth led by clean sources of energy.

The launch of the NAPCC saw many changes in the governance arrangements. Several national level line ministries came together to support the implementation of the plan. In addition, the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) was designated as the nodal department to oversee the execution of the climate action plan. After the launch of the NAPCC, the Indian government started budgeting (as part of the Five-Year Plans) for climate measures. Additionally, after 2008, budgetary allocations to the MoEF increased considerably, as is seen in the 11th (increase by 57.86 per cent between 2007 and 12) (GoI 2008b) and 12th Five-Year plans (109.17 per cent between 2012 and 17), respectively (GoI 2013). Furthermore, a dedicated chapter on climate change was included in the government's Five-Year Plans (GoI 2008b).

Powering (political support)

A policy (proposal) can only be adopted if it is backed or powered by relevant actors. The NAPCC was strongly supported by the PMO under Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.⁷ The PMO was directly involved in pursuing the climate action plan since July 2007 (Figure 1 in annexure). Firstly, the policy idea of formulating a comprehensive domestic climate action plan for the country originated directly from the Prime Minister.

Secondly, the PMO in 2007 appointed a Special Envoy for Climate Change to oversee the drafting of the plan. A former foreign secretary and negotiator of the Indo-US nuclear

deal (Dubash and Joseph 2016), Ambassador Shyam Saran⁸ was appointed the Special Envoy to align India's climate needs with international climate negotiations. The envoy mediated between the PMO and council members on the NAPCC mandates. The envoy enjoyed coordinating privileges. This helped the envoy approach a variety of government departments for information and support in a manner that would not be possible even for a secretary of a government department. The special envoy for climate change confirmed that, "the Prime Minister gave him the convening power to access and bring together relevant stakeholders including line ministries, which a single ministry could not do", and "if I on behalf of the Prime Minister convened a meeting and asked say the secretaries to the Government of India, they had to come and not send their joint secretaries" (Interview, 2022).

Thirdly, a high-level advisory committee, the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change, was constituted by the PMO in 2007. The committee was tasked to draft the climate action plan under the supervision of the Special Envoy. Support of the PMO helped bring together different perspectives and coordinate intensive deliberations involving representatives from different national ministries, members from PMO and a few chosen non-state actors (see [Figure 1](#)).

Fourthly, the PMO closely supervised the deliberations and progress of the plan through its representatives (members of the PMO) in the PMCCC. In fact, the Prime Minister personally engaged with the formulation of the climate action plan by attending all council meetings. Political backing of the PMO was a crucial factor in facilitating the NAPCC.

Policy learning and puzzling (collective deliberations)

The Indian government was aware of the technical expertise required to draft a climate action plan and recognized the lacunae in existing governance structures (e.g. lack of coordination between line departments, siloed sector specific approach). Consequently, the PMO constituted a high-level advisory committee, the PMCCC, to draft and review the climate action plan. The council comprised of state⁹ actors such as representatives from national ministries, retired and serving civil servants, members from PMO (scientific officer) and select non-state¹⁰ experts. Members were selected based on their technical and policy making experience. This taskforce had to identify the country's climate issues, recommend potential measures, deliberate over the draft plan and ensure that India's international climate negotiation stances were clearly reflected. This was a swift process largely conducted behind closed doors over three consultations held between 2007 and 2008.

The first council meeting on 13 July 2007 involved discussions of climate issues¹¹ and measures required to address them. India's climate concerns were highlighted by the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF). All council members provided suggestions on potential climate adaptation and mitigation measures across a range of sectors. The PMCCC acknowledged the need to formulate a national report on India's climate issues and actions. A few members from the council (the Prime Ministers' scientific advisor Dr. R. Chidambaram, the Director of TERI¹² Dr. R K Pachauri and the Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forests Meena Gupta) were nominated by the PMO to draft a report, which would be discussed in the next meeting. Some preliminary

action points were proposed¹³, which would be pursued by relevant national level ministries.¹⁴

The second meeting of the PMCCC was held on 26th November 2007 to discuss the draft report on the country's climate issues and proposed measures. The Prime Ministers' Scientific Advisor presented the report findings, which was deliberated by the council members and the Prime Minister. The draft report of the climate plan was considered substantial, but too technical¹⁵ for a national action plan. The PMCCC desired a simplified version that could be used for communicating the measures to international and domestic constituencies. The Prime Minister suggested that the plan should address two issues. First, India should be showcased as a climate-conscious global actor willing to take climate action. Second, the plan should highlight the country's negotiating position and expectations from the international community to collectively address climate challenges.

The PMCCC members met a third time on the 2nd of June 2008 to discuss the final draft of the climate plan. There was a consensus amongst the council members to modify the technical document formulated by the Prime Ministers' scientific advisor. A non-technical and policy-oriented document would be developed by drawing on some of the key elements from the technical report. Additionally, the final plan would be editorially vetted to highlight India's position in global climate debates. The technical document would be re-structured to align with the action plan and annexed as a reference document. The Prime Minister proposed that the plan should be made public. The NAPCC was published on the 30th of June 2008. The figure below (Figure 1) shows the role of different domestic actors in the policymaking process leading to the formulation of the NAPCC.

Analysis

Negotiations leading to the NAPCC point to three important aspects of the policy process. First, the process was largely endogenous and proactively pursued by the Indian state. Second, learning & puzzling and powering within the Indian state became the quintessential element of the proactive policy style. This resonates with recent scholarship on policy styles which suggests that national policy styles are

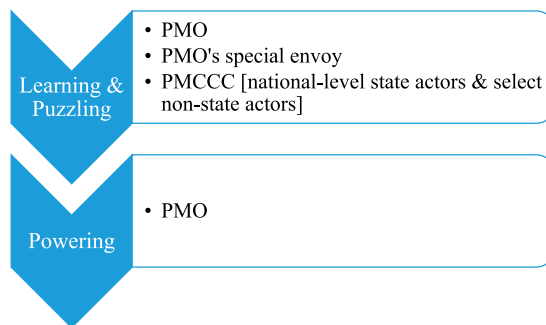


Figure 1. Policymaking processes and domestic actors involved in the formulations of the NAPCC. Source: authors' own analysis.

influenced by the political-administrative regimes (Howlett and Tosun 2018). Finally, the policy process was only partially consensual.

Domestic climate measures including the NAPCC were proactively pursued by the Indian government without any pressure from the global climate community. The Indian government introduced the climate action plan to bolster its position as an emergent global power and gain leverage in climate negotiations. The Prime Minister clearly articulated that, “India is prepared to do whatever it can to mitigate climate change without compromising its overriding priorities of economic and social development and poverty eradication” (Telegraph, 2011). This was evident while tracing the chronology of the NAPCC formulation process (see table 1 in annexure). The PMCCC meetings were scheduled between important global summits such as the 2007 G8 summit in Heiligendamm and the Bali summit in December 2007. The NAPCC was announced (on 30th June 2008) before the Tokyo meeting of the Group of 8 (G8) countries¹⁶ in July 2008. In addition, many of the climate measures included in the climate action plan were already being undertaken by sectoral ministries and supported by domestic resources. Existing domestic measures were realigned in the plan by explicitly acknowledging their climate potential. Until 2008, measures were being pursued sectorally (e.g. water, agriculture, energy), without recognizing their significance in addressing climate concerns. Furthermore, after the launch of the NAPCC in 2008, the government increased budgetary allocations for climate action and climate concerns were incorporated in India’s five years plans to enable implementation of the plan. A senior consultant from TERI who was involved in reviewing the draft climate action plan stated that, “India does not buckle down to foreign pressure, the NAPCC was pursued because it was driven by the Indian government” (Interview, 2018).

The policy styles lens accompanied by the puzzling and powering framework helped unpack the NAPCC policymaking process. The Indian government was the main actor in furthering the plan. The PMO was influential in technical deliberations and guiding the climate action plan, that is policy learning and puzzling. Additionally, it actively lent the political power necessary to formulate the plan. This was reflected in the appointment of the special envoy and creation of a high-level advisory committee tasked to deliberate over the policy and draft the plan. Finally, the Indian PM was actively involved in ensuring the launch of the NAPCC.

The policy-making process was only partially consensual in nature. Several domestic state and non-state actors were involved in drafting the NAPCC. A 26-member council (PMCCC) was established to draft the plan within a limited timeframe (within a year). Members of the taskforce were selected for their technical expertise and policy experience. Majority of the PMCCC members were state actors civil servants working across relevant national level ministries (see table 2 in annexure) with some representation of select non-state actors such as experts from non-governmental and research organisations and media personnel. However, the composition of the council was selective with no representation from sub-national governments and other non-state actors such as industry associations, trade unions or cooperatives and religious groups. Therefore, the formulation of the NAPCC was only partially consensual.

Conclusion

The NAPCC launched in 2008 was India's first significant step towards climate action; 15 years later the NAPCC continues to guide the country's climate measures. India's climate action plan was proactively pursued by the state in a partially consensual manner involving select state and non-state actors. The introduction of the NAPCC demonstrates India's move towards an embedded liberal policy paradigm which was a departure from its earlier structural conflict style involving no domestic climate adjustments.

Recent developments point towards further consolidation of India's commitments along an embedded liberal route. Several announcements made at COP 26 in Glasgow (2021) demonstrate the renewed embedded liberal trajectory: a net-zero emissions target by 2070; and meeting 50 per cent of its electricity requirements from renewable sources by 2030. These targets are now reflected in the country's revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). India currently has the fourth largest base for renewable energy capacity globally and its domestic policies like the National Green Hydrogen Mission, the recent amendment of the Energy Conservation Bill (2022) contribute to the larger goal of energy transition. However, a successful transition to a low-carbon development path will require financial and technological support.

India is also emerging as a leader by launching international initiatives like the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), the International Solar Alliance (ISA), and enjoys the position of co-lead in the Industry Transition Leadership Group. These domestic climate commitments coupled with international initiatives are in line with India's embedded liberal climate policy paradigm.

Notes

1. Climate intermediaries comprise of religious groups, trade unions, businesses and funding bodies, which as relatively understudied as compared to environmental non-governmental organizations. This group of non-state actors may or may not be affiliated with the state.
2. Krasner argued that Third-World countries would not only embrace the liberal order, but they would also vehemently contest that order for three salient reasons. First, developing countries lacked capacity for market adjustments due to their inability to collect substantial taxes and garner resources required to create infrastructure necessary for market-led adjustments. Second, these countries were inhabited by traditional societies, where social rigidities impeded market-driven adjustments. Finally, dependency theory in international relations and political economy had given these countries substantial intellectual reasons to argue that under-development of the developing countries was caused largely by the exploitative developed countries that dominated the global capitalist system (see Cardoso and Faletto 1979). Lack of state capacity, social rigidities, sovereign equality and dependency theory would lead developing countries to oppose a market-led order.
3. The embedded liberal order produced by the Bretton Woods system was contrasted by Ruggie with the more market-driven adjustment system of *laissez faire* that characterized Pax-Britannica. Ruggie argued that the original Bretton Woods system was far more Keynesian, where multilateral institutions were designed to allow for market interventions in order to make the liberal order work (Ruggie 1982). Many years later, John Ruggie also agreed that neoliberal economics of the 1990s had led to the demise of the original purpose that the Bretton Woods institutions were meant to serve (Ruggie 2016).
4. Under an embedded liberal order, countries cooperate with the multilateral liberal order after taking into consideration the domestic needs.

5. India's per capita emissions were much lower than those of the developed world (GoI, undated), this would not necessitate substantial investments in the short-run. Per capita emissions were an excellent way to acknowledge both the need for commitment, as well as buy time to garner resources required to make the transition (Mukherji and Jha 2022).
6. Actors interviewed were involved in reviewing the technical aspects associated with the NAPCC.
7. Dr. Manmohan Singh, an eminent economist had led the technical team as the finance minister who pursued India's historic economic reforms in 1991 (Mukherji 2014a; 2014b). He is also considered the architect of the Indo-US nuclear deal in 2008, which is considered as a turning point in Indo-US relations. The similarities between the nuclear deal and the NAPCC are striking as they are the handiwork of the same PMO
8. Ambassador Saran had enjoyed a similar status while negotiating the historic nuclear deal with the US.
9. State actors comprised of representatives from national level ministries such as the Ministries of Agriculture, Water Resources, Finance, Environment and Forest, New and Renewable Energy, External Affairs and members from the PMO's office, Planning Commission, Cabinet, National Manufacturing Competitive Council (PMO 2009) (see details in Table 2 in annexure).
10. The non-state actors included experts from non-governmental and research organisations such as TERI, CSE, IRADe, and representatives from the media such as the Frontline and India today (PMO 2009) (see Table 2 in annexure).
11. These included the impact of melting Himalayan glaciers, enhancing computing technologies for climate modelling, the impact of climate change on rain-fed agriculture, and the importance of reducing the carbon footprint (Prime Minister's Office 2009).
12. TERI is a research institute which works closely with the government and enjoys substantial funding from international organizations. It's former Director the late Dr. R K Pachauri was Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) from 2002 till 2015. This could be a reason why TERI worked closely on drafting the technical report.
13. India's resource constraints were recognized during the process of puzzling. India pledged towards renewables through the Jawaharlal Nehru Solar Energy Mission and the National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency were successful. It was understood that the transition to renewables was quite expensive. It therefore needed to be mediated through the energy efficiency route. Energy efficient equipment became quite popular in India as a result of this approach (Interview, 2022).
14. The ministries include the MoEF, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Ministry of Power, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy Sources, Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
15. The technical paper comprised details of the implications of climate change on India's diverse ecosystem.
16. India along with Brazil, China, Mexico and South Africa were invited to the G8 meeting.

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Appendix

Table A1. Chronology of events leading to the formation of the NAPCC.

Year	Event
June 2007	Indian Prime Minister commits to reducing per capita emission at the G8 summit, Heiligendam
2007	Special Envoy for Climate Change appointed by the PMO
2007	Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change established by PMO
13th July 2007	First meeting of the council; India's climate concerns and domestic actions discussed. Select members (led by Prime Minister's principal scientific advisor) tasked to draft a climate action plan
26th November 2007	Second meeting of the council; draft plan presented and discussed by council
December 2007	UN Climate Change conference, Bali
2nd June 2008	Third meeting of the council. Consensus to revise the draft plan into a less technical and policy-oriented plan and attach technical details as an annexure to the plan
15th June 2008	Review and finalise the action plan
30th June 2008	NAPCC released as a public document
July 2008	G8 summit, Tokyo

Source: PMO (2009); Atteridge et al. (2012).

Table A2. Members of the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change.

Sl. No.	Domestic actors
State/ government actors	
1.	Members from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO): special envoy on climate change, media advisor, principal secretary, additional secretaries, joint secretaries, minister of state
2.	Prime Minister's principal scientific advisor
3.	National ministries: water resources, agriculture, power, bureau of energy efficiency, urban development, central electricity regulatory commission, new & renewable energy, finance, external affairs, science & technology, environment & forest
4.	Members of Planning commission: chairman, deputy chairman, and principal advisor on energy
5.	Cabinet secretary
6.	Members of the Prime Minister's Economic advisory council: chairman Members of the National Manufacturing Competitive council: chairman
Non-state/non-government actors	
1.	Members of the investment commission: chairman
2.	Non-government/research organization representatives: several members including director of The Energy Resources Institute (TERI); Director of the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE); Director of the Integrated Research and Action for Development (Iradе)
3.	Media personnel/representatives: The Frontline and India Today

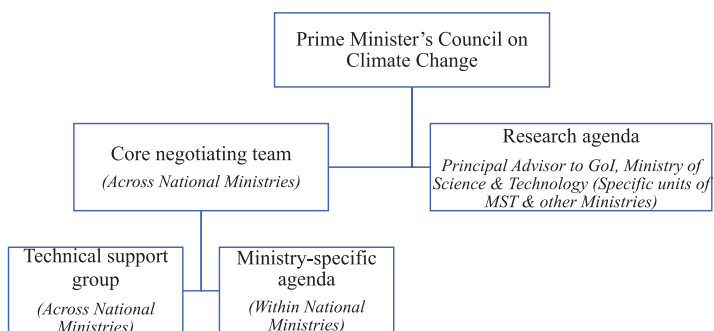


Figure A1. Involvement of state actors from PMCCC in designing the NAPCC.