



Climate Change Resilience Deficit in Asia-Pacific Countries

For Prelims: [Net-zero emissions](#), [Greenhouse gas emission](#), [Global climate crisis](#)

For Mains: Impact of climate-induced disasters on vulnerable groups in the Asia-Pacific region, economic costs associated with climate change

Why in News?

A recent study, "**The Race to Net Zero: Accelerating Climate Action in Asia and the Pacific**," by the [United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific \(UNESCAP\)](#) has revealed that most countries in **Asia and the Pacific** are **inadequately equipped to manage the growing threats** posed by extreme weather events and natural disasters.

- The study emphasizes the **lack of necessary data and resources to support adaptation and mitigation efforts** in the region.

What are the Key Highlights?

- **Escalating Climate Challenges in Asia-Pacific:**
 - **Increasing temperatures** in the region over the past 60 years have surpassed the **global average**, leading to more frequent and **intense extreme weather events and natural hazards**.
 - **Tropical cyclones, heatwaves, floods, and droughts** have resulted in significant loss of life, displacement, health issues, and heightened poverty levels.
 - Out of the top 10 countries most affected by such disasters, **six are located in the Asia-Pacific region**, causing disruptions in food systems, damaging economies, and undermining societies.
- **Disproportionate Impact on Vulnerable Groups:**
 - Climate change and climate-induced disasters disproportionately burden marginalized and vulnerable groups, including **women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, migrants, indigenous populations**, and young people in vulnerable situations.
 - The underlying drivers of poverty and societal inequalities are intensified by these challenges, hindering development progress.
- **Region's Contribution to Greenhouse Gas Emissions:**
 - The Asia-Pacific region is responsible for **more than half of the world's greenhouse gas emissions**.
 - **Rapid development, coupled with a significant population**, places the region at a critical position in the [global climate crisis](#).
 - Many **low-lying cities and vulnerable small island states are located** within the region, exacerbating the risks faced by these areas.
- **Economic Costs of Climate Change:**
 - ESCAP estimates the annual **average losses from natural and biological hazards** in Asia and the Pacific to be around **780 billion USD**.
 - These losses are projected to increase to **1.1 trillion USD under a moderate**

climate change scenario and **1.4 trillion USD** under the **worst-case scenario**.

- Current financing for climate action **falls short of meeting the region's needs and limiting global warming to 1.5°C**.
- **Steps Required to Address:**
 - **Closing the Emissions Gap:**
 - **Energy Sector:**
 - Restructuring **national energy systems** and investing in **renewable energy infrastructure**.
 - Transitioning from **fossil fuels to renewable energy sources**.
 - Promoting **cross-border electricity grids** to increase the **share of renewable energy**.
 - Emphasizing **local solutions and decentralized power generation**.
 - **Transport Sector:**
 - **Shifting to low-carbon** transportation pathways.
 - **Reducing transport distance** through integrated land-use planning.
 - Encouraging **sustainable transport modes** with low-carbon or **net-zero emissions**.
 - Improving **vehicle and fuel efficiency**.
 - **International Trade and Investment:**
 - Integrating **climate considerations into regional trade agreements**.
 - Promoting **climate-smart trade practices**.
 - Encouraging the private sector to **adopt low-carbon pathways and sustainability practices**.
 - Increasing **transparency and accountability** through **sustainability reporting and greenhouse gas accounting**.

What is UNESCAP?

- **About:** The UNESCAP is the **regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region**.
 - It has **53 Member States and 9 Associate Members** from Asia-Pacific Region including India.
- **Established:** 1947
- **Headquarters:** Bangkok, Thailand
- **Objective:** To overcome some of the region's greatest challenges by providing results-oriented projects, technical assistance and capacity building to member States.

[Source: DTE](#)

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