

KARNATAKA

# Scientists call for dedicated State funding to handle climate change challenges

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**There is no fixed percentage of assured finance allocated in the State budget for mitigation of its impact**



With climate change causing excess rainfall and extensive damage to agricultural/horticultural crops and public properties in Karnataka, scientists have called upon the State Government to access private and multilateral finance options for adopting eco-friendly technologies and mitigation of climate change.

While the Glasgow Climate Pact highlighted the global-level funding, scientists said State-level funding was needed to address climate change challenges. Currently, there is no dedicated fund at the State level.

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## Scattered funding

Climate financing in the State is highly scattered and based on Central and State-level schemes and programmes, with no fixed percentage of assured finance allocated in the State Budget for mitigation and adaptation programmes, observed scientists N.H. Ravindranath of IISc. and Indu K. Murthy of the Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy, Bengaluru.

Jagmohan Sharma, director general of the Environmental Management and Policy Research Institute, nodal agency of the State Government, said Karnataka State Action Plan on Climate Change (2021), which was yet to approved by the Centre, estimated the annual budget requirement for climate change action plan of the State at ₹20,880 crore in 2025 and ₹52,827 crore in 2030.

A sum of ₹ 8,253 crore was allocated in the budget in 2019 for climate change adaptation and mitigation in more than a dozen of sectors, including agriculture, horticulture, fisheries, forest, energy, water resources, micro irrigation.

Prof. Ravindranath and Prof. Murthy said the State has to take a lead and give more push to proposals seeking funds from both private and global lending agencies for scaling up environment friendly technologies from gram panchayat level to the State level.

## Not sector specific

Further, they said State climate finances are not sector-specific, region or zone-specific or social group-specific, taking into consideration current vulnerabilities, to address climate change. Environmental activities are to be integrated with ongoing rural/urban development projects, said Prof. Ravindranath, author of multiple UN IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) reports on climate change.

Dr. Sharma said besides increase in rainfall, the State would see a rise in summer temperature between 0.5 degree Celsius and 1.5 degree Celsius in the coming years and would cause impact on farm productivity, livestock and submergence of islands.

While climate change would increase productivity in forest lands, cotton and sugarcane crops, cause harm to agriculture crops such as paddy, ragi, groundnut. There was an opportunity to increase forest area by 1.2 million hectares by planting saplings, he said.

Former Minister and chairman of BCCI-Karnataka chapter, B K Chandrashekar, who organised a round table meeting with scientists on COP 26, Glasgow, and its impact on Karnataka, appealed to Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai to demonstrate a political commitment for addressing climate change.

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