Global agreement on climate change linked to availability of financing through Green Climate Fund: Prakash Javadekar

NEW DELHI: At the meeting of the Major Economies Forum currently underway in Paris, Environment MinisterPrakashJavadekar has made it clear that a robust global agreement on climate change, scheduled to be finalized in Paris next year, is directly linked to the predictable availability of financing through the Green Climate Fund

New Delhi has said that developed countries must commit substantial and dedicated funds for climate fund in time for United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's climate summit in September for developing countries to move ahead on commitments to reduce carbon emissions.

Addressing the meeting of the 17 major economies, which account for the bulk of global emissions, Javadekar called for the quick capitalization of the [Green Climate Fund](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/topic/Green%20Climate%20Fund) by 2015. The minister said that countries have to agree on a roadmap to meet this deadline.

The minister made it clear to his counterparts in the Major Economies Forum that without clear and positive movement on finance by the industrialised countries the likelihood that many developing countries would submit their emission reduction proposals, known in [climate change](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/topic/climate%20change) negotiations parlance as intended nationally determined contributions (INDC), was "very low".

"The probability of many developing countries submitting their INDCs will be very low if the developed countries do not commit substantial amount of climate finance upfront before September 2014 to fund the requirements likely to be depicted in the INDCs and bring it to the notice of the Heads of State of the developing countries," Javadekar told the gathering.

The Indian minister stressed that provision of "substantial" climate finance was "an essential prerequisite for eliciting carefully prepared information on INDCs from the developing countries." Javadekar has effectively put the onus of an ambitious climate change agreement on industrialised countries. By showing the crucial link between availability of adequate and predictable funding and the ambitious efforts to reduce emissions, the minister has made it clear that the rich industrialised countries need to do their "fair share" and not simply demand that developing countries do more to tackle climate change.

New Delhi maintains that the Green Climate Fund must be capitalized at the earliest. "We are concerned that despite being launched in 2009-10, the Green Climate Fund still has empty coffers. The need of the hour is the quick capitalisation as climate actions cannot wait. The Initial Resource Mobilisation meeting in Oslo has hardly produced any result," the minister told the Forum.

While underscoring the need to ensure that the Fund is capitalised by 2015, Javadekar stressed that the need for new funding. "We cannot reclassify [Overseas Development Assistance](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/topic/Overseas%20Development%20Assistance) (ODA) as climate finance. This would have critical bearing on the pre-2020 and the post 2020 climate agenda."

Javadekar said that the capitalization of the Fund should be facilitated largely by "public financing in grant terms", he did not shut the door on private financing. Marking yet another positive move by New Delhi. "Many countries are emphasizing on private sector investment and climate investment as panacea for all ills. However in our view the private sector can complement but not supplant public finance needed to address climate change and its impacts," he said.

Javadekar's stress on the capitalization of the Green Climate Fund comes close on the heels of the German Parliament adopting the 2014 Budget, which has a provision that authorizes the German government to make a multi-year pledge of up to 750million, and a first payment to the Fund is planned for 2015, though the Angela Merkel government is expected to make a symbolic payment this year. While the budgetary provision and parliamentary approval is not a pledge, it does allow Germany the opening to pledge to the Fund and sign a binding contribution agreement. France too, is working on its contribution, with rising domestic demand that the government contribute at least 1 billion as minimal contribution, which would be in line with its fair share of the estimated initial capitalisation of the Fund based on global overseas development assistance that is pegged at 15 billion. There are indications that Japan too likely to make a substantial pledge to the Fund, though not immediately. There are also discussions on possibility that South Korea and Mexico would contribute to a South-South Solidarity Fund under the umbrella of the Green Climate Fund.

New Delhi's engagement at Paris is indicative of the proactive diplomacy that Prime Minister Narendra Modi espouses. Javadekar's intervention at the [MEF](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/topic/MEF) will go a long way to establish India's credentials as a constructive participant in devising a solution to the global challenge of climate change. A move that is reminiscent of similar proactive measures made by former environment minister Jairam Ramesh during his tenure.

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