Environment & Ecology · GS - III

“Climate summits repeatedly pledge to limit global warming, yet hesitate to name fossil fuels, its principal cause.” Analyse the reasons behind this paradox. What should India’s approach be in this context?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 19/11/2026	GS - III	Environment & Ecology

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Paradox: COP28’s language versus silence at COP30 and COP31. Reasons: consensus rule, petrostates, developmental needs, finance deficit, energy security. India: CBDR-RC, cover all fossil fuels, scale up renewables, a just transition, finance and technology demands.

Model Answer

Fossil fuels cause about two-thirds of global greenhouse gas emissions, but COP texts struggle to say so. COP28 agreed to “transition away” from them, yet COP30 and now COP31 have stepped back from naming them.

Reasons for the paradox:

- **Consensus rule:** Any one party can block wording, and oil producers have repeatedly vetoed it.
- **Development and energy security:** Developing countries still depend on cheap fossil energy for growth and to end energy poverty.
- **Finance gap:** The COP29 finance goal of $300 billion a year by 2035 falls far short of the trillions developing countries need.
- **Equity:** Rich countries used up most of the carbon budget yet demand that others cut faster.

India’s approach:

- **Equity:** Uphold CBDR-RC and insist that any phase-out language covers all fossil fuels, not just coal.
- **Leading by example:** Point to non-fossil sources already making up half of installed power capacity, the 500 GW target for 2030, and the Green Hydrogen Mission.
- **Just transition:** Press for coal regions and workers to be protected, and for finance and technology transfer to be delivered.
- **Leadership:** Build coalitions through the International Solar Alliance and the Global South.

Conclusion: Credible climate action needs both ambition and fairness.

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