



## Viewpoint: Greening the Economy

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With Delhi's air pollution taking the wrong turn and threatening large parts of North India, a green economy could be just what is required. Against the background of our current economic slowdown, anything "green" is instinctively presumed to be an added cost which may not be justified. However, that is far from the truth. India's economy needs not just a renewed boost of structural reforms, but also a second generation of green policies. Simply shutting down industrial units operating in residential areas is not always the answer to the problem of pollution. Accountability at all levels is the key to ensuring that Indians are able to live their lives without major health hazards. It is a matter of concern that despite various orders being passed by the Supreme Court from time to time in the pollution matter, the situation has only gone from bad to worse. If Indian industry is to remain globally competitive, greening the economy isn't optional as it has a direct impact on the health and productivity of the workforce. The UN recently said that greenhouse gas levels in

the atmosphere, the main driver of climate change, hit a record high last year. There is no sign of a slowdown, let alone a decline, in greenhouse gases concentration in the atmosphere despite all the commitments under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. With the international situation being far from rosy, India has to do all it can to protect its economic and environmental interests, which run concurrently. Climate change is predicted to hit our agricultural sector particularly hard, and so the greening of our economy needs to be made a policy priority.

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