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Target 1.5 : Another Warning on Warming: IPCC Special Report on Global Warming

Why in news:-

- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has just released **a special report on global warming of 1.5°C** over pre-industrial temperatures.

Significance of Report:-

- World leaders have been looking for **greater clarity on the impact of accumulating emissions on climate**. The report is prepared as a **follow-up to the UN Paris Agreement on Climate Change**, provides the **scientific basis** for them to act.
- It provides details on how the **global response to climate change needs** to be strengthened within the broader context of **sustainable development** and **continuing efforts to eradicate poverty**.
- There is now greater confidence in **time-bound projections on the impacts of climate change on agriculture, health, water security and extreme weather**.
- With sound policies, the world can still pull back, although major progress must be achieved by 2030.
- It will be **a key scientific input** into the **Katowice Climate Change Conference in Poland** in the coming December.

Highlights of Report:-

- Report highlights that the nations' pledges in the Paris agreement are insufficient to limit warming to 1.5°C in any way and calls for the world's leaders **to limit future human-caused warming to just 0.5°Celsius from now**. This is, notably, well below the earlier globally agreed-upon goal of 1° C from now.
- The report also lists several specific advantages ("**climate-related risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security, and economic growth**") of keeping the global temperature rise within 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels as compared to 2.0 degree. For examples:
 - **Coral reefs** would decline by 70-90% with global warming of 1.5 degrees, whereas virtually all would be lost with 2 degrees Celsius.
 - By 2100, **global sea level rise** would be 10 cm lower with global warming of 1.5 degrees compared with 2 degrees Celsius.
 - There would be fewer deaths and illnesses from heat, smog, infectious diseases and undernutrition and substantially fewer heat waves, downpours and droughts.
 - Limiting warming to 0.5°C from now means the world can keep the ecosystems much as it is now and **avoid the danger of crossing tipping points**, or **thresholds** beyond which the earth's systems are no longer able to stabilise, becomes higher with more warming and many more.

- The world could be **3% wealthier by 2100** in a 1.5°C scenario compared to a 2°C scenario. A 1.5°C strategy could **create double the number of jobs in the energy sector by 2050**.
- **Impact on India and other coastal nations and agricultural economies if global temperature rise beyond 0.5:**
 - Decline in crop yields and reduction in economic growth,
 - Unprecedented climate extremes for eg. India could annually expect conditions like the 2015 heat wave that killed at least 2,000
 - Diseases such as malaria, dengue, and conditions like premature deaths due to air pollution, undernourishment are likely to multiply.
 - Poor would likely be hit the hardest, and extreme weather, especially heat waves, will be deadlier.
 - Increased susceptibility could push a significant population into poverty and
- **Pathways and policies suggested by report on how Earth's weather, health and ecosystems could be made better:**
 - The report predicts the possibility to keep the increase in global average temperatures to within 1.5 degrees Celsius of pre-industrial times with time-bound manner targets.
 - For that The world would need to bring down its greenhouse gas to about half (45%) of its 2010 levels by 2030, and to net zero by about 2050.

- As of now, (to keep within 2.0 degree) the aim is to reduce greenhouse gases by only 20%, from 2010 levels, by the year 2030 and achieve a net-zero emission level by the year 2075.
- Require technological development for Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR). It is a reference to physical removal of the stock of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to reduce its concentrations.
- To stay below 1.5°C, the transitions required by energy systems and human societies, in land use, transport, and infrastructure, would have to be rapid and on an unprecedented scale with deep emission reductions.
- It involves much sharper and quicker emission cuts by big emitters like China, the US, the European Union and India.

➤ **What India Should do :**

- India should fast-track its emissions reduction pledges made for the Paris Agreement.
- The commitment to generate 100 GW of solar energy by 2022 should lead to a quick scale-up from the 24 GW installed, and cutting down of coal use.
- Agriculture needs to be strengthened with policies that improve water conservation, and afforestation should help create a large carbon sink.

Challenges to follow pathways and policies suggested by Report:-

- With ***US withdrawal*** from the Paris deal make it very hard to achieve ambitious target as contributions from the U.S. and other rich countries to the **Green Climate Fund** and other funding mechanisms for the purpose of mitigation and adaptation are vital even to reach the goals of the **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**.
- Even if *all the NDCs are implemented*, the world is *expected to warm by over 3°C*.
- Disputes over the implementation of the Paris Agreement at numerous meetings depict the *deep divides among rich countries, emerging economies and least developed countries*.
- How is the remaining carbon budget, that is the room available in the atmosphere to safely contain more CO₂, going to be shared among different countries? This is a difficult question to address, given the *contentious nature of the negotiations*.

Way Forward :-

- This special report poses options for the global community of nations, which they will have to contend with in Poland, the next Conference of the Parties.
- Each will have to decide *whether to play politics on a global scale for one's own interests or to collaborate to protect the world and its ecosystems as a whole*.
- The *path forward offers achievable but not easy solutions*.

THANK YOU

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