

The 'Future of Earth, 2020' report

August 21, 2020

- Recently the South Asia Future Earth Regional Office, Divecha Centre for Climate Change, Indian Institute of Science released "The Future of Earth, 2020" report

Aim: The report was prepared with the **aim of reducing carbon footprint and halting global warming below 2 degree Celsius by 2050.**

Key observations

- **The five global risks identified by the report are:**
 - Failure of climate change mitigation and adaptation
 - Extreme weather events
 - Major biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse
 - Food crises and
 - Water crises
- **The interrelation of risk factors:** It mentions that **extreme heatwaves can accelerate global warming by releasing large amounts of stored carbon** from affected ecosystems, and at the same time **intensify water crises and/ or food scarcity.**
- **The loss of biodiversity:** The loss of biodiversity also weakens the capacity of natural and agricultural systems to cope with climate extremes, increasing vulnerability to food crises
- **Warmest years:** The report also states that during 2019, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere reached more than 415 ppm, and the five years from 2014 to 2018 were the warmest recorded over land and ocean since 1880
- **Threatened species:** According to the report, humans have

now “significantly altered” 75% of our planet’s land area; about a quarter of species in assessed plant and animal groups are threatened, it mentions that in 2018, the world’s last male northern white rhino died in his Kenyan enclosure, while the Brazilian blue parrot, Spix’s Macaw, was declared extinct in the wild.

- **Food Production:** Strains on food production are expected to increase, as a result of various forces including climate change, biodiversity loss, and a global population on the rise
- **Digital Platforms/Social Media:** The flow of information in the world is changing, as today, around half of the planet’s 7.6 billion people are online, deeply influenced by social media, search engines and e-commerce algorithms. These digital platforms tend to favor the spread of information designed to engage with emotion over reason, can cause the propagation of “fake news”, and can lead to social harms like erosion of trust in vaccines

A brief note on South Asia Future Earth Regional Office

- South Asia Regional Office of Future Earth is hosted by the Divecha Centre for Climate Change, Bengaluru, India.
- **It seeks to promote sustainability and climate research and adapt and spread the vision of Future Earth in the region.**
- **Future Earth was officially announced in June 2012 at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), to be created as a global initiative to strengthen the interface between policy and science.**
- Future Earth became fully operational with a permanent Secretariat at the end of 2015.
- A South Asian Regional Office of Future Earth was convened in Bangalore, south India, in July 2016.
- The new Regional Office for South Asia has a domain that spans over the countries of the South Asian Association

for Regional Cooperation, Myanmar and a few Indian Ocean island nations.