Behind the Curves: Projected global emissions and warming taking into account India's new (announced) 2035 target

Briefing: 27 March 2026

1. Summary

India's Cabinet has announced the emissions targets for 2035 as part of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) for submission to the UNFCCC.[1] The announcement also implies India's target for net-zero by 2070 may cover all greenhouse gases (GHGs) rather than CO_2 only.

This briefing outlines India's 2035 NDC and updates our global warming projections taking it into account. Overall, NDCs for 2035 now announced or submitted by around 130 countries cover around 70 % of emissions from all countries that are parties to the Paris Agreement. We now have a more complete view of the course that the world has set for the next ten years and beyond to its mid-century net-zero goals. This perspective is much needed as the world navigates the immediate energy security implications of the crisis in the Middle East.

The key findings given all NDCs now submitted, and the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement, remain broadly in line with our earlier assessments.[2] That is:

- Global emissions are still projected to peak this decade. The 2035 NDCs show increasing mitigation ambition in aggregate (compared to 2030 NDCs), with variation across countries.
- Overall, these 2035 targets align near-term action with a broadly linear path to stated long-term net-zero goals.
- A consistent finding in major studies since late-2025, and in this update with India's and other recent NDCs, is three bands for the best estimates of projected 2100 warming. We are headed for warming of:[3]
    - 1.8 to 2.2 °C, taking into account NDCs and long-term targets, met in full.
    - 2.3 to 2.6 °C, taking into account only NDCs, but not long-term targets. A range of approaches are used to extrapolate emissions after NDCs.
    - 2.5-2.9 °C, if emissions continue as projected under current policies, instead of declining to meet the targets now set.
- Returning to 1.5°C by 2100 after temporary overshoot remains technically feasible but requires that existing targets are met or overachieved and ambition accelerates. The opportunity to limit warming to 1.5°C without overshoot has likely passed.[4]

2. India's 2035 NDC

India's announced 2035 target is a 47% reduction in emissions intensity by 2035, as compared to the previous target of reducing emissions intensity by 45% by 2030. India's 2035 target may result in emissions 1-2 $GtCO_2eq$

[1] Press Information Bureau, Delhi 25 March 2026 https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2245209&reg=3&lang=1, accessed 26 March 2026
[2] Climate Resource (2026) Behind the Curves: Comparing 2100 temperature projections and underlying assumptions
[3] ibid
[4] Climate Resource (2025) Pre -COP30 How are temperatures tracking on latest climate targets?

higher than implied by its 2030 target, depending on the rate of growth in India's GDP to 2035. In addition, India announced a 2035 target of achieving 60% of non-fossil fuel based electricity generation capacity and creating a carbon sink from forest and tree cover of 3.5-4.0 GtCO2 cumulatively from 2005 to 2035. Given India's current net sink in the land sector, it is already on track towards this target.

The 2035 announcement more strongly points towards all-GHG targets for 2030, 2035 and 2070. Previously this was more ambiguous and often interpreted as a CO_2 only target. A net-zero GHG target in 2070 would be a significant strengthening compared to a CO_2-only target.

India has already achieved key targets it set for 2030. The targeted 33–35% reduction in the emissions intensity of GDP was met 11 years ahead of schedule.[5] A target of 40% share of non-fossil electricity generation capacity has also already been delivered. In February 2026, the reported share of non-fossil electricity generation capacity was around 52%.[6]

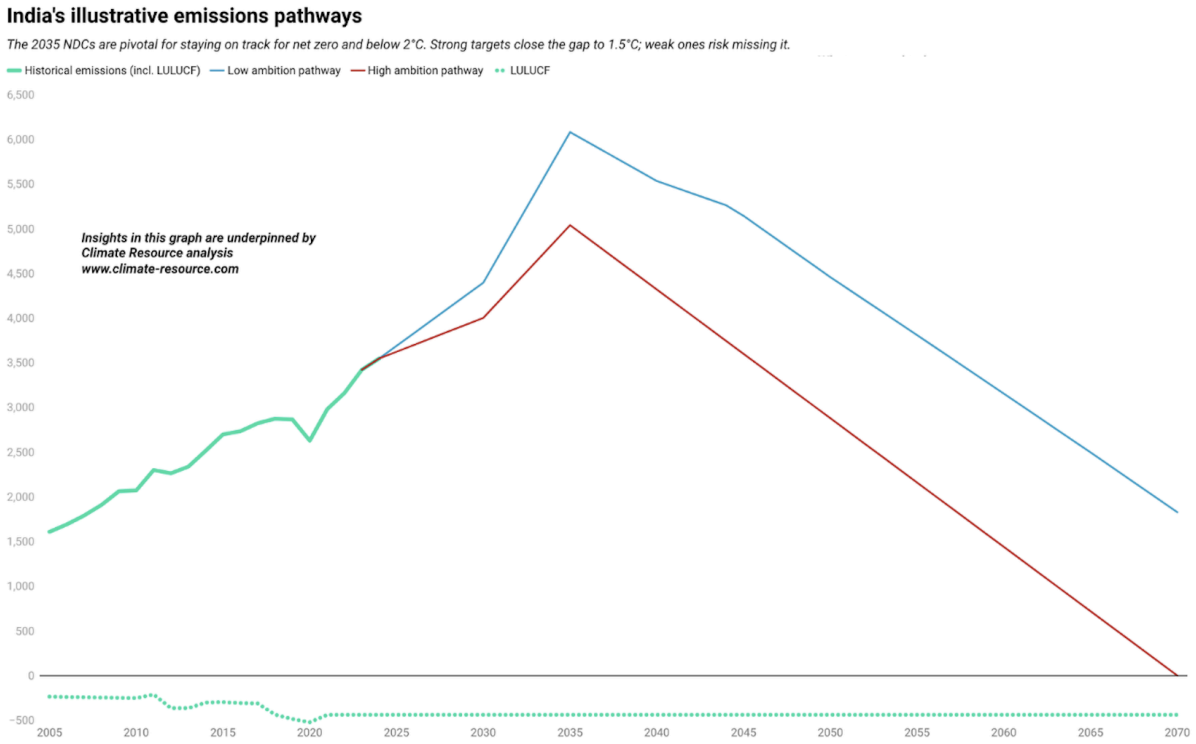

Figure 1 India's new 2035 NDC target announcement - implied emissions trajectories *The high ambition end of the range reflects slower GDP growth to 2035 of 5.5% p.a. The low ambition end of the range reflects faster GDP growth of 7.% p.a. GDP values are sourced from Table 1.7 in the Economic Survey 2025-2026, Statistical Appendix for the historical period. Although a 2035 emissions peak is shown in the figure, the 2035 NDC announcement does not clarify when emissions might peak - this could be before or after 2035.*

[5] Press Information Bureau, Delhi 25 March 2026 https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2245209&reg=3&lang=1, accessed 26 March 2026

[6] Ministry of Power, 05/02/2026, https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2223720&reg=3&lang=2, accessed 26/03/2026

It is unclear when India's emissions will peak. India has long had lower per-capita emissions than other large economies, and a post-2030 peak has been anticipated in line with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities enshrined in international climate commitments. However, the 2035 target announcement could imply a higher rate of growth in emissions from 2030 to 2035, relative to the rate of growth in emissions to the 2030 target, depending on GDP growth over the relevant periods. A 2035 emissions peak is shown in Figure 1, with emissions declining thereafter towards its 2070 net zero target - for which we consider a range depending on whether this is an all GHG target, or CO_2 only.

3. Global emissions

Global greenhouse gas emissions are still projected to peak within this decade given countries' targets and actions, and decline materially to 2035, notwithstanding the withdrawal of the USA (Figure 2). This is a consistent finding and a shift compared to assessments from the early 2020s, which still projected continued emissions growth to 2035 and beyond under the policies implemented at that time.[7] It is due to the rapid deployment of renewable energy, declining fossil fuel demand in several regions, and improvements in energy efficiency.[8]

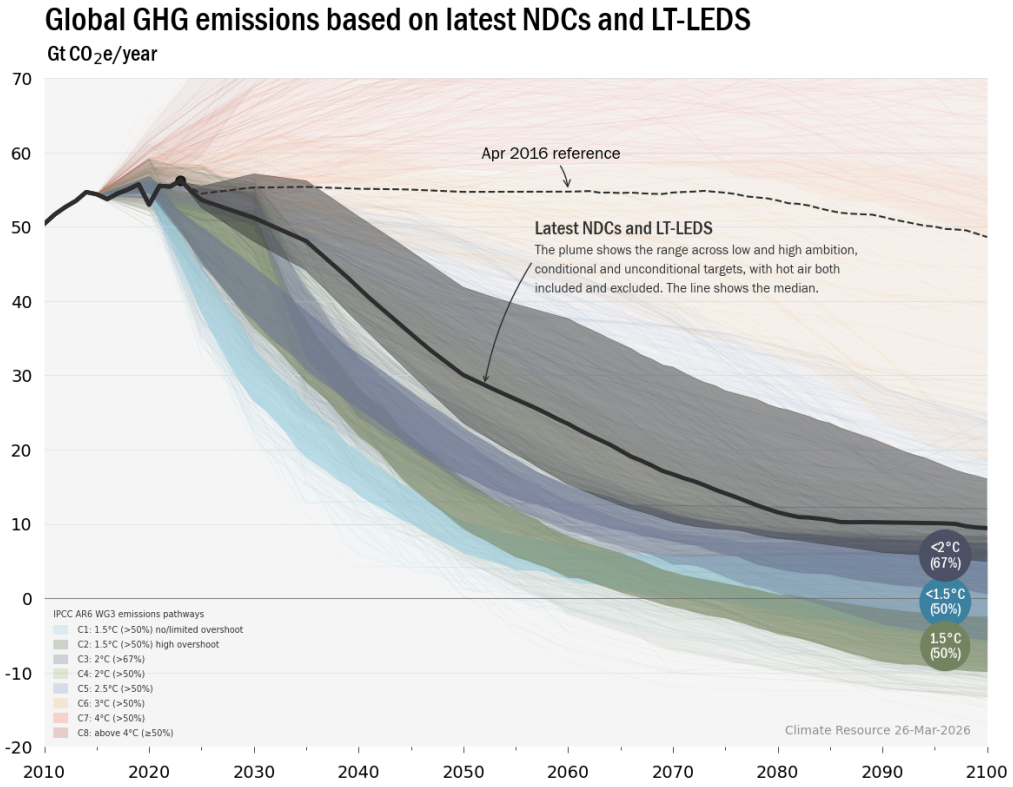

Figure 2: Global emissions pathways implied by NDCs + LT-LEDS as at 26 March 2026. *The grey plume represents the full range of emissions outcomes implied by these commitments, with the upper and lower bounds reflecting countries' higher and lower targets, which in some cases correspond to unconditional targets and targets conditional on international support.*

[7] UNEP (2025). Emissions Gap Report 2025: Off Target. UNEP; International Energy Agency. (2025). World Energy Outlook 2025. IEA.; Climate Resource. (2025). Pre-COP30: How are temperatures tracking on the latest climate targets?
[8] IEA (2025). World Energy Outlook 2025. IEA.

Taken together, 2035 NDCs remain broadly aligned with a linear path from 2030 NDCs towards countries' long-term net-zero goals, though some, including India, will not see emissions peak by 2030, or in some cases by 2035. The global aggregate trajectory implied by 2035 targets is generally consistent with a transition towards net-zero targets in the second half of the century, even taking into account projected continued growth in emissions in some countries, including those with historically low per-capita emissions and high development needs.

4. Temperature

The best estimate of projected warming, based on full implementation of countries' NDCs and long term targets announced and submitted to the UNFCCC, consistently points to global temperatures of 'just below 2 °C', even following the US withdrawal.[9] This remains our projection with India's new NDC (Figure 3).

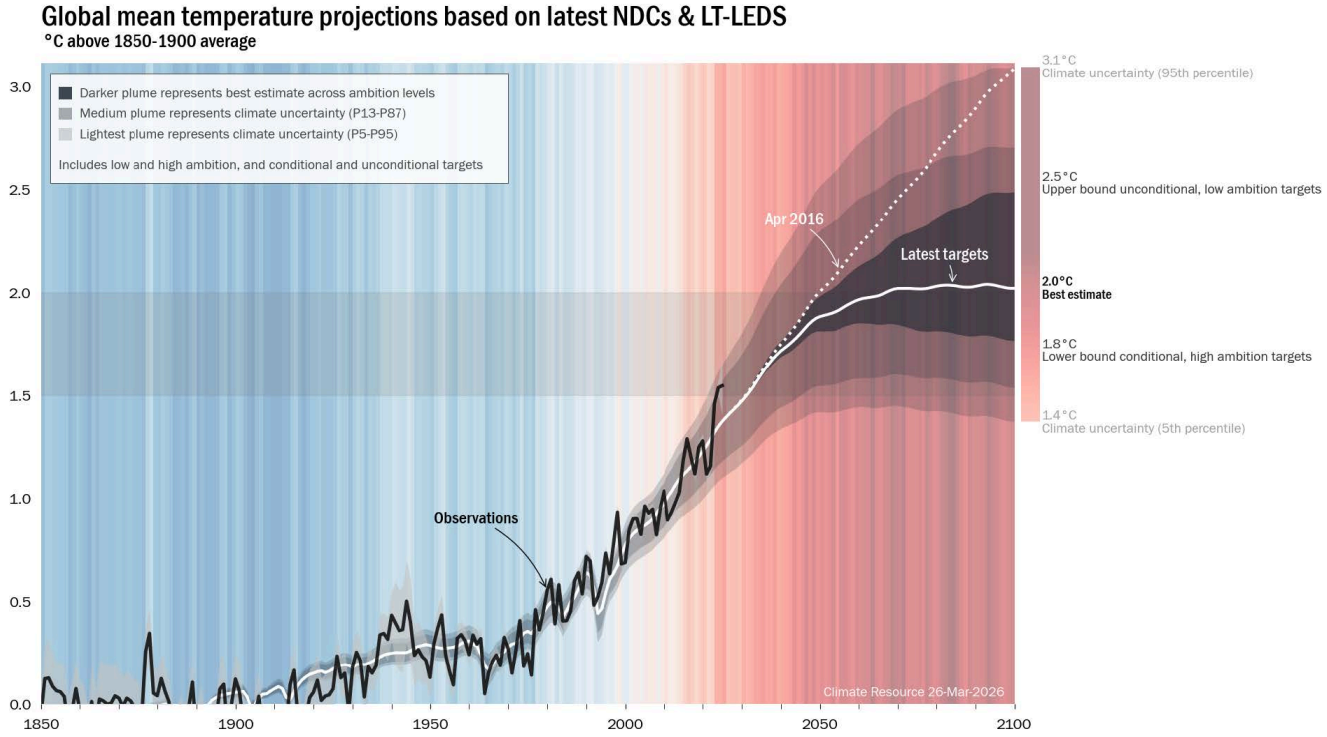

Figure 3: Global 2100 temperature implied by NDCs + LT-LEDS.

Figure 3 shows the full range of projected warming taking into account countries' NDCs and long-term targets as at 26 March 2026. The best estimate is warming of 2°C. Across the full high and low ambition estimates of countries' submitted targets, the 50th percentile projections span a range of 1.8 to 2.5 °C by 2100 — which reflects the full grey plume from Figure 2. This is conservative to the extent that for the USA it assumes emissions trends after 2035 continue to reflect current policies and do not trend towards net-zero by mid-century. If instead, we assume that the USA course-corrects, and after 2035 its emissions decline to reach net-zero by mid century, projected warming is around 0.1-0.2 °C lower.

[9] UNEP (2025). Emissions Gap Report 2025: Off Target, Climate Resource (2026) Behind the Curves: Comparing 2100 temperature projections and underlying assumptions

5. Takeaways

With the announcement of India's 2035 emissions target, we now have a more comprehensive picture of the course the world has set. Overall, the 2035 targets continue to align near-term action with a broadly linear path towards stated long-term net-zero goals, notwithstanding the variation across countries, and post 2030 emissions peak for some.

These 2035 NDCs in aggregate provide a strong signal, particularly given the broader geopolitical context. Key takeaways are:

- **Base case for planning:** Scenarios delivering 1.8-2.2 °C are now a central case for policy, regulatory frameworks, and investment strategies.
- **Implementation remains critical**: Implementing NDCs and closing the gap between current policies (2.5-2.9 °C) and targets (1.8-2.2 °C) requires rapid policy and faster clean energy deployment. It makes clear the transition risks for high-emissions assets, and the opportunities for clean energy expansion and low-emissions industrial processes.
- **International cooperation and finance is core:** Delivering all conditional elements of NDCs, including scaling finance for the clean energy transition, and decarbonisation of hard-to-abate sectors is essential to fulfil countries' international commitments.
- **The policy and ambition gap:** The global mitigation challenge is not just to implement current targets but to close the gap between the 'just below 2 °C' best estimate implied if current targets are met in full, and what is needed to limit 2100 warming to 1.5 °C after a short and shallow overshoot.