

This is how you are supposed to do it. [Via the Hindu](#), Indian Finance Minister Mukherjee's Budget uses carbon charges to combat climate change:

The [tax] slapped on coal in last year's budget will help pay for schemes to protect and regenerate forests and clean up polluted sites announced in this year's Budget.

Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee has allocated Rs. 200 crore each to the Green India Mission, an ambitious ten-year Mission which is a key element of India's climate change strategy, and environmental remediation programmes to combat the pollution problems that have emerged as serious public health concerns.

The money has been earmarked from the National Clean Energy Fund. This Fund was announced exactly a year ago, to collect revenue from the Rs. 50 a tonne tax imposed on both Indian and imported coal. It was to be used to sponsor research and innovative projects in clean energy technology, which would help combat climate change.

How big of a charge is this? In Indian parlance, a "crore" is ten million, so 200 crore rupees is 2 billion rupees. With two such programs, that of course



India's Finance Minister Pranab
Mukherjee

makes 4 billion rupees. At roughly 45 rupees to the dollar, that's about \$90 million. But given that [US GDP is about four times higher than India in terms of Purchasing Power Parity](#), we're roughly around \$360 million a year as an equivalent. That isn't earth-shattering, but it's a substantial start, which is more than the United States can say.

Which just shows how embarrassing the whole thing should be for this country. Americans loudly protest the developing world's failure to make binding climate change commitments; [the Byrd-Hagel resolution of 1996](#) which passed the Senate unanimously, said that the United States would not commit to emissions caps unless developing countries did. Quietly, India is leaving us in the dust. Note that the reforestation portions of the Green India Mission potentially combat climate change as much as the technology development portions, because forest can serve as carbon sinks.

Republicans say that we can't afford to do anything on climate; India, where 75% of the populace makes less than \$2 a day, is actually doing something. The whole thing would be shameful but for the fact that the modern conservative movement is incapable of feeling shame.