

Climate lens Through the Manifestos

Nepal is all set for the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies' Election happening on 20th November 2022. This is the second election of its kind and the first one happened 5 years back.

Political parties have released their manifestos which look fancy and are like dreams that hardly come true and are far away from reality. They have continued to follow the tradition of showing dreams and taking people above the clouds. The commitments that they publish in black and white have hardly met. So the question on credibility of those manifestos always exists.

Climate agendas have received satisfactory space in the manifestos of the political parties. The parties seem to have clearly identified the issues and have connected climate change with forest conservation, clean energy, pollution control, disaster risk management, climate finances and sustainable infrastructure development.

Clean energy has become a hot cake for almost all political parties. Parties have mentioned different clean/renewable energy sources including hydro-energy, solar, biogas, and even hydrogen and energy mix. However, electricity is the number one priority. Parties have shown their concern on electricity for domestic, industrial, and transportation usage. They have pledged free electricity for domestic usage to support which is a very good commitment when thousands of Nepali die annually from diseases associated with air pollution. Further, with free electricity, consumptions are likely to increase. This is in accordance with several national and international commitments Nepal has made. Shifting from the fossil fuel would not only help maintain clean air, public health but also reduce trade deficit as fossil fuel imports constitute 22% of Nepal's total imports which is more than all exports combined.

ENERGY

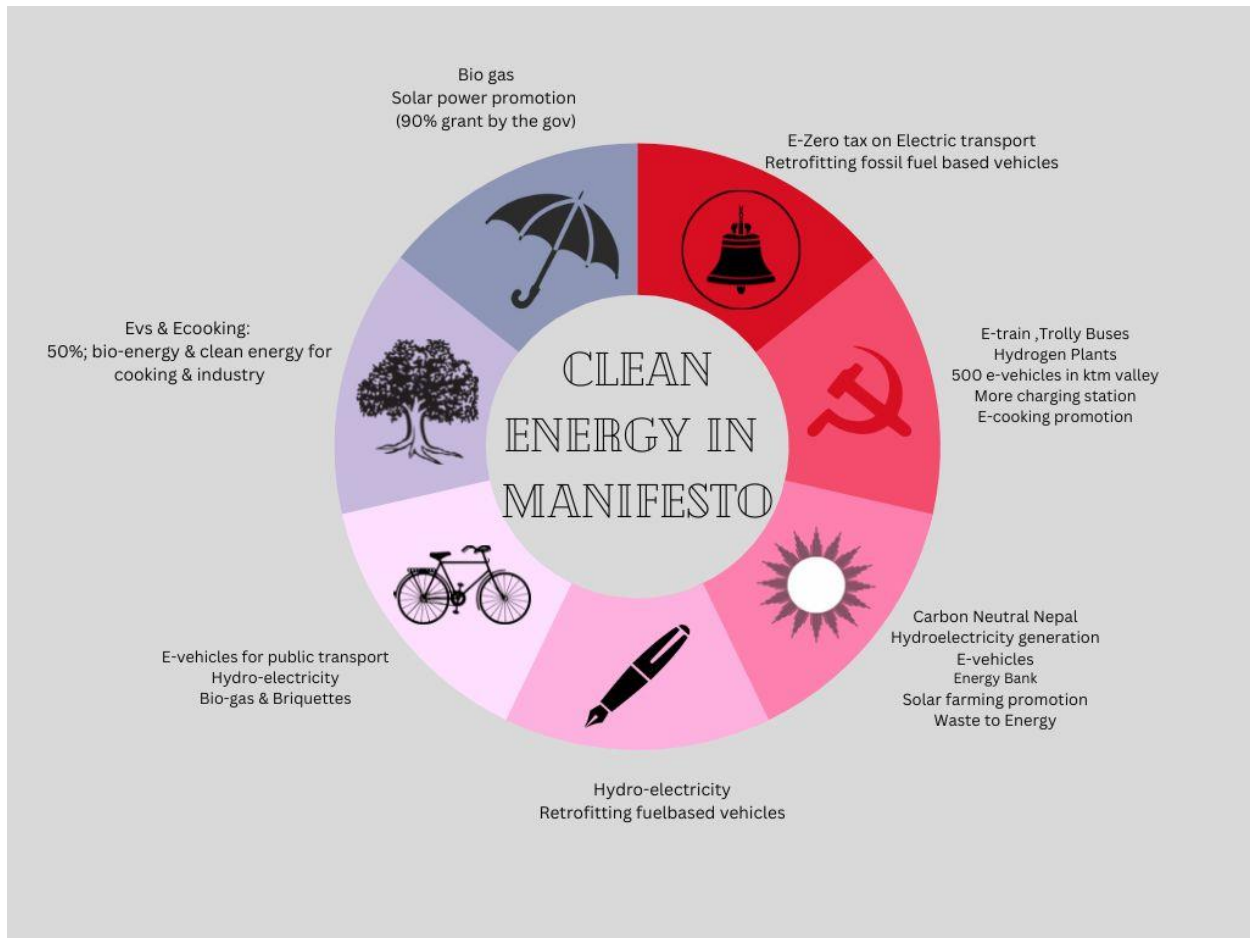


Figure 1: Clean Energy in Manifestos of Major Political Parties

NC (Nepali Congress) pledges providing 50 KWh of electricity free per month for each family (20KWh/month of recent practice). Further, it says of increasing the installed capacity of electricity generation to 10,000 MW. And per capita electricity consumption will reach 1200KWh. NC says it wants to increase the use of electric vehicles and e-stoves to 50 percent in the next five years. NC also plans for zero fossil fuel based vehicles in city by 2045, will promote e-vehicles with wider availability of charging stations across the country. Moreover, NC talks of bio-energy and clean energy for cooking and industrial usage. NC has also mentions about production of Green Hydrogen & ammonia.

The CPN (Maoist) Party mentions about providing upto 30KWh free electricity. Further CPN commits of ensuring quality and quantity of electricity reaching all

households and consumers within next 5 years. It even talks of freeing electricity for irrigation purpose. Further, CPNs manifesto includes e-mobility promotion (mono/metro train, trolley bus), construction of e-train tracks and charging stations in major highways, 500 EVs in Kathmandu valley and conversion of fossil fuel based vehicles to EVs. It also talks on energy mix and hydrogen plants and promoting e-cooking & industries manufacturing e-stoves. Added more to the list are 5000MW of electricity generation and hydrogen plant establishment in next 5 years. It also mentions about waste to energy, for waste management.

Nepal Communist Party Unified Socialist manifesto mentions providing 200 units of electricity to each family for free. Besides, it also mentions promotion of hydro electricity production; industrial use promotion and promotion of public vehicles, retrofitting fuel based vehicles. Unified socialist also talk about waste to energy through bio-gas and briquettes.

UML (Nepal Communist Party) mentions about Hydro electricity production & promotion. Similarly, it also highlights about replacing/& conversion of fossil fuel-based vehicles to e-vehicles, infrastructure development for e-mobility (study & development of Metro railways, cable cars) and promotion of public transport. Moreover, UMLs manifesto includes promotion of solar-farming, energy mix (also hydrogen) and energy bank to ensure energy security.

Peoples' Socialist Party mentions promoting solar power for areas that are not connected to the grid electricity via 90% grant by the GoN. It even talks of biogas for every household.

Loktantrik Samajwad Party (LOSAPA-Democratic Socialist Party of Nepal) mentions about promoting e-vehicle while making it the public means of transport and zero-tax provision on electric transport. Moreover, the existing fossil fuel-based vehicles will be converted to e-vehicles and within the five years will stop the sell of new fossil fuel based vehicles. The party also mentions the construction of the cycle lanes. LOSAPA has also included bio-gas and briquette production.

Though the commitments from all of the political parties are indeed good to look at. It seems, almost every party intends to ensure access to affordable, reliable and sustainable clean energy for all. The only question that arises now is how realistic

these commitments are and most importantly are these issues brought together to be addressed or just to fool the voters.

Climate Change issues in the Political Manifesto





Nepali Congress (NC) climate promises include clear roadmap to zero carbon country by 2045. It mentions maintaining 47 % forest cover; conservation of wetlands, lakes & ponds; developing open spaces and parks in cities and city planning via integrated model. NC also plans to establish **climate change research center**, study multi-hazard, maintain Early warning systems for improved climate adaptation, resettlement plans for settlements in hazard-prone areas, and awareness on climate change & risk reduction. Furthermore, it speaks of Climate change and biodiversity conservation program that links gender equality. Pollution is at times associated with the behavior of the people and behavior change doesn't come readily. NC seems to have realized this and the manifesto includes education/awareness raising for all types of pollution, banning on use and import of plastics below 74 microns and recycling of 80% metal & glasses. NC speaks of accessing both climate loans and grants from international climate finance and climate credits. When Nepal has already suffered from the impacts of climate change, NC should have considered the climate injustice Nepali vulnerable communities and should have stick to the grants.

The CPN (Moaist) manifesto includes raising the mountain issues in COP27. However, the event will conclude before the election. It also says the Nijghad Airport construction will be done sustainably allying with environment conservation. CPN mentions of Chure conservation through the resettlement of vulnerable human settlements. It also plans for hazard mapping & information, promoting environment-friendly development work for the minimization of the

disaster risk. Similarly, it says green zone will be maintained in cities. For waste management composting and waste to energy will be practiced and watershed will be managed.

Nepal Communist Party Unified Socialist manifesto includes Multi hazard mapping, resettlement of vulnerable communities and integrated settlement development. It further says EIA process to be made effective for environment-friendly development. It talks of afforestation/Plantation in empty spaces including public/private lands as well as within forest area, maintaining green zones along the road sides. Unified Socialist seems to be much concerned of the waste management issue which is reflected in the manifesto that includes waste segregation at source and use of different vehicles for transport of organic & inorganic waste; ban of plastic of low standard along with materials imposing adverse impacts on environment, ban on disposal of sewage into lakes and river of Kathmandu/other cities and conversion of waste to energy & fertilizers, will be practiced. The manifesto also includes rainwater harvesting, collection of water in ponds, recharging water resources and wetlands conservation. It even mentions development of water transport.

UML (Nepal Communist Party) plans to focus on Climate change adaptation while establishing Nepal as a model country on *ENVIRONMENT FRIENDLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*, prioritize for compensation for climate change and take initiatives in networking with least developed countries and mountainous countries to take the climate change issue into international level. Moreover, it plans for integrated settlement development while developing 18 smart cities. Multi hazard identification and mapping, early warning and preparedness as well as rehabilitation activities are also included. It also speaks on insurance assurance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Risk Management.

Towards addressing pollution issues, it talks about e-mobility, e-cooking, the waste management and shifting smoke emitting industries outside Kathmandu. It mentions about the waste segregation at source, recycling via modern technologies, waste to fertilizer & energy and safe disposal of inorganic waste. Moreover, it also mentions for campaigning on Climate Neutral Nepal and plan strategically to minimize the effects of Climate Change.

Politicians have been using youth networks almost all the times for political purposes, especially for agitations. However, this time, youth networks will be mobilized for social cause i.e. raising awareness on Disaster, epidemics, environmental conservation as well as engaging them in those activities.

UML also talks about campaigning for Carbon Neutral Nepal, the conservation for mountain & ocean's environmental linkages; and mountain environment. The manifesto further says 45% forest cover to be assured as well as use of forest during construction of industry, factories and infrastructures in a way that doesn't negatively impact forest; Conservation of watersheds (including) lakes, rivers, glacier lakes and ponds) & cleaning the rivers of Kathmandu, and green belts along the roadsides. UMLs manifesto also includes Biodiversity conservation with special programs for the conservation of rare animals endemic to Nepal, commercial production of wildlife (musk deer, wild boar, kalij) and human wildlife conflicts control (conservation and control mechanisms) while compensating the damage.

Peoples Socialist Party mentions about focusing on adaptation to the impacts of climate change and prioritizing environmental sustainability in any developmental activities. It also talks of forest conservation & plantation, and biodiversity conservation. The manifesto further mentions of land zone planning, developing open spaces in cities, cleaning the rivers and development of green cities.

LOSAPA mentions of Chure conservation. Plantation on chure region will be done to reduce soil erosion. It envisions Green Province. Agricultural production to be free of poisonous pesticides & insecticides. It also says Green belts will be maintained through plantation along roadsides and the budgets for such plantations to be included mandatorily during the planning phase of road construction. Also, Green pockets and public parks will be made in cities and the budget will be included in the annual planning. Further, it says when buildings are constructed, plantation is to be done twice the area used for construction and Government will provide the area for plantation for the private sectors. Besides planting new trees it wants to ensure existing plants are safe within the city and Green City Police will be mobilized and made responsible for the no deforestation.

LOSAPA also mentions of the early warning systems for the prevailing hazards including floods, hailstorm, cold waves, storms & heavy downpours while maintaining preparedness at the administrative level. For the pollution issue, it

talks about imposing pollution tax (Polluters pay model) and using the tax for building green school.

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