This is not to suggest that there is no place for regulation, or that the impact of air and water pollution on the health of Indians is of no concern. Witness the forced closure of 60 industries whose corrosive emissions were threatening the Taj Mahal; the country-wide call for the improved treatment/disposal of hazardous solid waste arising from the Bhopal tragedy; and the swift response to the 1994 outbreak of pneumonic plague. These actions, however, are more often the exception than the rule in the rapid drive towards industrialization in which the economic agenda takes priority over environmental concerns.

Like many other developing nations, India needs to modernize by leap-frogging over wasteful and polluting technologies to environmentally and energy efficient technologies. In addition, these technologies must also provide tangible cost savings if they are to obtain wide-spread use by industry.