

SUMMIT OVERVIEW



WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2025

**PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACCELERATING SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE SOLUTIONS**

September 25 -29, 2025 | Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre London





The year 2025 marked the 24th edition of the Summit series. In its journey since 2001, the platform has become a focal point for global thought leaders and practitioners to congregate and drive ambition and action for achieving sustainable development, and to address the global challenge of climate change. The Summit series has emerged as the impactful international event based in the Global South on sustainability which focuses on global futures while keeping an eye on present actions.



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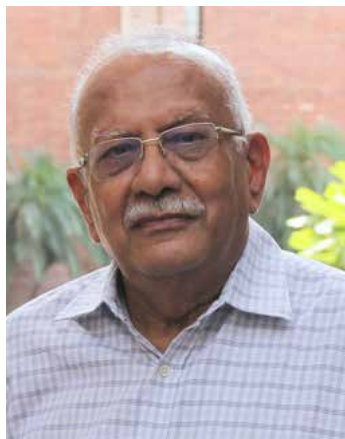
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Chairman's Message



Mr Nitin Desai
Chairman, TERI

The year 2025 marked the 24th edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS), continuing the esteemed legacy of the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit, established by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) in 2001 under the visionary leadership of Dr R K Pachauri. This edition held particular significance as it coincided with TERI's 51st anniversary, celebrating its remarkable and unwavering contribution to India's sustainable development journey.

Since its inception at the dawn of the millennium, WSDS has evolved substantially. The theme of the 24th edition, *Partnerships for Accelerating Sustainable Development and Climate Solutions*, underscored the critical role of partnerships in driving sustainability efforts. It also highlighted the complexities of fostering collaboration and resource-sharing to ensure responsible conservation and equitable usage at all levels.

Partnerships are indispensable, as no single country can tackle climate change in isolation. It is a global crisis that necessitates collective action. However, despite widespread recognition of this need, we continue to fall short on both fronts.

With just five years remaining, we are significantly off-track in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set in 2015. Current estimates indicate that only about 14% of these goals are progressing as intended. Similarly, in the fight against climate change, we are not on course to limit global temperature rise to below 1.5°C by 2030. Recent geopolitical developments further complicate this pursuit, making the target seem increasingly elusive.

This concern is particularly relevant to TERI. As an organization committed to energy and resource management, TERI operates across diverse sustainability domains and remains deeply invested in fostering partnerships to accelerate progress in these areas.

In many ways, the discussions held during the 24th edition of WSDS have enriched our understanding of these pressing challenges. The insights shared will play a crucial role in encouraging governments, businesses, and other key stakeholders—who hold the levers of economic development—to take more decisive action towards sustainability and climate resilience.

A recurring theme among younger participants in this Summit has been the emphasis on partnerships. Every issue they raised centred around fostering collaboration. As someone who has worked extensively with governments but now sees greater promise in engaging non-



governmental actors, I strongly believe that our best path forward lies in these collaborative networks.

This year's edition facilitated multi-stakeholder engagement on critical issues such as restoring nature and ecosystems, bridging the financing gap, the road to COP30, energy transitions, resilient infrastructure, green technology, and mainstreaming sustainable development. It enabled meaningful dialogue among leaders from governments, corporations, research institutions, and civil society, catalysing solutions that can lead to tangible, actionable outcomes.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Director General of TERI, the Summit Curator, and the entire team for successfully convening global leaders for this impactful event. I look forward to future initiatives under the *Act4Earth* platform and upcoming editions of WSDS, particularly as we approach the milestone *Silver Jubilee* edition next year. The 25th edition will be a pivotal moment to reflect on our collective journey and renew our commitment to urgent, collaborative action to ensure both intra-generational and intergenerational equity.

From the Director General's Desk



Dr Vibha Dhawan

Director General, TERI

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) successfully hosted the 24th edition of its flagship event, the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) from March 5-7, 2025. Over the past 24 years, WSDS has evolved into a global platform for driving collective action on sustainability, bringing together key stakeholders, including heads of state and government, ministers, industry leaders, academics, youth representatives, and grassroots organizations. The Summit continues to catalyse critical discussions, partnerships, and solutions that are essential to securing a sustainable and just future for all.

The theme of WSDS 2025—*Partnerships as an Accelerator for Sustainable Development* resonated deeply in today's complex geopolitical landscape. The Summit underscored the undeniable reality that no single entity, be it a country, government, corporation, or institution can tackle the pressing challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion, and social inequalities in isolation. These interconnected global crises demand collaborative, cross-sectoral solutions.

Frequent and severe environmental disasters, from floods to heatwaves, prove that climate change is an immediate crisis. With temperatures exceeding 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, urgent action is crucial to prevent further catastrophic consequences. Climate change impacts are deeply unequal as while some face financial losses, others experience generational setbacks, underscoring the need for equitable solutions. Finance remains a major barrier, requiring innovative investments. A shortage of skilled professionals further slows progress, making capacity building essential. Tailored solutions for SMEs in India are critical to achieving Net Zero by 2070. Scalable, affordable technologies are key to accelerating global sustainability.

A key takeaway from the Summit was the need for unified, urgent action. The COVID-19 pandemic showed that global collaboration can drive rapid breakthroughs. The same urgency is needed for the climate crisis as environmental degradation knows no borders, and inaction anywhere affects the entire planet. Climate action demands urgent implementation. Strengthening public-private partnerships, fostering regional collaboration, and embedding equity in sustainability must remain priorities. Partnerships need to go beyond being transactional, they must be transformational, built on shared values, inclusivity, and long-term impact.

Last year, TERI celebrated 50 years of advancing sustainable solutions. Founded by the Tatas in 1974 to address global challenges, TERI has



evolved into a leader in policy, grassroots action, and sustainability. We remain committed to driving impactful change for a greener future. Our goal is not just to generate solutions but to ensure their accessibility to other countries globally that require them the most.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Guyana, H.E. Brigadier (Retd) Mark Phillips and H.E. Ms Marina Silva, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Brazil for gracing the inaugural session of WSDS 2025. I am sincerely grateful to Shri Bhupender Yadav, Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for gracing the inaugural session and supporting the Summit. I also express my sincere appreciation to H.E. Ms Silva and H.E. Dr Bharrat Jagdeo, Hon'ble Vice President of Guyana, for accepting the Sustainable Development Leadership Award (SDLA), TERI's highest recognition for outstanding global leadership in sustainability. Their remarkable contributions to environmental conservation, climate action, and sustainable policymaking continue to inspire meaningful change worldwide. My special thanks to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Science and Technology for their unwavering support to the Summit. I thank all the speakers and participants for joining us and making this Summit a success.

This year's Summit owes its success to the efforts of various teams working behind it. I would like to acknowledge the core team for organizing the Summit. I thank Dr Shailly Kedia, Curator of the World Sustainable Development Summit and her team; Dr Dipankar Saharia; the IT team including Mr Varun Prakash Pandey and Mr Rohit Chauhan; the Events team led by Ms Sonali Mathur; the Communications and Publications team led by Ms Anupama Jauhry, the emcees, floor managers, facilitators, rapporteurs, and the staff members for making this event a great success. Special thanks to all our partners and the International Steering Committee and the Advocacy Committee for their support. We look forward to their strengthened associations in the future editions of the Summit.

While the preparations for the silver jubilee of WSDS shall commence soon, I am happy to share that the Summit, in tandem with its knowledge initiative—Act4Earth, has engaged on issues that require immediate attention from the world leaders. Launched at WSDS 2022, Act4Earth advances climate and sustainability goals through research and dialogue. Its two components, COP Compass and SDG Charter, drive inclusive climate action and policy strengthening. Last year, COP Compass focused on climate finance and sustainable lifestyles, while SDG Charter emphasized green public procurement and SDG synergies.

Preface by the Summit Curator



Dr Shailly Kedia

Senior Fellow and Associate
Director, TERI

Since its inception in 2001 as the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit and its transition to the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) in 2016, this Summit series has established itself as the only independently convened multi-stakeholder event on sustainable development and climate action based in the Global South. WSDS activities are enshrined in the theory of constructivism, which posits that socialization leads to the emergence, cascading, and internalization of norms, ultimately fostering ambition, commitments, and action.

The world is off track. According to the latest progress report on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), of the 169 targets, only 14% are on track, while 20% are not even tracked. Alarmingly, 14% of targets show regression, including those related to hunger, education, employment, and the environment. The first global stocktake underscores the gravity of these challenges. Achieving ambitious temperature goals requires a 43% reduction in emissions by 2030, yet current Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are projected to achieve only a 2% cut. These gaps reveal not only shortfalls in implementation but also in the data needed to guide progress. Acceleration, including through partnerships, in sustainable development and climate solutions is clearly needed. With this background, the 24th edition of WSDS focused on the umbrella theme: *Partnerships for Accelerating Sustainable Development and Climate Solutions*.

The Summit was held from March 5–7, 2025, at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi. The Summit discussions were informed by messages emerging from Act4Earth 2024, which concluded with COP29 in Baku in November 2024. As part of the Act4Earth activities, the COP29 Compass and SDG Charter outputs were launched in Baku.

It was a pleasure to curate the Summit under the leadership of Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute. It is extremely gratifying for me to have continued the legacy of the Summit, which was instituted under the vision of Dr Rajendra Kumar Pachauri in 2001.

The diverse programme included 11 plenary sessions, 29 thematic tracks, two special sessions, and 18 exhibition booths. The Summit hosted in-depth deliberations on topics such as energy transitions, climate action, integrating sustainable development, lifestyles, nature-based solutions, multilateralism, and finance. A 10-point Act4Earth Manifesto, encapsulating the key messages from the Summit



deliberations, was presented at the Summit's Valedictory Session. With continued partnership, we aspire to advance these discussions under Act4Earth and through future editions of the Summit.

I sincerely thank all our partners—International Steering Committee Members, TERI colleagues who assumed various roles in the run-up to and during the Summit, and colleagues from the WSDS Secretariat for their untiring efforts, cooperation, and support—in conducting yet another successful edition. Finally, to all those present during the Summit—members of the diplomatic community, policymakers, researchers, industry leaders, media, and civil society representatives—their engagement enriched this dialogue and will continue to drive action.

Our journey, having completed 24 successful years, still has a long way to go. We now set our sights on a milestone—next year marks the *Silver Jubilee* of WSDS, celebrating 25 years of pioneering ideas, policy impact, and partnerships for the planet.

We will be back next year. A milestone. A quarter-century of commitment, collaboration, and climate action.

Acknowledgements

The 24th edition of the annual flagship event of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS), was held on March 5–7, 2025, in New Delhi. The Summit deliberations focused on the umbrella theme: 'Partnerships for Accelerating Sustainable Development and Climate Solutions'.

The Summit was supported by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Ministry of External Affairs, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Ministry of Science and Technology and was co-branded with Mission LiFE [Lifestyle for Environment].

We thank our partners: Bloomberg Philanthropies [Star Partner], Royal Norwegian Embassy [Country Partner], Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office [Country Partner], The International Climate Initiative (IKI), German Government [Premier Partner], Tata Capital Limited [Senior Partner], Asian Development Bank [Associate Partner], Johnson Controls [Associate Partner], TERI School of Advanced Studies [Associate Partner], State Bank of India [Co-Associate Partner], Natural Resources Defense Council [Co-Associate Partner], Tata Power [Co-Associate Partner], Hero Future Energies [Co-Associate Partner], Delhi Metro Rail Corporation [Co-Associate Partner], Hind Rasayan [Co-Associate Partner], Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH [Co-Associate Partner], INOPOL (India-Norway cooperation project on capacity building for reducing plastic and chemical pollution in India) [Co-Associate Partner], National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) [Co-Associate Partner], Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India [Co-Associate Partner]. We express our sincere thanks to the Summit Outreach Partners: Climate Champions Team, POP Movement, World Sustainable Development Forum, Climate Group, Foreign Correspondents' Club, Press Club of India, and Kheoni. We thank TV9 News Network for being a Media Partner.

We thank Mr Nitin Desai (Chairman, Governing Council, TERI) and Dr Vibha Dhawan (Director General, TERI) for their leadership and trust in the WSDS team. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the International Steering Committee of the Summit, which comprised Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute; Ms Leena Nandan, Former Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; Mr Manish Bapna, President & Chief Executive Officer, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC); Ms Kathleen McGinty, Vice President & Chief Sustainability, Government and Regulatory Affairs Officer, Johnson Controls; Prof. Kazuhiko Takeuchi, President, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Japan; Mr Arne Walther, Former Secretary General of International Energy Forum & former Chairman, International Energy Agency; Ms Priya Shankar, India Director, Climate and Environment Program, Bloomberg Philanthropies; and Dr Henning Wuester, Director, Initiative for Climate Action Transparency (ICAT).

We express our heartfelt gratitude to Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Dr Prodipto Ghosh, Mr R R Rashmi, Mr Ajay Shankar, and Ambassador Ajai Malhotra, who guided us in the planning and brainstorming sessions.

The Secretariat team acknowledges the colleagues from the Director General's office—Mr Shyam Sundar Nayar and Mr Ritesh Kumar Jha, and Ms Shreya Singh who have been extremely instrumental in ensuring timely communications.

We thank our consultants Ms Anuradha Mathur and Ms Sangeeta Badhwar, and Ms Praveen Sharma for providing administrative support. We thank Dr Rajiv Chhibber who advised us on outreach and Value 360 Communications for their support on media engagement.



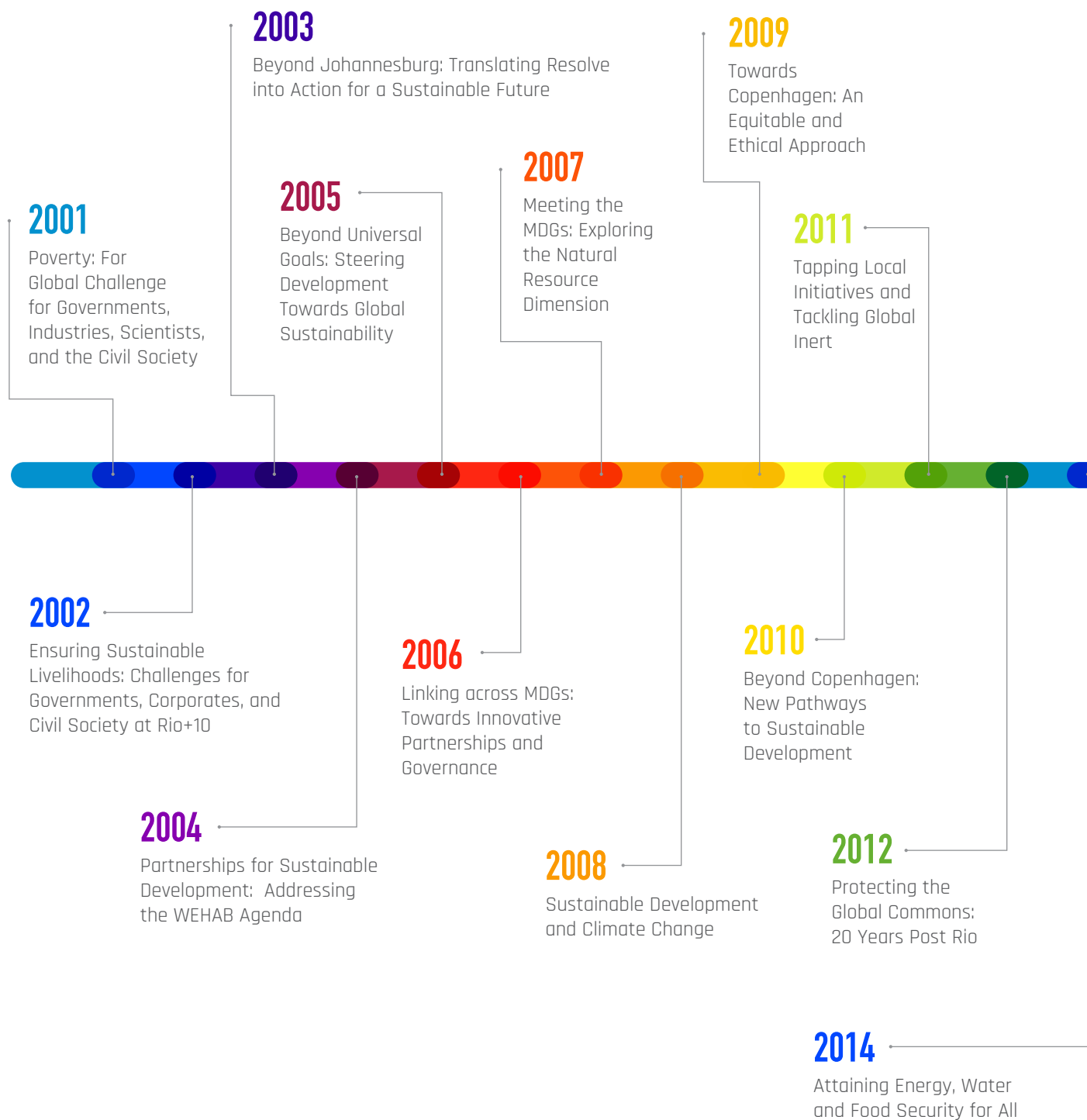
We thank our core coordination teams in TERI that included Information and Technology Services, Programme Cell, Communications and Publications, Administrative Services, Human Resources, and the Integrated Finance Unit. We thank all the floor managers, rapporteurs, facilitators, emcees, thematic track teams, and youth volunteers.

We look forward to hosting the Silver Jubilee Edition of the Summit next year as another milestone towards making 'sustainable development' a globally shared goal.

WSDS Secretariat

(Shailly Kedia, Palak Khanna, Ishita Srivastava,
Abhilash Kolekar, Taruna Idnani, Ravi Nair, and John Andruse)

Summit Series (2001–2025)



2013

The Global Challenge of Resource-Efficient Growth and Development

2019

Attaining the 2030 Agenda:
Delivering on our Promise

2021

Redefining our Common Future:
Safe and Secure Environment for All

2023

Mainstreaming
Sustainable
Development
and Climate
Resilience
for Collective
Action

2025

Partnerships
for Accelerating
Sustainable
Development and
Climate Solutions

2015

Sustainable
Development
Goals and
Dealing with
Climate
Change

2017

Transition
Phase

2016

Beyond 2015: People,
Planet & Progress

2018

Creating Partnerships
for a Resilient Planet

2020

Towards 2030 Goals: Making
the Decade Count

2024

Leadership for
Sustainable
Development and
Climate Justice

2022

Towards a Resilient Planet: Ensuring
a Sustainable and Equitable Future

Statistics @WSDS 2025

1,527

In-person Delegates

29

Partners

1

Head of State/ Government

19

Expo Booths

40

Sessions

116

Business & Industry

361

Speakers

500,000+

Social Media Reach

12

Ministers

140,000+

Website Users

48%

Women Plenary Speakers

700+

Media Coverage

International Steering Committee



Dr Vibha Dhawan

Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute



Ms Leena Nandan

Former Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change



Mr Manish Bapna

President & Chief Executive Officer, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)



Ms Kathleen McGinty

Vice President & Chief Sustainability, Government and Regulatory Affairs Officer Johnson Controls



Prof. Kazuhiko Takeuchi

President, Institute for Global Environmental Studies (IGES), Japan



Mr Arne Walther

Former Secretary General of International Energy Forum & former Chairman International Energy Agency



Ms Priya Shankar

India Director, Climate and Environment Program, Bloomberg Philanthropies



Dr Henning Wuester

Initiative for Climate Action Transparency (ICAT)

Inaugural Address



Shri Bhupender Yadav, Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India

It is a true honour to welcome you to the 24th World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS), the flagship convening of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).

I am thrilled to be part of this Summit—not just because of its critical role in shaping climate priorities for the Global South, but also due to my deep association and trust in TERI's vision. WSDS is more than a conference—it is a catalyst for action, fostering partnerships and collaborations that will drive a sustainable future, not just for today but for the long term.

The Global South is driving the climate agenda, and the world now looks to India as a leader. In 2020 alone, India slashed its GHG emissions by 7.93%—a testament to its commitment to climate action. Under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India has reshaped global sustainability, discourse, spearheading initiatives like the International Solar Alliance, CDRI, Mission LiFE, and the Global Biofuels Alliance, mobilizing global commitment to green growth.



British author Edward Thompson once asked Mahatma Gandhi, "Is wildlife fast disappearing?" Gandhi replied saying, "It is disappearing in jungles, but increasing in the towns." I would like to add that when wildlife increases in jungles, it is healthy for the environment. But when it increases in our towns, the environmental burden starts to get unsustainable.

We are supposed to belong to the same family sharing common traits, yet we live in a divided world. We are still fighting for equality of resources, technology and knowledge sharing. But I want to draw your attention today, to another inequality plaguing the world—Speciesism.

With the world's population going past 8 billion last year, it's clear that humans have achieved a unique status in Earth's history. We are the only creature to dominate all other organisms on the planet, from animals and fungi to plants and microbes. It remains to be seen whether humans can retain this dominance as we push the global climate to extremes while driving to extinction the very organisms that we climbed over to get to the top.

In the book *Speciesism in Biology and Culture*, a group of scientists and philosophers place part of the blame on an attitude prevalent among scientists and the general public for the climate crisis. Speciesism, like racism, is the common belief that some species—or even lineages—are superior to others.

Let us never forget eagles have better vision than humans, cheetahs can run faster than us, birds can fly while humans can't. And yet speciesism has led to prioritizing humans and human culture over everything else and accepting that ecosystems and life within them should be destroyed to make way for humans. Speciesism is the reason for our current crisis. And therefore when we talk about sustainability, our thoughts and actions must not be limited to saving the planet for human species alone, but all life forms.

India stands with the Global South, ensuring that climate action is inclusive, ambitious, and driven by collaborative solutions—it is in our DNA. As Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi says, "India is the land of Mahatma Gandhi, whose vision for sustainable development inspires us greatly. We have shown what it is to realize key principles like Green Future and Net Zero."

We all are witnessing the impacts of climate change. As per the latest UNEP Emission Gap report of 2024, it is still technically possible for us to stay on the 1.5°C pathway, with solar energy, wind power, and forests offering tremendous potential for significant and rapid reductions in emissions. However, to fully unlock this potential, we must act with urgency and developed countries should honour and fulfil their obligations, in particular, on means of implementation.

To unlock this potential, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) must be strengthened and include measures to maximize socioeconomic and environmental co-benefits, with enhanced international collaboration as the foundation.

The proposed quantum of \$300 billion per year by 2035 under the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG) is woefully inadequate against the \$1.3 trillion needed, effectively locking developing countries into a cycle of underfunded climate action. The proposed finance framework undermines equity by shifting responsibility from historical emitters to developing nations through voluntary contributions. Setting a mobilization rather than provisioning goal lets developed countries evade their obligations under Article 9 of the Paris Agreement.

According to UNEP Adaptation Gap report of 2024, there is an urgent need to significantly scale-up adaptation in this decade to address rising impacts. Adaptation finance has thus far been quite inadequate. Eighty-one per cent of countries have included adaptation measures particularly in food security, water resources and ecosystem management according to NDC Synthesis Report of UNFCCC in 2024. The focus of NDC has shifted to nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based adaptation.

While NDC Synthesis Report of 2024 reveals a maturing climate action landscape with growing emphasis on implementation, inclusion, and integration. There are gaps in financing, monitoring, and cross-sectoral integration; we have strong foundation for enhanced ambition and acceleration action in the next round of NDCs.

To achieve vision of Viksit Bharat, resilient and inclusive development strategies are essential. Without addressing climate risks, India could lose 24.7% of its GDP by 2070 due to climate-related disruptions as per the forecasts of Asian Development Bank in a recent report.

By 2047, India aims to be a developed nation, with net zero emissions targeted by 2070 which is driven by long-term low carbon development strategy. According to India's 4th Biennial Update Report (BUR-4) submitted to the UNFCCC during December 2024, India's emission intensity of GDP reduced by 36% between 2005 and 2020, compared to the 45% target for 2030.

Union Budget 2025 highlights efforts towards long-term energy security with plans to expand nuclear capacity to 100 GW by 2047, while emphasizing domestic manufacturing of key components like solar PV cells, batteries, and wind turbines.

India's total adaptation-relevant expenditure has increased from 3.7% of GDP in 2015-16 to 5.60% of the GDP in 2021-2022, indicating integration of climate resilience and adaptation into development plans.

India is Party to Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). India is not just progressing on sustainability—it is leading the charge. Our commitment to environmental action is unwavering, and we are delivering results.

Climate action demands bold, multi-sectoral partnerships. India's private sector must step up, drive innovation, and forge deep ties with research institutions to develop scalable, game-changing solutions. The time for incremental change is over—all stakeholders including corporates must act now. With rising energy demands, India has the opportunity and responsibility to accelerate development while securing a low-carbon future. This requires disruptive innovation, decisive implementation, and an unrelenting focus on sustainability.

India is not just protecting its natural resources—it is restoring them. Through relentless commitment, we are reshaping the future to be greener, healthier, and more resilient. Sustainability cannot be seen in isolation—climate action must be deeply integrated with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The fight against climate change is inseparable from the battles against poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation. A fragmented approach will fail—synergies across sectors and policies are crucial.

Global challenges demand global solutions. The current multilateral system is failing to address transboundary issues like climate change. We need urgent, structural reforms to global governance that put equity, justice, and action at the core of climate negotiations.

TERI's leadership in uniting the Global South on climate action is commendable. Collaboration is not an option—it is a necessity. The time to act is now.

Keynote Address



H.E. Brigadier (Retd) Mark Phillips, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Guyana

It is an honour to address this esteemed gathering at TERI's World Sustainable Development Summit 2025, a platform dedicated to shaping a more sustainable and resilient future. I bring greetings and best wishes on behalf of His Excellency Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, and Vice President Dr Bharrat Jagdeo, on whose behalf I received the award a few moments ago.

Both gentlemen have addressed the WSDS Summit in the past. I also extend my gratitude to the Government of India and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) for their continued leadership in advancing global sustainability efforts.

Today, we meet at a crucial juncture. The urgency of climate action is one of the most significant global issues before us. The global challenges we face—including climate change, biodiversity loss, energy security, and economic inequities—demand collective and transformative partnerships in order to be effectively addressed. Therefore, it is fitting and timely that the theme of this year's Summit rightly directs us to prioritize collaboration in accelerating sustainable development and climate solutions for the benefit of all.

The concept of sustainability has rightfully become a central focus in discussions among leaders, changemakers, and policymakers. Sustainability is both a guiding principle and a critical pathway towards securing a resilient, equitable, and thriving future—where economic progress aligns with environmental responsibility to safeguard the well-being of people and the planet.

However, sustainability cannot be achieved in isolation. It requires a collective commitment from all stakeholders to drive meaningful and transformative action. At this pivotal moment, leaders must be catalysts for change, driving policies that foster innovation, investment, and inclusive growth. Equally, societies must embrace a culture of sustainability, ensuring that individuals, businesses, and communities actively participate in the transformation of our economies towards greener, low-carbon futures.

At the core of all this, lies the principle of equity. The developing world, which contributes the least to climate change but bears its heaviest burdens, must have access to the resources, technologies, and investments required for a just and sustainable transition.

Guyana, my country, is among the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world today, facing one of the highest rates of sea-level rise globally. Studies show that 100% of coastal agriculture and 66.4% of urban areas are at risk of flooding and erosion, with potential GDP losses exceeding 46.4%. Extreme rainfall and rising seas have strained drainage infrastructure, prompting increased investments in flood risk management through our National Drainage and Irrigation Authority.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that without urgent coastal defences and disaster preparedness, critical sectors—including agriculture—will face severe disruptions. Climate change also threatens Guyana's rich biodiversity, with rising temperatures and shifting rainfall patterns endangering tropical forests, ecosystems, and endemic species. The UNDP highlights disruptions to water regulation, carbon sequestration, and habitat stability, reinforcing the need for strong conservation and sustainable development strategies.

Despite these challenges, I am proud to state that Guyana stands as a testament to what is possible when leadership, partnerships, and innovation converge in the pursuit of sustainability.

As a small developing state, we have embraced bold initiatives in digital transformation, clean energy, and climate resilience, ensuring that our development trajectory aligns with global sustainability goals. Guyana remains a leader in climate action with its Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030—a comprehensive roadmap for decarbonization.

As the first developing country to launch an LCDS in 2009, Guyana has maintained 85% forest cover while integrating sustainable economic growth. The updated LCDS 2030, finalized in July 2022, has advanced climate finance, fossil fuel policy, and forest conservation incentives, and has reinforced Guyana's global leadership in forest climate services.

Through the Guyana-Norway agreement, Guyana also secured \$227 million for forest conservation and climate mitigation. In 2022, it became the first nation to issue jurisdictional carbon credits under ART TREES, granting access to voluntary and compliance markets. A major milestone was achieved in mid-2024 when Guyana's carbon credits became the fourth globally eligible for phase one of the United Nations CORSIA aviation emissions reduction programme, unlocking new revenue streams while ensuring that forests continue to provide global climate benefits.

Our domestic energy transition is equally ambitious. By 2030, even as energy demand is expected to increase tremendously, greenhouse gas emissions will remain stable or decline, ensuring that growth does not come at the expense of environmental sustainability in Guyana.

Our domestic energy transition is equally ambitious. By 2030, even as energy demand is expected to increase tremendously, greenhouse gas emissions will remain stable or decline, ensuring that growth does not come at the expense of environmental sustainability. As part of this vision, our Gas-to-Energy project will reduce national electricity tariffs by 50%, making energy more affordable and reliable for businesses and households.

Solar energy capacity has grown by 173% since 2020, with the Guyana Solar Project set to launch the largest utility-scale solar plants in 2025, marking a major step towards a clean, renewable energy future for Guyana.

Guyana's LCDS serves as a blueprint for balancing economic development with environmental responsibility,



proving that low-carbon growth is not only possible but necessary for building a resilient and prosperous future. Despite significant oil and gas discoveries, Guyana remains committed to climate leadership, maintaining over 85% forest cover and pioneering climate finance mechanisms.

In fact, Guyana ranks as one of the most forested nations in the world, with our forests storing 19.5 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent, acting as a critical carbon sink in a world emitting 50 billion tonnes annually. Guyana is also one of only four nations globally with a high-forest, low-deforestation status, reinforcing our dedication to sustainable forest management.

As part of the Guiana Shield, our ecosystems hold 18% of the world's tropical forest carbon and 20% of its freshwater, with an estimated annual value of \$40–54 billion. Our rich biodiversity, home to 4% of known animal species, further underscores our global ecological significance.

Beyond forests, Guyana's ocean territory offers vast blue economy opportunities, including sustainable fisheries, coastal conservation, and marine-based renewable energy. Through initiatives like REDD+ and ART TREES, Guyana is monetizing ecosystem services, ensuring that conservation and sustainable development go hand in hand.

Digital transformation is a key pillar of Guyana's sustainable development strategy. Investments in e-government services, digital infrastructure, and smart technologies are enhancing efficiency, reducing waste, and fostering low-carbon economic growth. Initiatives such as improved climate monitoring through digital data collection and smart grids that optimize energy use are strengthening climate resilience in agriculture, health, and education while empowering citizens to participate in a modern, low-carbon economy.

As I mentioned earlier, partnerships are essential to advancing sustainable development and climate solutions. South-South cooperation is key to sharing climate finance and localized solutions among developing nations. The private sector must also be encouraged to drive investments in clean technologies, circular economies, and climate resilience projects, ensuring a collective approach to a sustainable future.

Another prime example of partnership at its best is the long-standing relationship between Guyana and India. Official diplomatic relations began in 1965, with the High Commission established in 1968 following Guyana's independence in 1966. These connections run deep, with nearly 40% of Guyana's population being of East Indian origin, including our President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, Vice President, Dr Bharrat Jagdeo, and Our High Commissioner.

Energy cooperation has strengthened this relationship, with Guyana signing an MoU on renewable energy with India in 2018, joining the Global Biofuel Alliance in 2023, and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure in 2024. Reflecting these strong ties, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was honoured with Guyana's highest national award in 2024, recognizing his leadership and commitment to strengthening bilateral cooperation in sustainability, trade, and development.

Guyana is proud to have successfully collaborated with India in renewable energy technology, transfer, and capacity building, with plans to expand efforts in solar, biofuels, and climate adaptation.

Another instance of collaboration that Guyana has embarked on is with TERI, which has been instrumental in driving renewable energy expansion, rural electrification, and low-carbon development in Guyana. TERI's initiatives have played a transformative role in enhancing energy security, reducing emissions, and supporting Guyana's sustainable ambitions. TERI's Solar Home Energy Systems have electrified 269 remote communities, benefitting over 145,000 people while reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 45,000 tonnes. Covering 245 hinterland and 24 riverine communities, this off-grid solution ensures clean energy access, monitored through an online portal for real-time performance tracking.

In partnership with the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme, TERI launched the Mainstreaming Low Emission Energy Technologies project in Guyana, integrating solar energy into water treatment plants to support Guyana's green economy vision and ensure a sustainable water supply.

As Guyana advances its LCDS 2030, TERI's Industrial Energy Group provides technical guidance in agriculture and energy, reinforcing Guyana's transition to a low-emission economy and its leadership in climate action.

TERI is also driving biomass-based energy solutions in Guyana. In January 2024, a Guyanese company, Durable Woods Product Inc., and EMC Energy Inc., with TERI's support, signed an agreement to establish a 1.5-megawatt

wood waste-based power plant using gasification technology. This project will power Durable Woods Product's operations, with surplus energy feeding into the national grid. TERI has long championed low-carbon energy in Guyana, supporting its forest gasifier power project on the Essequibo coast in 2014.

Through research, project implementation, and knowledge exchange, TERI and Guyana continue to drive sustainable energy innovation, demonstrating how strategic partnerships accelerate low-carbon development.

As we convene this transformative Summit, I urge that we do so with a continued commitment to bold action and tangible results. Sustainability must be placed as a priority across all sectors, ensuring that every policy and investment decision aligns with long-term environmental and social well-being.

We must seek ways of leveraging technology to bridge gaps in climate adaptation, resilience, and economic opportunities. We must also prioritize equity so that no one is left behind in this global transition—one that aligns directly with the Sustainable Development Goals.

There is a clear pathway ahead. Though it is not without its challenges, this pathway leads us towards an end result that can sustain our planet while allowing future generations to prosper. But we cannot achieve this reality without unity, leadership, and innovation. We can accelerate progress needed.

Guyana stands ready to play its part, working alongside partners like India and the global community to drive climate solutions that benefit the planet.

Here's to new collaborations, strengthened commitments, and the creation of a legacy of sustainability for generations to come.

Keynote Address



H.E. Ms Marina Silva, Hon'ble Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Brazil

It is with great honour that I take part in the opening of this important Summit and receive the Sustainable Development Leadership Award granted by The Energy and Resources Institute. I extend my sincere gratitude to the Institute for this distinction and for its long-standing commitment to promoting sustainable solutions to global environmental challenges.

I would like to begin by greeting Minister Yadav, whose leadership on environmental issues has been invaluable across multiple multilateral processes. We have worked closely in various forums within the G20, BRICS, UNFCCC, BASIC, and in our bilateral agenda, strengthening cooperation on key environmental and climate challenges.

I would also like to thank Mr Desai, whose legacy in global environmental and climate governance is immeasurable. His contributions were pivotal to the Rio 1992 Summit and the Johannesburg Summit in 2002.

As I receive this award, I acknowledge that it is not merely a recognition of my individual efforts but rather a testament to the crucial role that Brazil plays in the environmental and climate agenda. On the domestic front, we have reduced deforestation in the Amazon by 46% compared to 2022, reaching the lowest level in the past nine years.

Internationally, Brazil has long advocated for the expansion of financial flows to protect nature and compensate for ecosystem services. A key example of this effort is the Tropical Forests Forever mechanism, which we seek to operationalize by COP30.

At the G20, we have, for the first time, promoted a structured dialogue between finance ministers, environment ministers, and central bank governors to discuss climate finance—an essential step towards ensuring the necessary resources for a sustainable future.

As we move towards COP30, Brazil seeks to lead by example. In Baku, we announced our commitment to reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by 59% to 67% by 2035, based on 2005 levels. COP30 must be the COP of accelerated implementation, ensuring that the commitments made in Dubai and Baku translate into concrete actions.

We must advance the transition away from fossil fuels and deforestation while scaling up climate finance to \$1.3 trillion per year, building upon the \$300 billion already pledged by developed countries.

Beyond action, negotiation, and mobilization, we are incorporating a new dimension to our efforts—the Global Ethical Stocktake. This initiative, led by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, will promote up to six dialogues in different regions of the world, including critical areas such as the Arctic. These dialogues will bring together youth, women, scientists, religious leaders, artists, business leaders, activists, indigenous people, and traditional communities to emphasize the urgent need to align individual behaviour and decision-making with the overarching goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C.

I would like to once again express my gratitude to TERI, the Government of India, and the Indian people for this recognition and for the historical partnership that unites our nations.

I accept this award with deep respect for this country, its culture, and its invaluable contribution to peace, climate justice, and sustainable development.

I reaffirm my commitment to working towards a just ecological transition, more equitable societies, and the construction of a new cycle of prosperity—one that allows us to be fairer, more diverse, and more sustainable.

Sustainable Development Leadership Award (SDLA) 2025

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) proudly conferred the Sustainable Development Leadership Award (SDLA) 2025 on His Excellency Dr Bharrat Jagdeo, Hon'ble Vice President of Guyana, and Her Excellency Ms Marina Silva, Hon'ble Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Brazil, at the inaugural session of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) 2025 on March 5, 2025.



The prestigious award, instituted by TERI in 2005, recognizes global visionaries whose leadership has had a transformative impact on sustainability and climate action. This year's awardees exemplify bold and pioneering leadership, forging pathways for a sustainable future. SDLA is more than just an accolade—it is a global testament to leadership that defies convention and drives transformation. It honours those who step forward with vision, courage, and an unwavering commitment to a sustainable future. This award is not for those who wait for change; it is for those who make it happen.

H.E. Brigadier (Retd) Mark Phillips, Prime Minister, Guyana accepted the award on behalf of H.E. Dr Bharrat Jagdeo, Hon'ble Vice President of Guyana. Accepting the award, Mr Phillips stated, "Guyana stands as a testament to leadership, partnerships, and convergence in the pursuit of sustainability. In Guyana, growth does not come at the expense of environmental sustainability."

Dr Bharrat Jagdeo has been a driving force in global climate policy and sustainable development. As one of the world's youngest heads of government, he spearheaded Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) in 2009, positioning the country as a global leader in forest conservation and climate finance. Under his leadership, Guyana established one of the world's first national-scale payment systems for ecosystem services, setting a benchmark for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) initiatives. His role as a member of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Climate Finance and as Chair of the Board of Governors of the IMF and World Bank Group (2005–2006) highlights his impact on global financial frameworks for climate action. His efforts in championing sustainable development, while advancing the aspirations of his country and safeguarding its natural wealth for future generations, exemplify the principles of the SDLA.

Sharing her thoughts on being honoured with the award, Ms Silva stated, "As we move towards COP30, we must accelerate the implementation of the commitments made in Dubai and Baku. We must advance on our transitions from fossil fuels while stepping up on climate finance."

Ms Marina Silva is internationally renowned for her relentless efforts in combating deforestation and advancing climate crisis. As Brazil's Minister of Environment and Climate Change, she has led groundbreaking initiatives to curb illegal deforestation in the Amazon, achieving an 84% reduction between 2004 and 2012. Her advocacy for climate education and alignment of NDCs with global temperature targets ahead of COP30 in 2025 underscores her commitment to lasting environmental change. Over the years, she has received multiple accolades, including the Goldman Prize (1996), UN's Champions of the Earth Award (2007), and the Duke of Edinburgh Medal (2008).



The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
is proud to honour

His Excellency Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo

Hon'ble Vice President of Guyana
with the

Sustainable Development Leadership Award 2025

In recognition of his visionary leadership in championing sustainable development and climate action, while advancing the aspirations of his country and safeguarding its natural wealth for future generations, TERI acknowledges the remarkable contributions of His Excellency Dr Bharrat Jagdeo towards the three pillars of sustainable development.

As one of the world's youngest heads of government, Dr Jagdeo ushered in transformative policies through his leadership, including the launch of the groundbreaking Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) in 2009 in Guyana. Under his stewardship, Guyana became a global trailblazer in forest conservation by initiating one of the world's first national-scale payment systems for ecosystem services. This initiative serves as an exemplar for other nations through programmes such as Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).

As a member of the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Climate Finance, he played a pivotal role in mobilising billions annually to support climate action in developing countries. From 2005 to 2006, he served as Chair of the Board of Governors of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group, significantly influencing global financial policies. In October 2012, he was elected as the first President of the Assembly of the Global Green Growth Institute.

A distinguished leader and global advocate for environmental stewardship, Dr Jagdeo has fostered international partnerships, including South-South cooperation and broader global collaborations. His leadership has been recognised worldwide, including being named a 'Champion of the Earth' by the United Nations Environment Programme.

TERI salutes and celebrates this inspiring leader for his pioneering initiatives, unwavering commitment to environmental sustainability, and transformative vision—bridging the gap between development and conservation, not only for Guyana but as a beacon of hope for the world.



The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
is proud to honour

Her Excellency Ms Marina Silva

Hon'ble Minister of Environment and Climate Change Brazil
with the

Sustainable Development Leadership Award 2025



Ms. Marina Silva is globally recognized for her pioneering leadership in environmentalism, dedicating her life to combating deforestation and the climate crisis.

As Brazil's Minister of Environment and Climate Change, she has been at the forefront of climate action, leading efforts to halt rampant illegal deforestation in the Amazon. Her actions were instrumental in achieving an 84% reduction in the Amazon deforestation rate between 2004 and 2012.

Marina Silva's global influence is reflected in the numerous awards she has received. In 1996, she was awarded the Goldman Prize, often regarded as the Nobel Prize for the Environment. In 2007, the British newspaper The Guardian included her among the 50 people who could help save the planet. That same year, she won the Champions of the Earth award, the UN's highest environmental honour. In 2008, she received the Duke of Edinburgh Medal from Prince Philip at St. James's Palace in London, the most prestigious award granted by the World Wildlife Fund, in recognition of her dedication to the Brazilian Amazon.

Her continued influence was reaffirmed in 2024 when she was named one of Time magazine's 100 Most Influential People. Ahead of Brazil's hosting of COP30 in 2025, she has advocated for the inclusion of climate education in the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions, ensuring alignment with global temperature goals.

Marina Silva's life story is a testament to perseverance. TERI honours and celebrates her inspiring leadership, unwavering commitment to environmental sustainability, transformative vision for bridging development and conservation, and role as a global beacon of hope for future generations.

Tracing the Summit Days

September 25-29, 2025 | Thursday

INAUGURAL

PARTNERSHIPS AS
AN ACCELERATOR
FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

ABOUT THE INAUGURAL

WSDS 2025 Inaugural titled, 'Partnerships as an Accelerator for Sustainable Development and Climate Justice' was held as part of the annual flagship event of TERI on March 5. The inaugural session of the World Sustainable Development Summit 2025 set the stage for the Summit deliberations over the next two days. Given that only 14% of the 169 sustainable development goal (SDG) targets are on track, while others show regression, particularly in critical areas like hunger, education, and the environment; the inaugural addressed the pressing need for accelerated action on sustainable development. Insights highlighted the findings of the first global stocktake, which revealed the stark gap between current national commitments and the reductions needed to meet climate goals. The perspectives reinforced the importance of partnerships in bridging these gaps, strengthening global collaboration, and advancing climate and sustainability solutions.

The session also featured the announcement of the Sustainable Development Leadership Award 2025, conferred upon H.E. Dr Bharrat Jagdeo, Hon'ble Vice President of Guyana, and H.E. Ms Marina Silva, Hon'ble Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Brazil, for their outstanding contributions to sustainable development and climate action. Additionally, the *TerraGreen* WSDS Special Issue was launched, highlighting key perspectives on sustainability and climate solutions.



SPEAKERS

Welcome Address

- Mr Nitin Desai, Chairman, The Energy and Resources Institute

Theme Address

- Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute

Inaugural Address

- Shri Bhupender Yadav, Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India

Announcement: Sustainable Development Leadership Award 2025

- H.E. Dr Bharrat Jagdeo, Hon'ble Vice President of Guyana
- H.E. Ms Marina Silva, Hon'ble Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Brazil

Keynote Addresses

- H.E. Brigadier (Retd) Mark Phillips, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Guyana
- H.E. Ms Marina Silva, Hon'ble Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Brazil

Vote of Thanks

- Dr Shailly Kedia, Curator, World Sustainable Development Summit, TERI

CALL TO ACTION

Strengthening Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships: The complex and interconnected nature of global challenges demands collective action. Strengthening partnerships between governments, businesses, and civil society can serve as a catalyst for sustainable development and climate solutions.

Ensuring Equitable Access: Sustainability must be inclusive, ensuring that no one is left behind. Equitable access to resources, technology and opportunities is essential to achieving global sustainable development goals.

Shifting Focus to Capacity Building: A transition towards renewable energy and sustainable technologies must go beyond technology transfer. Capacity building and skill enhancement are vital for creating long-term impacts.

Advancing Climate Finance: The intersection of climate and finance remains critical for a sustainable future. Global platforms, such as the G20 and COP, must continue fostering dialogue between environmental and financial leaders to accelerate climate finance initiatives.

Promoting Responsible Consumption & Awareness: Every individual contributes to climate change, though the impact varies. Encouraging sustainable lifestyles, responsible consumption, and greater awareness can play a key role in mitigating climate change on a global scale.

MAKING WORDS COUNT @WSDS 2025



South-South cooperation is key to sharing climate finance and localized solutions among developing nations. The private sector must also be encouraged to drive investments in clean technologies, circular economies, and climate resilient projects, ensuring a collective approach to a sustainable future. We must seek ways of leveraging technology to bridge gaps in climate adaptation, resilience, and economic opportunities. Guyana stands ready to play its part, working alongside partners like India and the global community to drive climate solutions that benefit the planet.

- H.E. Brigadier (Retd) Mark Phillips
Hon'ble Prime Minister, Guyana



Speciesism like racism is the common belief that some species—or even lineages—are superior to others. Let us never forget eagles have better vision than humans, cheetahs can run faster than us, birds can fly while humans can't. And yet, speciesism has led to prioritizing humans and human culture over everything else and accepting that ecosystems and life within them should be destroyed to make way for humans.

- Shri Bhupender Yadav
Hon'ble Minister for Environment,
Forest and Climate Change, India



Internationally, Brazil has long advocated for the expansion of financial flows to protect nature and compensate for ecosystem services. A key example of this effort is the Tropical Forests Forever mechanism, which we seek to operationalize by COP30. At the G20, we have, for the first time, promoted a structured dialogue between finance ministers, environment ministers, and central bank governors to discuss climate finance—an essential step towards ensuring the necessary resources for a sustainable future.

- H.E. Ms Marina Silva
Hon'ble Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Brazil





When we talk of climate change, why do we need people and countries to come together? Because no one country can handle the impact of climate change by itself alone. The urgency of climate action demands that we move beyond discussions and towards implementation. We need stronger public-private partnerships, deeper regional collaborations, and a renewed commitment to equity and justice in sustainable development.

- Mr Nitin Desai
Chairman, TERI



No single entity—be it a country, a government, an industry, or an institution—can address the challenges of sustainability in isolation. We need collective, cross-sectoral global solutions. One of the major limiting factors to sustainability is finance. Everyone wants to go green, but the capital required to do so is a challenge.

- Dr Vibha Dhawan
Director General, TERI



As we conclude the inaugural session and move forward with the Summit's deliberations, let us carry forward the spirit of collaboration, conviction, and collective progress. Together, let us power partnerships, propel progress, and pave the path for a sustainable future.

- Dr Shailly Kedia
Curator, World Sustainable Development Summit, TERI



Tracing the Summit Days

MARCH 06, 2025 | THURSDAY

SETTING THE STAGE AND INVOCATION

ABOUT THE SESSION

The opening plenary set a reflective and inspiring tone for the Summit, emphasizing on the deep connection between spirituality, well-being, and environmental sustainability. The Global Leadership message emphasized that to create a better future for the next generations, we must accelerate action and strengthen collaboration. Urgent and collective efforts are key to addressing global challenges and ensuring a sustainable world.

The session explored how nature can be healed through spiritual consciousness and how a healthy body contributes to a healthier planet. It also highlighted the purpose of WSDS, underscoring its role as a platform for fostering dialogue, collaboration, and solutions for a sustainable future. The session served as a powerful reminder that sustainability is not just about policies and technologies but also about mindset, values, and holistic well-being.



SPEAKERS

Setting the Stage

- Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, TERI

Global Leadership Message

- H.E. Mr Michael Bloomberg, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Climate Ambition and Solutions (video)

Invocation: Spirituality and Sustainable Development

- Brahma Kumari Sister Shivani, Brahma Kumaris

CALL TO ACTION

Need for Stability amid Global Uncertainties: The session emphasized that the world is experiencing uncertainty in multiple dimensions, including climate change, financial instability, and geopolitical tensions. These factors create challenges for long-term planning, requiring resilience, clarity, and stability at both personal and policy levels.

India's Strength in Leading Climate Solutions: India's cultural and philosophical grounding in sustainability offers a strong foundation for climate action. The country has the potential to serve as a solutions hub, demonstrating how diverse communities can adopt green transitions while balancing economic growth and social equity.

The Role of Inner Transformation in Sustainability: Sustainability is not just external—it begins with individual mindset shifts. Fear, anxiety, and stress impact decision-making, while a calm and centred approach can lead to better leadership in climate action. Changing thought patterns and energy dynamics can create a more sustainable world.

Moving beyond Crisis Thinking to Solution-Oriented Action: Rather than focusing only on the urgency of the climate crisis, the session encouraged a shift towards solution-oriented thinking. By fostering self-awareness, ethical leadership, and collaborative action, societies can move towards a more positive and proactive approach to sustainability.

MAKING WORDS COUNT @WSDS 2025



“Sustainability is something engraved in the DNA of every Indian. We worship trees, we worship animals, and we believe in giving and caring for everyone. India is a unique country—if we can find solutions for our challenges, we have found global solutions. Our strength lies in innovation, resilience, and the values that guide us.

- Dr Vibha Dhawan
Director General, TERI





“If we want to leave the world a better place for our children and grandchildren, we have to move faster and find more ways to work together.

- H.E. Mr Michael Bloomberg
UN Special Envoy on Climate Ambition & Solutions and Founder of Bloomberg LP, Bloomberg Philanthropies





“My nature is influencing the outer nature, and if I want to create a magical transformation in the outer nature, it cannot happen without beginning with my nature. The planet has enough resources for our need, but it obviously will never have enough for our greed.

- Brahma Kumari Sister Shivani,
Brahma Kumaris



Tracing the Summit Days

MARCH 06, 2025 | THURSDAY

LEADERSHIP PANEL

HEALING NATURE, OCEAN
AND ECOSYSTEMS

ABOUT THE SESSION

The plenary session on 'Nature, Oceans, and Ecosystems: Advancing Restoration and Resilience' at WSDS 2025 on March 6th underscored the urgency of addressing ecosystem degradation. It provided a platform for policymakers, researchers, and community leaders to discuss challenges, share best practices, and explore actionable restoration solutions.

Discussions highlighted alarming trends, such as a 47% decline in natural ecosystems and significant alterations in terrestrial and marine environments. Experts emphasized nature-based solutions (NbS) as effective interventions offering both ecosystem restoration and climate resilience. Key insights reinforced the role of partnerships in large-scale restoration. The session also stressed the need for proactive restoration, commonly referred to as 'bending the curve,' emphasizing on lifestyle changes. A pollination study showed that 26% of revenue would be lost without bees, underscoring the importance of ecosystem services. The session concluded with a call for collaborative, scalable, and locally driven solutions to restore ecosystems and strengthen climate resilience.



SPEAKERS

Chair

- Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)

Panelists

- Dr Pema Gyamtsho, Director General, The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
- Prof. Petteri Taalas, Director General, The Finnish Meteorological Institute
- H.E. Ms May-Elin Stener, Ambassador of Norway to India, Royal Norwegian Embassy in New Delhi
- Ms Nisha Bakker, Director of Partnerships, The Ocean Cleanup
- Dr Dindo Campilan, Regional Director for Asia & Hub Director for Oceania, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Mr Ranjit Barthakur, Founder Forester, Balipara Foundation
- Ms Suruchi Bhadwal, Senior Fellow & Director, TERI
- Mr Vidar Helgesen, Executive Secretary, UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (virtually)

CALL TO ACTION

Strengthen Multi-Sectoral Collaboration for Ecosystem Restoration: Develop a shared understanding among stakeholders on the interconnectedness of climate change and biodiversity loss. Establish clear, measurable targets for nature-based solutions (NbS) and foster partnerships for effective implementation.

Innovate Financial Mechanisms for Nature Investments: Encourage the integration of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation into national financial planning. Explore mechanisms like biodiversity credits and policy-driven incentives to ensure long-term sustainability.

Empower Community-Led Conservation Efforts: Scale grassroots initiatives, such as Norway's plastic bag tax model, to reduce environmental impact and fund conservation activities. Support community-driven restoration projects and sustainable tourism models.

Embed Sustainable Blue Economy in Policymaking: Advocate for ocean conservation and blue economy strategies in national and international policies. Ensure marine ecosystem restoration is prioritized alongside economic development.

Promote Research and Data-Driven Decision Making: Support studies on ecosystem services, such as the economic impact of pollinator loss, and widely disseminate findings to influence policies and investment in biodiversity protection.

Enhance Biodiversity Protection in Critical Areas: Implement better management, monitoring, and community engagement strategies in biodiversity hotspots like the Himalayan forests to ensure sustainable conservation efforts.

Accelerate Science-Based Climate and Biodiversity Action: Recognize that incremental efforts are insufficient; immediate, science-backed interventions and stronger regional cooperation are essential to prevent further ecological decline.

MAKING WORDS COUNT @WSDS 2025



“Nature and ocean are not separate geographical entities. It is a transboundary issue and there is a need for regional cooperation among countries to tackle it. Forests in Himalayan regions are very important repositories of biodiversity, although some protected areas are there, but limited management practices are being followed.”

- Dr Pema Gyamtsho
Director General, The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development





Scaling nature-based solutions (NbS) would require an aggregated approach integrating multiple NbS into an ecosystem perspective to bring large scale impact. The approach should be a mix of three approaches firstly science-based Research and Development (R&D) for species identification, maintaining diversity, etc. Secondly, inclusivity focusing on the role of communities and lastly on incentivization based on market-based approach.

- Ms Suruchi Bhadwal

Senior Fellow & Director, TERI



There has not been any decrease in emissions even after COVID-19 and we have exceeded 1.5°C. At present we are observing 10% more humidity, sea level rise by 5 mm, melting of glaciers, frequent heatwaves, floods, droughts and are heading towards a temperature rise of 2.5-3°C.

- Prof. Petteri Taalas

Director General, The Finnish Meteorological Institute



The journey to ocean conservation will have challenges, many mistakes might be made, but the important thing is to learn from the mistakes and keep working towards it. Integration of ocean planning should have sustainable blue economy at its centre and this should also be a topic of discussion in international cooperation.

- H.E. Ms May-Elin Stener

Ambassador of Norway to India,
Royal Norwegian Embassy in New Delhi



Nurturing and healing nature cannot just be business as usual—it has to be business and usual. We cannot continue having separate conferences for climate and biodiversity; they are two sides of the same coin.

- Dr Dindo Campilan

Regional Director for Asia & Hub Director for Oceania,
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)





The important lesson we have learnt is to be persistent in our approach and bring systemic changes. It usually takes decades to bring about a systemic change, but we can at least buy time for the changes to occur. There is a validated solution to all the problems. Sometimes we just need to start tackling one problem at a time and the dots will connect.

- Ms Nisha Bakker

Director of Partnerships, The Ocean Cleanup



The world is a complex system and after the industrial revolution, the idea of better, brighter, faster, and cheaper has increased the productivity and use of resources. It is all on us what we want to do and move forward from here. American Presidents have said in the past, it is anthropocene and climate has changed over past millions of years. But the important question is are we consuming more than required. We have depleted our fixed deposit of natural resources, and its impact is climate change.

- Mr Ranjit Barthakur

Founder Forester, Balipara Foundation



Nature-based solutions (NbS) offer a powerful way forward. Restoring mangroves can protect coastlines from extreme weather while sequestering carbon at the same time. Regenerating forests and wetlands can revive biodiversity and enhance resilience against climate change. The solutions already exist—we just need to scale them up.

- Dr Vibha Dhawan

Director General, TERI



A healthy, resilient, and productive ocean that is sustainably managed is essential for achieving all elements of sustainable development. Without ocean science and knowledge, progress on climate action, food security, clean energy, and sustainable cities will remain elusive.

- Mr Vidar Helgesen

Executive Secretary, UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission



Tracing the Summit Days

MARCH 06, 2025 | THURSDAY

LEADERSHIP PANEL

BRIDGING THE FINANCING GAP FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ABOUT THE PLENARY

The plenary on 'Bridging the Financing Gap for Climate Action and Sustainable Development' addressed the urgent need to mobilize financial resources for the 2030 Agenda. With a \$4 trillion annual financing gap for developing nations and additional climate funding needs, discussions emphasized realigning financial flows with sustainability goals. Speakers highlighted innovative financial instruments like blended finance, sustainability-linked bonds, and climate-responsive fiscal policies. The session stressed collective action among governments, multilateral institutions, private sector stakeholders, and civil society. Discussions focused on aligning public finance with SDGs, incentivizing sustainable private investments, and reforming financial systems. The plenary concluded with a call for actionable strategies to mobilize resources, reform financial mechanisms, and ensure global investments align with climate action and sustainable development objectives.



SPEAKERS

Chair

- Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)

Panelists

- H.E. Mr Yutaka Matsuzawa, Vice-Minister for Global Environmental Affairs, Japan
- Ms Priya Shankar, India Director, Climate and Environment Program, Bloomberg Philanthropies
- Dr Sujata Gupta, Director, Asian Development Bank

- Mr Manish Chourasia, COO, Tata Capital Limited
- Dr Jennie Dodson, Senior Director, World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)
- Mr Sankar Chakraborti, Group CEO, Acuité Group
- Ms Heeta Lakhani, Founder & Director, The ClimAct Foundation
- Ms Ilka Hirt, Deputy Director-General for International Policy, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Germany

CALL TO ACTION

Enhancing Financial Mechanisms for Sustainability: Leveraging emission trading schemes and financial disclosure frameworks can drive sustainable business practices. Governments and businesses must collaborate to create predictable and transparent financial policies that incentivize low-carbon investments and ensure long-term economic benefits.

Mobilizing Private Capital for Climate Action: Public finance must be strategically leveraged to attract private investment. Exploring blended finance models and innovative financial instruments can unlock new funding streams and accelerate sustainable development.

Bridging the Climate Finance Gap: Addressing climate change requires significant financial investments, but it also presents a high-return opportunity. Strengthening collaborations between governments, private investors, and philanthropic organizations can accelerate funding for clean energy and climate resilience, ensuring a just and sustainable future.

Expanding ESG Risk Integration: Making ESG and climate risk assessments mandatory in financial evaluations will enhance awareness among banks, insurers, and investors, leading to better financial resilience and sustainable decision-making.

Expanding Concessional Finance for Sustainability: Developing nations require concessional funding to bridge the climate finance gap. Strengthening international commitments and mobilizing low-cost capital will ensure equitable progress towards climate resilience and sustainable development.

Strengthen Financial Models for Sustainable Investment: Investors, governments, and businesses must collaborate to bridge financing gaps in critical sectors like resilience and nature-based solutions. Innovative public-private partnerships can unlock capital and drive large-scale impacts.

Ensure Inclusive Finance for Systemic Change: Financial institutions and policymakers must prioritize accessible funding for youth-led, women-led, and indigenously led initiatives. Trusting and investing in these grassroots organizations will drive meaningful, community-based climate action.

MAKING WORDS COUNT @WSDS 2025



“We all understand the importance of money. Money enables access to technology, facilitates regulations, and supports many other aspects of climate action. The needs are tremendous, but we must also recognize realities. Most importantly, the private sector must play a leading role.”

- Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri
Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)





To fulfil the financial gap, both domestic policy and international cooperation are essential. Emission trading schemes for greenhouse gas reduction—specifically carbon credit trading—are highly effective in influencing the behaviour of private sectors. These schemes provide predictability for businesses and ensure economic benefits while encouraging emission reductions.

- H.E. Mr Yutaka Matsuzawa

Vice-Minister for Global Environmental Affairs, Japan



Public finance alone will not be enough. We need to bring the private sector on board, explore blended finance solutions, and develop new ideas to demonstrate the business case for climate action.

- Ms Ilka Hirt

Deputy Director-General for International Policy,
Federal Ministry for the Environment, Germany



We also know that the investment needed for the climate transition is enormous—trillions of dollars. Despite the challenges, it also presents immense opportunities. India, with its strong policies and renewable energy targets, has been relatively successful in attracting investments for climate and renewable energy. However, even India, despite its success, needs at least three times more climate finance to meet its existing climate goals.

- Ms Priya Shankar

India Director, Climate and Environment Program,
Bloomberg Philanthropies



If we can establish a system where projects that don't generate revenue—such as afforestation, reforestation, and mangrove cultivation—can earn income through carbon credits, it could be transformative. A structured carbon budget and mandatory carbon credit purchases by high-emission industries would create significant financial incentives.

- Mr Manish Chourasia

COO, Tata Capital Limited





“To align public finance and fiscal policies towards regional or global public goods, it is necessary that the additional costs of these actions be covered by new, additional, and concessional resources.

- Dr Sujata Gupta
Director, Asian Development Bank




“Public-private finance must come together to solve problem and focus on solutions. Right now, policy is often developed separately from business reactions. We need spaces where public-private finance can align in a strategic direction and accelerate progress.

- Dr Jennie Dodson
Senior Director, World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)




“India requires around \$170 billion annually for sustainability initiatives. This demands new credit underwriting models, financial tools, and innovative structuring of financial instruments.

- Mr Sankar Chakraborti
Group CEO, Acuité Group




“We need to stop thinking of vulnerable communities—young people, women, gender minorities, farmers—as a separate section that needs to be supported. The narrative needs to flip. We need to empower them to make decisions because, as rightfully said, they are our future and if they are our future, we need to be making the decisions for them now.

- Ms Heeta Lakhani
Founder & Director, The ClimAct Foundation



Tracing the Summit Days

MARCH 06, 2025 | THURSDAY

MINISTERIAL

MULTILATERALISM ON
THE ROAD TO COP30 AND
COP33

ABOUT THE PLENARY

This plenary examined the role of multilateralism in shaping climate ambition and accountability in the lead-up to COP30 and COP33. It analysed how countries updated their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC 3.0) to reflect greater ambition and alignment with the global stocktake findings. The discussions assessed the progress made under the UAE-Belém Work Programme in advancing the Global Goal on Adaptation and developing measurable indicators for adaptation efforts. The session also reviewed how partnerships between governments and non-state actors contributed to implementing NDC 3.0 and accelerating climate action. Furthermore, it explored the gaps in mitigation, adaptation, and finance, identifying necessary reforms to strengthen multilateral climate governance and deliver climate justice for vulnerable countries, communities, and people.

The speakers emphasized the need for finalizing NDCs to address adaptation and mitigation gaps. They highlighted the urgency of financial flows to support adaptation, resilience and emissions reductions, with commitments exceeding targets and calls for broader mobilization. Climate justice and integration of loss and damage into NDCs were key themes at the session. The speakers also emphasized that collaboration remained vital despite geopolitical challenges, and that equity and sustainability are key to avoid burdening vulnerable communities.



SPEAKERS

Chair

- Mr RR Rashmi, Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)

Science Leadership Address

- Prof. Jim Skea, Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Ministerial Address

- H.E. Ms Marina Silva, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Brazil
- H.E. Mr Aain Bahadur Shahi Thakuri, Minister of Forest and Environment, Nepal
- H.E. Dr Muaviyath Mohamed, Minister of State for Tourism and Environment, Maldives
- H.E. Mr Andreas Bjelland Eriksen, Minister of Climate and the Environment, Government of Norway (virtually)

Leadership Address

- Ms Jennifer Lee Morgan, State Secretary and Special Envoy for International Climate Action at the Federal Foreign Office, Federal Republic of Germany (virtually)
- Ms Helen Clarkson, Chief Executive Officer, Climate Group
- Ms Anne Jellema, Executive Director, 350.org

CALL TO ACTION

Strengthen Multilateral Climate Action: COP30 in Brazil and COP33 in India are critical milestones for global climate governance. Countries must sustain multilateral consensus despite geopolitical uncertainties and ensure that updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) align with the Global Stocktake (GST) process to bridge the emissions gap.

Increase Climate Finance and Just Transition: There is an urgent need to scale up climate finance from the \$300 billion pledged to \$1.3 trillion annually. Financial mechanisms such as the Tropical Forest Forever initiative should be expanded, ensuring a just transition that prioritizes vulnerable communities, particularly in developing nations.

Accelerate Renewable Energy and Mitigation: The IPCC highlights that emissions must drop at least 43% by 2030 to stay within the 1.5°C target. Scaling up renewable energy, reducing methane emissions, and phasing out fossil fuels must be central to the NDC 3.0 commitments.

Embed Climate Justice and Local Participation: Equitable climate policies must empower the most affected groups, including indigenous communities, small island states, and low-income populations. Governments must integrate adaptation strategies into national planning, ensuring fair representation and local participation in climate finance decisions.

Enhance Implementation through Partnerships: Public-private partnerships, subnational government initiatives, and civil society engagement are key to successful NDC implementation. Businesses, investors, and state-level actors should align with national targets, fostering innovation in clean technology and sustainable development.

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“This year, countries are expected to submit, revise, or update their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), covering both mitigation and adaptation targets. With the deadline fast approaching, finalizing these commitments remains a significant challenge. Additionally, the work programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation must be concluded within this year.”

- Mr RR Rashmi
Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)






“Limiting global warming is a pre-requisite for equitable and sustainable development, as those who suffer the worst consequences of climate change have contributed the least to its causes. The most vulnerable are in urgent need of measures to improve resilience and enhance adaptive capacity. Without enhanced financial flows, the means to implement urgently need adaptation or mitigation measures will remain insufficient.

- Prof. Jim Skea
Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change




“Mobilizing climate finance is essential for investing in solutions that will enable us to reduce emissions more rapidly. I am very proud that Norway has exceeded its climate finance target for the past two years. We will continue to push forward, and I hope many others will join us in mobilizing finance from both public and private sources. This collective effort will allow us to work together to accelerate emission reductions.

- H.E. Mr Andreas Bjelland Eriksen
Minister of Climate and the Environment, Government of Norway




“COP 30 must be the conference of accelerated implementation, ensuring that the commitments made in Dubai and Baku translate into tangible outcomes. We must advance the transition away from fossil fuels and deforestation while significantly increasing climate finance to \$1.3 trillion annually, building on the \$300 billion pledged by developed countries. This roadmap will be crucial for the post-Belém period.

- H.E. Ms Marina Silva
Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Brazil




“The discourse on climate justice in developing climate finance should be based on the latest and most robust scientific evidence. Nepal believes that the specific impacts of climate change on vulnerable countries should form the basis for adaptation support. We argue that the issue of disproportionate climate impacts on our people and ecosystems is a matter of global ethics and shared humanity.

- H.E. Mr Aain Bahadur Shahi Thakuri
Minister of Forest and Environment, Nepal





Another key area is loss and damage, which must be integrated into NDC 3.0. Under Article 8 of the Paris Agreement, loss and damage are recognized as distinct from adaptation. Incorporating this aspect into NDCs will ensure that climate-induced impacts are systematically tracked and reported in the GST, offering a clearer picture of the growing burdens faced by vulnerable countries like the Maldives.

- H.E. Dr Muaviyath Mohamed

Minister of State for Tourism and Environment, Maldives



We welcome India's leadership and interest in hosting COP33. This will be a crucial moment, coinciding with the conclusion of the second Global Stocktake (GST), ensuring that the Paris Agreement's ambition cycle continues. Germany is fully committed to working with India on the road to COP30, alongside Brazil, and towards COP33. We are also co-hosting the Petersberg Climate Dialogue with Brazil in three weeks to help prepare for COP30, recognizing its significance.

- Ms Jennifer Lee Morgan

State Secretary and Special Envoy for International Climate Action at the Federal Foreign Office, Federal Republic of Germany



On one hand, the science is very clear, as we have heard—we can see the impacts outside. On the other hand, we are facing an incredibly uncertain geopolitical context in which climate is increasingly weaponized. However, what is less visible is the level of collaboration and coordination among a wide range of stakeholders, particularly subnational governments and businesses, which should give us hope.

- Ms Helen Clarkson

Chief Executive Officer, Climate Group



The fossil energy system is riddled with inequalities—both within and across countries. It traps many developing countries in low-value commodity extraction and extends to widespread energy poverty. We must seize the energy transition as an opportunity to address these issues. However, climate policies too often have the opposite effect, placing a disproportionate share of the transition's cost on low-income households.

- Ms Anne Jellema

Executive Director, 350.org



Tracing the Summit Days

MARCH 06, 2025 | THURSDAY

LEADERSHIP PANEL

POWERING THE FUTURE
THROUGH SUSTAINABLE
ENERGY TRANSITIONS

ABOUT THE PLENARY

The Tracking SDG 7: Energy Progress Report 2024 revealed key gaps in achieving universal access to affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy by 2030. While progress was made, challenges persisted, especially in underserved regions. Projections suggest 1.8 billion people might still lack clean cooking access by 2030. Renewables accounted for 18.7% of total energy consumption in 2021, up from 16.7% in 2015, but still far from the 32-35% needed to meet climate goals. Energy efficiency improved slightly, with energy intensity decreasing from 4.9 MJ/\$ in 2015 to 4.6 MJ/\$ in 2021. Financing was a bottleneck, with international financial flows to developing countries falling to \$15.4 billion in 2022, well below the 2016 peak. The session focused on strategies for achieving universal energy access, advancing clean energy, and improving efficiency to ensure progress towards SDG 7 by 2030.

During the session, the 39th edition of *TERI Energy and Environment Data Diary and Yearbook (TEDDY)* was launched that provides updated information on the energy supply sectors (coal and lignite, petroleum and natural gas, power, and renewable energy sources), energy demand sectors (agriculture, industry, transport, household, buildings), and environment (local and global).



SPEAKERS

Moderator

- Ms Urmi Goswami, Assistant Editor, The Economic Times

Panelists

- Dr Ajay Mathur, Director General, The International Solar Alliance
- Ambassador Arne Walther, Former Secretary General, International Energy Forum
- Ms Amanda Maxwell, Managing Director, Global Division, Natural Resources Defense Council
- Ms Seema Paul, Program Director, India, Sequoia Climate Foundation
- Ms Mansi Madan Tripathy, VP, Shell Lubricants Asia Pacific & Chairperson, Shell Group of Companies India
- Ms Shweta Pandey, Vice President, Legal and Compliance, Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India Pvt. Ltd
- Ms Laura Aylett, Head of Climate and Energy, British High Commission, New Delhi
- Mr Ajay Shankar, Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
- Dr Ritu Mathur, Director, TERI
- Prof. Jeffrey D Sachs, Director, Center for Sustainable Development in the Earth Institute, Columbia University (virtually)
- Prof. Hoesung Lee, Former Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (virtually)

CALL TO ACTION

Mindset Shift is Essential: Governments, businesses, and individuals must recognize and embrace the economic benefits of renewable energy.

Geopolitical Challenges should not Halt Progress: Multilateral cooperation is critical to overcoming political and economic barriers and ensuring continued progress.

Localized Innovation and Incentives are Key: One-size-fits-all solutions won't work for energy access. Diverse, scalable projects must be developed, focusing on renewable energy to create jobs and financial opportunities. Encourage growth in agriculture and technology markets to boost scalability and accessibility, while offering job opportunities in the renewable energy sector across both rural and urban areas.

Public-Private Collaboration is Crucial: Strong partnerships can accelerate the energy transition. Governments must implement policies that generate demand and encourage adoption of renewable energy technologies, aligned with the practical needs of the people. This should be coupled with scaling up production and providing consumers with diverse energy choices.

Finance and Policy Must Drive the Transition: Development banks, climate finance, and structured investments are vital to support the energy shift. India, with the right ecosystem in place, can set a global precedent by demonstrating scalable solutions.

Circular Economy and Mineral Security are Vital: Resource extraction must be responsible, with a strong emphasis on recycling and alternative materials. Innovation and technology are key to expanding access, particularly in the mobility sector.

Sector-Specific Roadmaps are Essential: Clear, sector-specific transition plans, especially for hard-to-abate industries, are necessary to achieve transition to net zero. Economic growth must go together with decarbonization efforts.

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In the context of current geopolitical challenges, energy access is crucial for the countries of the Global South. While challenges persist, optimism and strategic collaboration are essential. We must move forward with both urgency and hope.

- Ms Urmi Goswami

Assistant Editor, *The Economic Times*



We need to make public policies that provide choices to the people when it comes to clean energy solutions. Centralized solutions rarely work; we need localized innovation and incentives to encourage adoption.

- Dr Ajay Mathur

Director General, The International Solar Alliance



Political landscape is changing around the world. The geopolitical and economic climate is more unstable than last year. This volatility threatens energy transition efforts. Global energy policies are shifting, but short-term national interests often delay long-term sustainability goals. There is new achievement in energy sector in India and the solar energy sector is booming.

- Ambassador Arne Walther

Former Secretary General, International Energy Forum



Scalability is a challenge. Many energy access solutions focus on urban areas, while rural communities remain underserved. India has an opportunity to set an example by scaling clean energy solutions that can be adopted globally.

- Ms Amanda Maxwell

Managing Director, Global Division,
Natural Resources Defense Council





“A major challenge is the resistance to renewable energy despite its economic viability. The "drill baby drill" narrative is becoming stronger in present geo-political context. We must build a stronger counter-narrative to debunk myths on renewables.

- Ms Seema Paul
Program Director, India, Sequoia Climate Foundation




“The key to scaling sustainable energy transitions is collaboration. Bringing together different stakeholders—government, private sector, and financiers—is critical for creating a successful transition model.

- Ms Mansi Madan Tripathy
VP, Shell Lubricants Asia Pacific & Chairperson, Shell Group of Companies India




“From the mobility perspective, the challenge is ensuring access to sustainable transportation, particularly for the bottom of the pyramid. We need more structured public-private partnerships to accelerate clean mobility solutions. Technology and innovation are key for addressing the challenges of energy access.

- Ms Shweta Pandey
Vice President, Legal and Compliance, Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India Pvt. Ltd




“The UK has a strong energy relationship with India, and we recognize the challenges of ensuring economic growth while decarbonizing. Energy access also has a significant impact on public health, particularly for women who suffer from indoor air pollution. Mutual and cross sectoral learning should happen between countries.

- Ms Laura Aylett
Head of Climate and Energy, British High Commission, New Delhi





Renewables along with storage are affordable and accessible. Developing countries can have access to clean and affordable energy. Countries with energy poverty should prioritize access to clean energy as a development imperative.

- Mr Ajay Shankar
Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)



We need innovative models to scale renewable energy adoption. Demand aggregation, agri-PV solutions, and hybrid renewable power systems can help bridge the gap in energy access. This would help us scale renewable energy up to the level of economy.

- Dr Ritu Mathur
Director, TERI



There is no real shortage of critical minerals. The problem is geopolitical tension and lack of international cooperation and strategic planning. Instead of each country hoarding resources, we need global supply chain agreements to ensure smooth access to materials.

- Prof. Jeffrey D Sachs,
Director, Center for Sustainable Development in the Earth Institute, Columbia University



The urgency of the 2025 emissions peak cannot be overstated. Without immediate action, we risk missing critical climate targets, which will lead to increased costs and technological dependence on carbon removal in the future.

- Prof. Hoesung Lee
Former Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change



Tracing the Summit Days

MARCH 07, 2025 | FRIDAY

LEADERSHIP PANEL

**BUILDING
INFRASTRUCTURE FOR A
RESILIENCE DIVIDEND**

ABOUT THE SESSION

The current global population is 8 billion. By 2050, it is expected to reach 10 billion, and over 90% of the infrastructure required is yet to be built.

The world faces stranded assets and worsening disasters, threatening lives, economies, and vital services. According to the Global Infrastructure Resilience report, disasters cause over \$700 billion in annual damages, with low and middle-income countries shouldering 54% of the impact, despite holding just a third of the global infrastructure value. These regions face chronic underinvestment, with up to 85% of infrastructure spending allocated to repairs rather than resilient development. Investing in resilience turns vulnerability into opportunity. The plenary session aimed to explore strategies for integrating resilience into infrastructure development, unlocking economic opportunities for sustainable growth, equity, and climate adaptation.

Prior to the session, the Summit saw the signing of an MoU between TERI and CONCOR to establish a Centre of Excellence for Green Logistics, supporting Indian Railways' net zero goal and promoting sustainable freight solutions.



SPEAKERS

Moderator

- Ms Teena Jha, Journalist, Sansad Television

Panelists

- Mr Amit Prothi, Director General, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure
- Dr Madhav Bahadur Karki, Expert Member, Environment Protection and Climate Change Council, Government of Nepal
- Mr Shekhar Singh, Municipal Commissioner, Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation
- Mr Santhosh Muzumdar, Director, Government Relations and Sustainability, Johnson Controls
- Mr Shoubhik Ganguly, Senior Adviser – Infrastructure and Climate Finance, FCDO, British High Commission, New Delhi
- Mr Sanjay Seth, Senior Fellow & Senior Director, TERI
- Ms Shabnam Bassi, Director, Sustainable Buildings, TERI
- Ms Josefina Belmonte, Mayor, Quezon City, Philippines (virtually)

CALL TO ACTION

Converting Vulnerability into Opportunity: To transform vulnerability into opportunity, the panel reiterated to focus on resilience dividends—reducing damage, creating economic opportunities, benefitting both the environment and society. For instance, initiatives like Trash-to-Cash-Back, which incentivize waste segregation and recycling, turn waste into economic value.

Incentivizing Resilient Urban Infrastructure Development: Incentivizing cities to meet resilience objectives can be leveraged as an opportunity to incorporate resilience into infrastructure projects. Additionally, geographically focused programmes for urban planning, addressing risks like flooding and extreme heat, are essential for low and middle-income countries. Coalitions can play a crucial role in creating new opportunities.

Leveraging Investments for Resilient Infrastructure: Investing in resilience requires robust data support and climate models. To attract investments, the lifecycle costs of infrastructure must be integrated into new projects.

Integrating Bottom-Up and Top-Down Approaches for Capacity Building: Urban resilience involves more than government planning; it requires capacity building at every level—from city official to everyday citizens. Building capacity among political representatives and government stakeholders is equally essential. Programmes like Urban Living Labs, combine top-down and bottom-up strategies, engaging communities in reshaping urban spaces. This ensures resilience is embedded in planning processes, preparing cities for the impacts of changing weather patterns.

Partnerships for Technological Advancements: No single company can address this challenge alone, which is why business-to-business partnerships are vital. Cooling is a crucial component in buildings necessitating technological innovations. For example, the collaboration between Johnson Controls and Mahindra Group known as the Net Zero Buildings Initiative works to reduce building energy consumption through education, technological interventions, policy advocacy, and the implementation of best practices. Strong business-to-government partnerships with policy regulations also support these efforts.

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“Infrastructure plays a pivotal role for countries in the Global South. To navigate a successful transition, cities require the right approach and policy framework. By leveraging technological solutions, we can transform buildings into sustainable buildings.

- **Ms Teena Jha**
Journalist, Sansad Television




“The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) addresses challenges of building resilient infrastructure by tackling key barriers: data availability, infrastructure costs, and the need to push technological boundaries. By overcoming these constraints, CDRI enables sustainable and adaptive infrastructure solutions that drive long-term progress.

- **Mr Amit Prothi**
Director General, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure




“To secure climate finance, we must improve our technological capacity- better climate models, projections, and scientific rationale are essential for funding approval. A transformative approach is needed—doing things differently requires better coordination, stronger decision making, and more collaboration between industries and government tiers.

- **Dr Madhav Bahadur Karki**
Expert Member, Environment Protection and Climate Change Council, Government of Nepal




“Green buildings when conceptualized at a right time and design stage are cost effective. We need to empower end consumers at all costs. To scale green buildings at the level we aspire to, the power must be placed in the hands of end consumers powering them to demand sustainable, high-performance buildings.

- **Mr Sanjay Seth**
Senior Director- Sustainable Infrastructure Programme,
Vice President and CEO- GRIHA Council
The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)





“Financial markets and banks must start pricing climate and disaster risks into their loan structures, ensuring high-risk projects face higher borrowing costs.

- Mr Shoubik Ganguly
Senior Advisor-Infrastructure and Climate Finance,
FCDO, British High Commissioner, New Delhi




“Life cycle costs need to be integrated while planning for new projects. There is a need to develop a metric where people and stakeholders understand the incentives and disincentives of a disaster resilient infrastructure.

- Mr Shekhar Singh
Municipal Commissioner, Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation




“We need to have 360 degrees approach in terms of how we are measuring and implementing, double clicking of actions. Digital interventions and technological solutions can advance actions for integrating sustainability in buildings. Partnerships are crucial for accelerating technological advancements.

- Mr Santhosh Muzumdar
Director, Government Relations and Sustainability,
Johnson Controls




“Measuring and evaluation processes at each level are extremely critical to the process of sustainability. What gets measured gets managed—this philosophy must be followed at all levels. Role of standards and codes are crucial in driving sustainable change.

- Ms Shabnam Bassi
Director, Sustainable Buildings, TERI
Deputy CEO and Secretary- GRIHA




“The role of international organizations and national governments are crucial in scaling SDG implementation and climate action. These are strengthening partnerships; capacity building and resource sharing which are imperative to ensure all cities have tools to implement reforms.

- Ms Josefina Belmonte
Mayor, Quezon City, Philippines



Tracing the Summit Days

MARCH 07, 2025 | FRIDAY

IDEAS FORUM

GREEN LEAP THROUGH
TECHNOLOGY AND
INNOVATIONS

ABOUT THE PLENARY

The session examined how technology can drive sustainability amid growing environmental challenges. Speakers emphasized the potential of green technologies—such as renewable energy and carbon capture to reduce environmental impact while fostering economic growth. However, these innovations face competition from entrenched brown technologies, whose true costs are often excluded from market pricing. Discussions highlighted the reluctance of private investors to back emerging green solutions without government support, especially when they are not yet cost-competitive. To address this, participants stressed the need to shift from a market-driven model to an innovation-driven approach, fostering collaboration among businesses, research institutions, and policymakers.

The discussions concluded with a strong call for strategic partnerships, targeted policy interventions, and innovation-driven market shifts to accelerate the adoption of green technologies, ensuring they become viable and scalable solutions for a sustainable future. An announcement on the Fellowship under Atal Innovation Mission was also made during the session, aiming to accelerate community innovations in battery energy storage across Indian states.



SPEAKERS

Moderator

- Ms Shweta Kothari, Senior Editor, TV9 Network

Panelists

- Ms Prachi Shevgaonkar, Founder, Cool The Globe
- Mr Srivatsan Iyer, Global CEO, Hero Future Energies
- Mr Andrew Prag, Managing Director of Policy, We Mean Business Coalition
- Ms Chhaya Bhanti, Founder, Vertiver
- Mr Himal Tewari, CHRO, Chief – Sustainability & CSR, The Tata Power Company Limited
- Dr Dipankar Saharia, Senior Fellow & Senior Director, TERI

CALL TO ACTION

Prioritize Science-Backed Climate Policies: Governments, businesses, and communities must align policies with scientific evidence to combat climate change effectively. A commitment to sustainable practices and green innovation is essential to securing a liveable future.

Empower Individual Climate Action with Technology: Organizations and individuals must leverage digital tools to track, scale, and amplify sustainable behaviours. By integrating technology into daily practices, we can drive measurable climate impact and collective change.

Accelerate Adoption of Cost-Effective Renewable Energy: Investing in renewable energy is now both economically and environmentally sound. Businesses and policymakers must accelerate adoption by leveraging cost-effective sustainable technologies to build future-ready infrastructure.

Drive Innovation for a Sustainable Future: Businesses and policymakers must accelerate the development and scaling of emerging clean technologies. By fostering investment and collaboration, the gap between innovation and implementation to achieve net-zero emissions can be bridged.

Adopt Holistic Energy Solutions for Agriculture: Sustainable technology must balance energy, water, and food security. By integrating renewable energy with soil health initiatives and responsible water use, we can create long-term, effective solutions for farmers and ecosystems.

Accelerate Clean Energy Transition Through System Integration: A balanced energy future requires a mix of renewables, nuclear, and efficient storage solutions. Stakeholders must collaborate to scale sustainable technologies while ensuring grid stability and energy access for all.

Promote Green Innovation: Businesses, policymakers, and communities should work together to make green technologies more accessible, ensuring they improve livelihoods, boost efficiency, and drive sustainable economic growth.

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The world has never been at such a crucial juncture, and I hope it never will be again. It is even more important because it comes at a time when scientifically proven theories are now being contested, and science is being challenged. It raises the question of why a group of well-meaning people have gathered here today—to literally protect what we believe will be our future.

- Ms Shweta Kothari

Senior Editor, TV9 Network



At the beginning of my journey, I thought it would take a miracle to avoid the worst effects of climate change. When we conducted our survey, we realized that many people are waiting for this miracle. Climate change seems like such a grim reality that we are all hoping for a breakthrough discovery. But the truth is, an imaginary technological or scientific discovery is not the miracle we need. The miracle starts in our own homes, in our own actions. Technology can help us scale it.

- Ms Prachi Shevgaonkar

Founder, Cool The Globe



The biggest challenge that always existed for sustainability was the cost—going green used to mean paying more than usual. Fortunately, several technologies have been incubated, adapted, and advanced to a stage where that dilemma no longer exists. You no longer have to choose between what's economically viable and what's sustainable.

- Mr Srivatsan Iyer

Global CEO, Hero Future Energies



To achieve the scenario of net-zero global emissions by 2050, only 35% of the necessary emission reductions can be achieved with commercially available technologies today. This means there is a significant need to accelerate innovation—not just for brand-new technologies but also for early-stage technologies that require scaling.

- Mr Andrew Prag

Managing Director of Policy, We Mean Business Coalition





“We are all dealing with a soil emergency—our lands are degraded, and we need to figure out systems and applications of technology that will restore soil health so that everything that comes on top of that, including food security, can be built.

- **Ms Chhaya Bhanti**
Founder, Vertiver




“There is no one road to success—solar alone cannot do it, wind alone cannot do it, and batteries alone cannot do it. We need a systemic approach, integrating nuclear, pumped storage, and also minimizing the impact of brown technologies while they still exist.

- **Mr Himal Tewari**
CHRO, Chief - Sustainability & CSR,
The Tata Power Company Limited




“Green technology is not just about reducing our carbon footprint or environmental footprint; it is also about enhancing efficiency, improving quality of life, and increasing economic opportunities. All these aspects come together.

- **Dr Dipankar Saharia**
Senior Fellow & Senior Director,
The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)



Tracing the Summit Days

MARCH 07, 2025 | FRIDAY

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INTEGRATED ACTION

ABOUT THE PLENARY

The session explored the pressing challenges of Polycrisis, including planetary crises, setbacks in sustainable development goals (SDGs), and rising global conflicts. Recognizing the urgency of integrated action, discussions focused on dismantling silos across political, environmental, and economic spheres. Participants examined systemic barriers hindering sustainability mainstreaming and identified solutions to foster collaboration among governments, businesses, and civil society.

The session highlighted the role of green budgeting, sustainable procurement, and regulatory frameworks in accelerating SDG progress. By showcasing best practices in vertical (national to local) and horizontal (cross-sectoral) cooperation, the plenary advanced systemic solutions to drive inclusive, resilient, and transformative sustainable development globally. The discussions recognized that progress on SDGs remained alarmingly off track, with more than 80% of targets lagging. Debt burdens have escalated, diverting resources from critical investments in health and education. Speakers emphasized multilateral cooperation, innovative financing, and partnerships alongside donor-recipient models to drive sustainable development.



SPEAKERS

Chair

- Mr Shombi Sharp, United Nations Resident Coordinator in India, United Nations

Leadership Video Messages

- Mr Li Junhua, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- Dr Achim Steiner, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

In Discussion

- Mr Md Golam Sarwar, Secretary General, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
- Mr Hiroshi Ono, Executive Director, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)
- Dr Julie Reviere, Country Director, GIZ India
- Dr Soumya Swaminathan, Chairperson, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation
- Dr Purvi Mehta, Senior Advisor, Global Growth and Opportunities, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Ms Dechen Tsering, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Environment Programme

CALL TO ACTION

Strengthen Integrated and Collaborative Approaches: Climate change, biodiversity loss, and socioeconomic disparities require coordinated, cross-sectoral responses. Governments, private sector actors, and civil society must work together to align policies and investments with global sustainability goals, ensuring efficiency and impact.

Accelerate the Implementation of Climate Commitments: While policies and funding mechanisms exist, the real challenge lies in speeding up implementation. Countries must move beyond diagnostics and pilot projects to scale up proven solutions, such as renewable energy adoption, climate-resilient agriculture, and sustainable urban planning.

Leverage Technology, Data, and Innovation for Impact: Harnessing AI, genomics, and data-driven decision-making can enhance responses to air pollution, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and climate-related risks. Governments and stakeholders should prioritize data-driven interventions to target the most urgent sustainability challenges effectively.

Encourage Individual and Organizational Responsibility: Sustainability is not just a policy matter—it requires a behavioural shift at all levels. Individuals, businesses, and institutions must take proactive steps, from waste segregation to sustainable production practices, ensuring that sustainability becomes a shared commitment rather than a top-down mandate.

Align Climate Action with Economic Priorities: Climate change is not only an environmental issue but an economic one. Countries must integrate climate resilience into economic planning, recognizing that rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and environmental degradation threaten GDP growth, livelihoods, and long-term stability.

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The sustainable development goals (SDGs) were reaffirmed by the global community at the UN General Assembly and through key initiatives such as the Compact for the Future and the Global Digital Compact. Despite this, we remain significantly off track. You may have heard the figures—83% of SDG targets are currently off track. Global debt has surged beyond \$300 trillion, with 60% of low-income countries in debt distress. More than half of all countries now spend more on debt servicing than on essential investments in health and education.

- Mr Shombi Sharp

United Nations Resident Coordinator in India, United Nations



Our success hinges on leveraging synergies and managing trade-offs. The climate and SDG synergy conferences have demonstrated how climate action is essential to achieving the SDGs. The Global Stocktake at COP28 highlighted the critical need to align climate ambitions with sustainable development. The Pact for the Future reinforces our shared responsibility to act with purpose and urgency.

- Mr Li Junhua

Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs



Multilateral cooperation remains a cornerstone of addressing global development challenges such as climate change. UNDP is currently supporting over 80 countries in crafting ambitious third generation Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC 3.0) ahead of the pivotal COP30 meeting in Brazil later this year. These efforts can keep the 1.5°C goal within reach and deliver far-reaching benefits.

- Dr Achim Steiner

Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)





“By embracing green budgeting, sustainable procurement, green investment, and robust regulatory frameworks, we can unlock this region's vast potential, build resilience to climate change, and create a brighter, more equitable future for all.

- Mr Md Golam Sarwar
Secretary General, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation




“Mutual collaboration, shared learning, and reciprocal knowledge exchange will be more valuable than a one-way transfer of technology and financial aid. Instead of a donor-recipient model, we must adopt a partnership-based approach to capacity building and sustainable development.

- Mr Hiroshi Ono
Executive Director, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)




“All of us must not only sign policies and push for implementation but also bring more people on board. We must talk about sustainability more, reach out proactively, and not assume that change will happen on its own—because it will not. Unless we change our behaviour, we will not accelerate progress.

- Dr Julie Reviere
Country Director, GIZ India




“To combat antimicrobial resistance, we need an integrated One Health approach, recognizing the interconnections between human, animal, and environmental health. This approach must leverage data and technology to target interventions effectively. New technologies, such as genomics and artificial intelligence, offer game-changing solutions.

- Dr Soumya Swaminathan
Chairperson, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation





“

As a global community, we have spent years raising awareness about climate change. Now, we are witnessing a shift towards action. Instead of just discussing the problem, we are increasingly asking how we address it and what solutions can we implement at scale.

- Dr Purvi Mehta
Senior Advisor, Global Growth and Opportunities, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation




“

Methane is one of the most underestimated climate pollutants. UNEP's International Methane Emissions Observatory (IMEO) is using satellite technology to track methane leaks in real time. Over the past few years, we have issued over 100 methane leak notifications, two of which, when addressed, resulted in emissions reductions equivalent to taking one million cars off the road for a year.

- Ms Dechen Tsering
Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Environment Programme



Tracing the Summit Days

MARCH 07, 2025 | FRIDAY

VALEDICTORY

WSDS@25 AND DRIVING
IMPACT THROUGH
MULTISTAKEHOLDER
DIALOGUES

ABOUT THE SESSION

The Valedictory session of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) 2025, held on March 7, 2025, marked the conclusion of three days of impactful discussions, commitments, and collaborative efforts towards a more sustainable and just future.

As WSDS 2025 concluded, the Valedictory session reflected on key takeaways, reinforcing the urgency of bridging the gap between ambition and action. With global progress on sustainable development still lagging, the discussions reiterated the need for bold, transformative solutions and the power of partnerships in achieving climate and development goals. The session highlighted the role of multi-stakeholder collaborations in driving systemic changes, emphasizing that collective efforts must translate into tangible impacts beyond the Summit.

The felicitation of the Youth Climate Conclave winners and the presentation of The Youth Pledge showcased the crucial role of young leaders in shaping the future of sustainability. Additionally, the Act4Earth 2025 Manifesto was presented, outlining actionable pathways for achieving climate justice and sustainable development in the critical years ahead.



SPEAKERS

Chair's Address

- Mr Nitin Desai, Chairman, TERI

Global Leadership Video Message

- Ms Amina J Mohammed, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General

Keynote Address

- Ms Dia Mirza, Actor, Producer, UNEP Goodwill Ambassador; UN Secretary General's Advocate for SDGs
- Mr Martin Raiser, Vice President, The World Bank

Felicitations of winners of Youth Climate Conclave & Presentation of The Youth Pledge

- Dr Livleen Kahlon, Senior Fellow and Associate Director, TERI

Summit Report and Acknowledgement

- Dr Shailly Kedia, Curator, World Sustainable Development Summit, TERI

Act4Earth 2025 Manifesto: Ms Palak Khanna, Area Convenor & Research Associate, TERI; Ms Ishita Srivastava, Research Associate, TERI; Dr Abhilash Kolekar, Research Associate, TERI; Ms Taruna Idnani, Associate Fellow, TERI

DG's Closing Address

- Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, TERI

CALL TO ACTION

Strengthen Partnerships for Scalable Climate Action: Collaboration between governments, businesses, and civil society is essential to accelerate climate solutions. Climate action must be inclusive, with partnerships enabling large-scale implementation of successful innovations.

Prioritize Equity in Climate Policies: The most vulnerable populations, who contribute the least to climate change, are the worst affected. Policies must ensure just transition, equitable access to resources, and meaningful support through mechanisms like the loss and damage fund.

Scale Up Proven Sustainable Technologies: Many viable climate-friendly technologies already exist but remain underutilized. Efforts should focus on their large-scale adoption and integration into global markets to drive impactful change.

Enhance Corporate Accountability and ESG Implementation: Businesses play a crucial role in sustainability. ESG should not just be a compliance measure but a guiding framework for responsible corporate action, ensuring that economic growth aligns with environmental and social well-being.

Invest in Youth and Climate Education: Engaging and empowering youth through climate education, capacity-building programmes, and leadership opportunities is critical for long-term sustainable development. Their voices and actions must be central to climate governance.

MAKING WORDS COUNT @WSDS 2025



“

There is a disagreement between people who focus on development and those who focus on the environment. The real challenge to sustainability is how to combine development with environmental protection. Multilateralism is deeply under threat right now. Climate scepticism had virtually disappeared over the years, but that might change now.

- Mr Nitin Desai
Chairman, TERI



“

The youth are taking charge, they are bringing change, and we must support their choices, amplify their voices, and invest in their ideas. To the youth here today, we see you, we hear you, and we stand with you. The SDGs are not just a set of goals but something very personal—they represent our shared cultural values. We will stay committed to the pursuit of sustainability and equity.

- Ms Dia Mirza
Actor, Producer, UNEP Goodwill Ambassador; UN Secretary General's Advocate for Sustainable Development Goals



“

We are greatly off track in realizing SDGs—600 million people are in extreme poverty, hunger is increasing, and extreme weather conditions have intensified. But there is hope. However, developing countries cannot take these actions alone, they need support in their environmental and economic transformation. No single nation can navigate challenges alone. Effective collaboration is increasingly critical to shaping our common future. The United Nations is committed to standing with all partners as we accelerate action on the SDGs.

- Ms Amina Mohammed
United Nations Deputy Secretary General



“

There is no better country in the world than India to drive green transition given its scale, entrepreneurial talents, but above all, necessity—India is highly vulnerable to climate change. A good developmental policy is a climate conscious policy.

- Mr Martin Raiser
Vice President, The World Bank





“The Youth Climate Conclave is not just an initiative, it is a movement that empowers young minds to become climate leaders. Through debates, capacity-building sessions, and interactions with global experts, we are shaping a generation that understands the urgency of climate action and is ready to lead the change.

- Dr Livleen Kahlon
Senior Fellow and Associate Director, TERI




“As we conclude this edition, we also set our sights on a milestone—next year marks the Silver Jubilee of WSDS, celebrating 25 years of pioneering ideas, policy impact, and partnerships for the planet. We will be back next year. A milestone. A quarter-century of commitment, collaboration, and climate action!

- Dr Shailly Kedia
Curator, World Sustainable Development Summit, TERI




“Sustainability is not just a job we do, it is the very foundation of our survival on this planet. If we want a secure future for our children, they don't just need money—they need clean air to breathe, safe water to drink, and food that is free from harm.

- Dr Vibha Dhawan
Director General, TERI



Thematic Tracks

Group A

Day 1: March 5, 2025 | Wednesday | 09:30 am – 11:00 am (IST)

Track Name	Venue
Driving Industry Transition: Focus on Cement Sector	Maple Hall
Accelerating India's Pathways to Sustainable Transport and Emission Reductions through Transport specific NDCs	Silver Oak 1
Growth of Per Capita Energy Consumption in India: Role of LiFE Initiative	Jacaranda 1
Financing Critical Mineral Acquisitions – De-Risking Investments & Strengthening Financial Ecosystems	Jacaranda 2
Greening the Future: Sustainable Solutions for Environmental Restoration	Juniper Hall
Context-Specific Carbon Finance Standards Aligning with India's Agroforestry Potential	Tamarind Hall

Group B

Day 1: March 5, 2025 | Wednesday | 11:30 am – 01:00 pm (IST)

Track Name	Venue
Science and Policy Action on Reducing Plastic and Chemical Waste in the Marine Environment	Magnolia Hall
Unlocking Opportunities for SME Financing and Capacity-building in Emerging Markets	Marigold Hall
Climate Finance: Accelerating India's Decarbonisation Journey	Juniper Hall
Putting Gender at the Heart of India's Clean Energy Transition	TERI Seminar Hall, IHC
Advancing Building-Integrated Photovoltaics (BIPV) Manufacturing in India	Silver Oak 1
Integrated Approach Towards Achieving Energy Efficiency and Thermal Comfort Through Active and Passive Interventions	Jacaranda 1
Transforming Finance for Low-Carbon Transition	Jacaranda 2
Watershed Management for Agricultural Resilience: Challenges, Solutions, and Sustainable Development	Tamarind Hall
Agriculture Sustainability through Advanced Technologies and Innovations to Achieve Food Security and Heal Our Planet	Casuarina Hall
People-centric Transition for Energy Equity	Gulmohar
Grassroot Action for Ecosystem Restoration through Implementation of Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in India	Social Room

Group C

Day 1: March 5, 2025 | Wednesday | 02:00 pm – 03:30 pm (IST)

Track Name	Venue
Sustaining Change: Public-Private Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Eco-Villages	Magnolia Hall
Accelerating Transformation: SDG Implementation and Climate and Biodiversity Goals	Juniper Hall
Partnerships for a Greener Future: Role of Environment Education in Schools	Silver Oak 1
Building Leadership for Carbon Neutrality in Higher Education Institutions	Jacaranda 1
Beyond Blueprints: Reimagining Climate-Resilient Cities through Living Labs and Digital Democracy	Jacaranda 2
Investing in Nature: Financing Forest Landscape Restoration in India	Tamarind Hall
India as a Global Green Leader: International, national, and local possibilities and trade-offs in just energy transition	Casuarina Hall
Decarbonizing India's Electricity Sector: Facilitating Energy Transition through Emerging Storage Technologies and Solutions	Gulmohar
CSR's Role in Ecological Conservation	Social Room
Delivering Finance and Investment to Achieve Low-Carbon Transition	RK Pachauri Conference room
Building a Global AgriStack: Boosting climate resilient agriculture and food security through digital public goods and infrastructure	Amaltas

Spotlight Tracks

Greening the Future: Sustainable Solutions for Environmental Restoration



The thematic track aimed to explore the existing processes, challenges, and policies governing the adaptation of various remediation methods for managing environmental pollutants. It sought to identify opportunities for innovation, enhancement, and collaboration among national and international stakeholders to strengthen sustainable approaches for pollution mitigation and environmental management.

Dr Vipin Chandra Shukla, Scientist 'G', DSIR, said that mammoth efforts were required at all levels—individual, stakeholder, and regulatory bodies—to achieve the sustainable development goals. He added that MSMEs needed support in research and development through infrastructure and intellectual input.

Dr G Rambabu, Scientist 'E', CPCB, stated that the absence of global soil standards affected the assessment and restoration of contaminated sites. He stressed that addressing risks in contaminated areas was crucial to prevent fatal diseases and build regulatory capacity for land remediation.

Mr Rajeeva Kumar, Former Chief General Manager-Head HSE, ONGC, highlighted that India's energy security was increasingly vulnerable due to crude oil and natural gas imports. He explained that rising energy demand and supply gaps could lead to price volatility, which technical and industrial experts could help reduce.

Mr Gaurav Lunawat, Assistant Director, Centre for High Technology, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, stated that India had great potential for converting biomass to bioenergy. However, he pointed out that supply chain, finance, and policy challenges must be tackled for the biofuel sector to grow.

Dr Onkar Nath Tiwari, Scientist 'F', DBT, remarked that the BioE3 policy was a landmark initiative that would foster High-Performance Bio-manufacturing and industrial growth. He added that government funding was crucial for biotechnology and biomanufacturing but required continuous reform for better efficiency and accessibility.

Dr Dheeraj Rathore, Assistant Professor, Central University of Gujarat, mentioned the need to mimic nature in environmental bioremediation strategies. He also noted that the three pillars of sustainability were the economy, environment, and society.

Decarbonizing Cement and Steel Industry: Levers and Strategies



The thematic track aimed to explore key decarbonization levers for the cement and steel industries in India, examining pathways to reduce emissions and enhance sustainability. Discussions provided perspectives on scaling LC3 cement production, industry-led initiatives to drive demand for green steel and cement, and the implementation of pilot projects to accelerate low-carbon transitions in these sectors.

Mr Sobhanbabu PRK, Senior Fellow, Industrial Energy Efficiency, TERI, said that TERI had been working with the Ministry of Steel on the steel industry decarbonization roadmap. He highlighted that India's cement production had surpassed 420 million tonnes in 2025.

Dr Soumen Maity, Vice President, Development Alternatives, and Chief Technology Officer, TARA, stated that performance-based standards could incorporate emissions as a key metric. He emphasized the need for an emission cap on the cement industry to promote the adoption of green cement among manufacturers.

Dr Abhishek Kumar Rai, Head - Quality Assurance, Control and R&D, Shree Cement Limited, pointed out that low-carbon cement should have a separate tax category. He suggested a phased approach, with 100% replacement of OPC with LC3 in the first phase, followed by further advancements in the second phase.

Mr Amit Khare, Program Manager, Sequoia Climate Foundation, stressed that developing a taxonomy for green cement had been crucial for fostering partnerships that could drive policy interventions.

Mr Anupam Badola, Deputy Chief Sustainability Officer, Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited, remarked that a transition from input-based to performance-based standards had been necessary to advance sustainability in the industry.

Mr Arvind Srivastav, Head (Corporate Quality), Tata Projects, observed that LC3 cement required a more proactive approach from manufacturers. He noted that the market had already been eager for sustainable solutions, and the benefits extended beyond financial gains to broader sustainability objectives.

Dr Neha Gupta, IIT Delhi, underscored the importance of LC3 cement in meeting the anticipated demand over the next four to five years. She highlighted that green finance could serve as a significant driver in addressing capital expenditure requirements for the sector's transition.

Science and Policy Action on Reducing Plastic and Chemical Waste in the Marine Environment



The thematic track aimed to foster knowledge-sharing and capacity-building to address plastic and chemical pollution, along with its social, economic, and environmental consequences. It sought to identify opportunities for reducing marine plastic and chemical waste while strengthening a science-informed research foundation to enhance policy relevance and drive effective, evidence-based decision-making.

Dr Hans Nicolai Adam, Senior Research Scientist, NIVA, said they had spent the last two years mapping the Cauvery River to address macro and microplastic pollution and develop science-based policy solutions. He emphasized that international collaboration was essential, as plastic and chemical pollution crossed national borders and required coordinated efforts for effective mitigation.

H.E. Martine Aamdal Bottheim, Minister Counsellor, Royal Norwegian Embassy in New Delhi, said Norway was proud to support Indo-Norwegian projects to tackle plastic and chemical pollution through science-based policies and interventions. She added that the High Ambition Coalition to End Plastic Pollution, co-chaired by Norway, remained committed to a legally binding treaty that addressed plastic pollution across its full lifecycle with a circular approach.

Mr Ved Prakash Mishra, Jt. Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India, said economic growth needed to be managed sustainably to control its environmental impact, including plastic waste. The government had taken significant steps by banning certain single-use plastics and enforcing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) to enhance accountability in waste management.

Dr Rachel Hurley, Researcher Scientist, NIVA, said macroplastic pollution must be tackled first to curb future microplastic pollution. Research along the Cauvery River showed urban areas as major contributors, highlighting the need for better waste management.

Prof. Paramita Chakraborty, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, said plastics are not just pollutants but also contain harmful chemicals that leach into the environment, posing health and ecological risks. She added that burning plastic releases hazardous byproducts like endocrine disruptors, making mismanaged plastic waste a major environmental and health concern.

Dr Girija Bharat, Founder Director, Mu Gamma Consultants (MGC), stressed that a lack of transparency in plastic manufacturing hinders regulation of toxic additives. She underscored the importance of empirical data in informing policies and empowering consumers and policymakers.

Mr Satish Sinha, Associate Director, Toxics Link, said the opacity in plastic manufacturing hindered regulation of toxic additives. Raising consumer awareness could drive market demand for safer, sustainable alternatives.

Dr Smita Mohanty, Sr. Principal Scientist, CIPET, highlighted effective plastic waste management required standardization and certification of recycled materials to ensure safety and quality. The implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) set clear targets for industries, but continuous monitoring and innovation in recycling technologies were essential for its success.

Ms Vilde Kloster Snekkevik, Research Scientist, NIVA, noted that monitoring plastic pollution required local adaptation, as river systems differed, making regional waste pattern analysis crucial for effective mitigation. She added that global policy discussions, like the INC negotiations for a plastics treaty, stressed the need for strong monitoring frameworks to evaluate intervention effectiveness.

Ms Avanti Roy Basu, Associate Director, Mu Gamma Consultants (MGC), said India's plastic waste regulations were evolving, but enforcement and monitoring remained major challenges in achieving circular economy goals. She emphasized the need to integrate recycled plastics into higher-value applications rather than downcycling for more sustainable reuse.

At the event, two pivotal baseline reports were launched under the Indo-Norway cooperation project (INOPOL), strengthening efforts to combat plastic and chemical pollution in India. The first report, "Hazardous But Invisible: Persistent Organic Pollutants (PoPs) in Tamil Nadu, India", sheds light on the presence and impact of PoPs, while the second, "Plastic Waste Management in Tamil Nadu, India: Perspectives and Pathways," outlines strategies for effective plastic waste management. Developed through a collaborative effort of esteemed research institutions, these reports provide critical insights to inform policy and action.

Unlocking Opportunities for SME Financing and Capacity-building in Emerging Markets



The thematic track aimed to create a platform for exploring key enablers and opportunities that facilitate access to formal finance and capacity-building for SMEs in emerging markets, strengthening their resilience to climate impacts. It fostered knowledge-sharing on the regional EMDE-specific landscape, highlighting existing support, resources, and lessons learned in scaling SME finance. Additionally, the session showcased the role of SME ecosystem builders, financial institutions, and partnerships in climate-proofing SMEs, drawing insights from success stories and case studies. The track brought together leading SME ecosystem builders, research organizations, technical consultants, and financial institutions actively engaged in emerging markets and developing economies (EMDEs).

Financial institutions, including **SIDBI, KfW Development Bank, and the Asian Development Bank**, shared insights

on successful models from India and the broader Asia region, including Central Asia. These discussions emphasized the importance of a **partnership-led and collaborative approach to catalytic finance**, supporting SMEs' access to formal financial systems for climate-proofing.

The **World Bank** contributed success stories from **South Asia**, particularly Bhutan, highlighting the role of **carbon markets** in channelling finance to SMEs and the significance of the **Bhutan Climate Fund**.

Additionally, **Invest India**, the national investment promotion agency, outlined its efforts in connecting SMEs to formal finance by addressing **information asymmetry**. It showcased the success of initiatives such as the **National Single Window System and Startup India** in streamlining SME access to resources.

A strong focus on **inclusive design and gender-lens investing** emerged as a critical theme. Organizations such as **Women's World Banking and Nikore Associates** stressed the importance of empowering **women-led SMEs and entrepreneurs** as part of the broader financial inclusion agenda.

The discussion also highlighted key contributions from **SME ecosystem builders** collaborating on the **Climate-proofing SMEs campaign**. CDP shared the overwhelmingly positive response to its newly launched **SME questionnaire**, while **WBCSD** emphasized the need for greater engagement with businesses to support SMEs, particularly those within corporate supply chains.

WRI introduced insights from the **RISE program in India**, underscoring the role of sustainability initiatives in fostering SME resilience.

The event further explored the role of **climate finance research, data, technology, and innovation** in scaling successful financing models. Participants highlighted the importance of designing **scalable pilot projects**, leveraging **non-traditional financing sources such as philanthropic capital, and public sector interventions** to crowd in additional SME financing. These discussions reaffirmed the critical role of **collaborative, innovative, and inclusive financial mechanisms** in unlocking opportunities for SMEs in emerging markets.

Climate Finance: Accelerating India's Decarbonisation Journey

TATA CAPITAL

Cleantech Finance

The thematic track aimed to facilitate discussions on India's energy transition by examining the role of private players and institutional investors in mobilizing green finance. It focused on key policy reforms and financial mechanisms necessary to bridge the climate finance gap, ensuring a sustainable and inclusive pathway towards India's long-term decarbonization and energy security goals.

Dr Shailly Kedia, Senior Fellow and Associate Director, TERI, said achieving 2030 and 2070 targets required massive investment and financial innovations. India's energy transition needed about \$2.5 trillion by 2030 and over \$10 trillion for net-zero by 2070. Overcoming climate finance barriers demanded policy reforms, innovative instruments, and stronger public-private partnerships.

Mr Pankaj Sindwani, Chief Business Officer, Cleantech Finance, Tata Capital and Managing Partner, Tata Capital Decarbonization Fund, said India's decarbonization is more than an energy transition—it is an economic transformation. Finance, he noted, would not just enable but serve as the backbone of this shift.

Mr Anil Rawal, MD & CEO, Intellismart Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd., said the digital transformation programme would impact every citizen as the country was fully electrified. He emphasized that electricity would be seen not just as a commodity but as a service. He noted that the power sector was entering its best phase, with generation set to grow, transmission well-placed, and distribution performing strongly. As discoms' financial health improved, demand would rise, boosting consumption and strengthening infrastructure.

Mr Sanjeev Aggarwal, Executive Chairman, Hexa Climate, said renewable energy, especially solar and wind, have become cost-effective, but ensuring a stable 24x7 power supply remains a challenge. As grid integration

increases, distribution companies are faced with greater fluctuations, leading to a shift towards structured power supply models requiring careful planning, technology selection, and risk management.

Mr Saurabh Kumar, Vice President- India, The Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP), said investment flow was not guaranteed. Achieving 500 GW capacity would require around \$150 billion in five years, plus \$20-30 billion for battery storage and \$200 billion for transmission and distribution. He added that subsidies alone were insufficient, and the key challenge in scaling decentralized renewables lay in developing sustainable business models, risk mitigation, and leveraging digitization for efficient energy distribution and policy execution.

Mr Devendra Chawla, MD & CEO, GreenCell Mobility, said India's bus market was \$50 billion and could reach \$100 billion by 2030, but EV penetration remained low at 1-2%. Since buses were major polluters, transitioning to EVs was crucial. He added that smart meters were more than just metering devices; with firmware, software, and IT integration, they ensured efficiency, monitoring, and better electricity management.

Putting Gender at the Heart of India's Clean Energy Transition



The thematic track aimed to explore the critical role of women in India's renewable energy transition, highlighting the socio-economic and environmental benefits of their active participation. It sought to identify strategies to overcome barriers, strengthen gender-inclusive policies, and scale women-led climate solutions, fostering an equitable, sustainable, and resilient clean energy future.

Ms Dipa Singh Bagai, Country Head, NRDC India, said renewable energy was once an urban trend but had expanded to rural areas, driving India's clean energy revolution. She noted that the sector was not gender-neutral.

Mr Rana Pujari, Lead - Renewable Energy, NRDC, India, said the introduction of biogas plants under the Hariyali Green Village initiative in Gujarat significantly reduced average expenditure on traditional woodfire. The adoption of the cool roof technique also reduced seepage and improved thermal comfort.

Ms Jyoti Macwan, General Secretary, Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) stated that women should be seen not just as users or small players but as owners and managers. She emphasized that when women take on managerial roles, they also create leadership opportunities for youth.

Ms Charu Lata, Director, Renewable Energy, NRDC India, said bioenergy reduced emissions, eased women's drudgery, improved their health, and enhanced indoor air quality. She emphasized that women should not only own technologies but also use, manage, and lead in the clean energy transition.

Dr Sangita Kasture, Scientist G, MNRE, said the Government of India ensured at least 25% of biogas plant owners were women by implementing online registration, removing asset requirements, and exploring incentives. She highlighted a manure cooperative in Gujarat, formed by over 200 women, which generated ₹69 lakh in revenue in 2023-24, with profits distributed among members, demonstrating a replicable model for empowerment and climate action.

Mr Arpit Sharma, CEO, Skill Council for Green Jobs, said, by successfully implementing a skill-building programme, around 40% of SEWA workers secured jobs in the sector. Women were not only trained but also empowered as entrepreneurs for self-sustainability.

Ms Amanda Maxwell, MD, Global, NRDC, said scaling any project required focus on policies, capacity building, partnerships, and finance. Strong stakeholder partnerships were crucial, with mutual support essential for success.

At the event, the report "It Takes a Village: Assessing Impact of Climate-Friendly Solutions in Rural India" was launched, highlighting the transformative role of sustainable technologies in mitigating carbon emissions. Covering key initiatives like biogas plants, solar precision irrigation, cool-roof technology, PM-Surya Ghar, and PM-KUSUM, the report underscores their positive environmental impact and potential to drive climate resilience in rural communities.

Agriculture Sustainability through Advanced Technologies and Innovations to Achieve Food Security and Heal Our Planet



The thematic track aimed to explore the intersection of soil health and nutrient use efficiency, emphasizing their critical role in sustainable agriculture. Discussions focused on the challenges of soil degradation, its impact on food security, and the inefficiencies of conventional fertilizers. Experts shared insights on technological innovations, policy frameworks, and farm-level adoption strategies. The sessions highlighted the need for cost-effective implementation, grassroots acceptance, and integrated sustainability approaches.

Mr Andrew Goodland, Lead Agriculture Specialist India and Afghanistan, World Bank, stressed that fertilizer consumption and subsidies had increased, but soil responsiveness had declined, reducing value for money. He emphasized the need to repurpose subsidies to incentivize soil health improvement and encourage sustainable farming practices that enhance soil microbiome diversity.

Dr Achim Dobermann, Chief Scientist, International Fertilizer Association, stated that government regulations needed updates to accommodate new agricultural product categories, ensuring efficacy, safety, and oversight. He also highlighted the importance of virtual agronomists and AI-powered platforms for direct communication and real-time farmer support.

Dr Tarunendu Singh, Manager & Head (Agricultural Services), IFFCO, said, integrating genomics, robotics, and nanotechnology with traditional knowledge and research collaboration can drive agricultural innovation and sustainability. A comprehensive basket of nano fertilizers—nano NPK, micronutrients, silica (Si), and sulphur (S)—is essential for enhancing nutrient use efficiency (NUE) and ensuring a successful transition.

Mr Tim Maurer, President, Lifestyle Management International, Inc., said the focus was on reducing input costs and mechanization expenses to ensure faster ROI while optimizing farm inputs, enhancing sustainability, and boosting yields to increase farmer profits. He added that farm monitoring apps used diverse data sources—weather forecasts, satellite imagery, soil data, and crop health information—to optimize crop performance and improve farmers' decision-making.

Mr Ashish Srivastava, Vice President, Chambal Fertilisers and Chemicals Limited, said there should have been a strong monitoring system and policy framework to ensure government agricultural programmes like PM Kisan directly benefited farmers, similar to the efficient delivery seen in the COVID vaccination programme.

Mr Madan Mohan Pandey, Managing Director, Zuari Farm Hub Limited, said farmers in India faced a triple deficiency—limited market access, inadequate knowledge, and lack of data and technology—hindering agricultural productivity and sustainability.

Mr Sanjay Chhabra, Executive Director, DCM Shriram Limited, said the government needs to set up advanced facilities to test, refine, certify, and efficiently market agricultural innovations.

Accelerating Transformation: SDG Implementation and Climate and Biodiversity Goals



Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Nature Conservation,
Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection



INTERNATIONAL
CLIMATE
INITIATIVE

The thematic track assessed progress on the 2030 Agenda through the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR, 2024). It examined challenges and opportunities in aligning SDG implementation with climate and biodiversity goals, drawing from Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) of India, Germany, and others. Discussions highlighted best practices, structural reforms, and collaboration strategies to enhance sustainability, resilience, and transformational pathways.

Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, TERI, stressed the urgency of accelerating SDG implementation with just five years left to achieve the 2030 Agenda. She highlighted the need for integrated approaches aligning sustainable development, climate action, and biodiversity goals. Emphasizing WSDS as a key platform for dialogue and collaboration, she urged for immediate and faster action.

Prof. Ambuj Sagar, from the International Group of Scientists (IGS) for GSDR 2023, highlighted that transformations progress through phases—slow beginnings, acceleration, and stabilization. To expedite SDG implementation, he emphasized the need for systematic progress assessment and timely policy interventions. He stressed the importance of aligning efforts across the private sector, government, and civil society to ensure coordinated action rather than fragmented approaches.

Ms Ilka Hirt, Government of Germany (BMUV), underscored that one of the key lessons from Germany's experience is that sustainability cannot be an afterthought—it must be at the core of every policy decision, across all ministries and sectors. She stressed that clear communication with people about the importance of sustainability is crucial to maintaining public support, as the social dimension of the SDGs is just as important as the environmental one.

Ms Nameeta Prasad, Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, underscored the Himalayas' vital link between human and environmental well-being. She stressed that climate and biodiversity goals must be foundational to sustainable development, not secondary considerations. Highlighting India's approach to SDG acceleration in mountain ecosystems, she emphasized the need to break silos, integrating climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and local livelihoods for holistic progress.

Mr David Surý, Director General, Ministry of Environment, Czech Republic, stressed that sustainability cannot be achieved without private sector involvement, but business models must evolve, as investors remain sceptical due to the longer return periods of green investments. He further noted that policy coherence is essential to avoid unintended consequences, highlighting the need to align environmental, social, and economic policies so they complement rather than contradict each other.

Dr Manish Anand, Senior Fellow, Resource Efficiency & Governance, TERI, observed that progress towards the SDGs is lagging, with only 13.4% of targets on track. However, he noted that there is still time to realign efforts and accelerate transformation. Emphasizing the urgency of the moment, he stated that the period from 2025 to 2030 is the final stretch, and the success or failure of the SDG agenda will be determined in the next five years, making immediate and integrated action critical.

Building A Global AgriStack: Boosting climate resilient agriculture and food security through digital public goods and infrastructure



This thematic track aims to explore the role of digital public goods and infrastructure in strengthening climate-resilient agriculture and food security. It will highlight innovative global and national initiatives, such as AgriStack, DiCRA, and the Digital Public Goods Alliance, fostering collaborations among governments, NGOs, and the private sector for scalable, sustainable agricultural solutions.

Dr A K Nayak, Director of the National Rice Research Institute, advocated for two-way communication with farmers to address gaps in knowledge and resources. He highlighted the role of digital platforms in enabling direct transactions between farmers and input dealers, reducing reliance on traditional marketing channels and intermediaries.

Mr Tapan Kumar Sahoo, DGM-NABARD, highlighted NABARD's role in preparing annual PLPs for all districts, estimating credit potential under the priority sector to guide banks in formulating credit plans. He also emphasized NABARD's efforts in facilitating core banking solutions for RRBs and rural cooperative banks, enhancing financial accessibility in rural areas.

Ms Swetha Kolluri, Expert at the World Bank, accentuated DiCRA's role in delivering open access to geospatial datasets for climate-resilient agriculture. She underlined its deployment of AI and machine learning to evaluate data, categorizing farms as resilient or at risk to climate change, enabling well-targeted interventions.

Mr Kunjibihari Daga, Partner at MSC, underscored the significance of offering users real-time updates on weather conditions and mandi prices to aid informed decision-making. He stressed the necessity of unifying government bodies, the private sector, and CSOs to enhance backward and forward linkages in agriculture.

Mr Zhongxin Chen, Lead at FAO's Agro Informatics Unit, emphasized the pivotal role of the DPGs Alliance Registry in supporting farmers. He noted that the platform offers advanced geospatial data, including food security indicators and agricultural statistics, to enable precise and effective agricultural interventions.

Mr Sivakumar Moorthy, Partner at EY, stressed the importance of three key questions for farmers using digital apps: Who am I? What do I possess? And what do I do? He also advocated for state governments to have control over AgriStacks rather than the central government.

Dr R Rajkumar from the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) strongly advocated for the Digital Plant Clinics programme. He highlighted its advanced system, incorporating voice modulation to enhance accessibility and farmer engagement.

Mr Anindya Banerjee from the Department of Agriculture & Farmer Welfare stated that nearly 4 crore farmers have registered on digital apps out of the 6 crore target. He also shared the Government of India's plan to develop a farmland registry modelled after the UPI system.

Sustaining Change: Public-Private Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Eco-Villages



This session highlighted the impact of the GIZ India-Hindustan Unilever Limited eco-village initiative, showcasing its water-positive, zero-waste, and low-carbon strategies. It aimed to promote eco-villages as scalable models,

launch the Eco-Village Compendium, and foster multi-sector collaboration to drive climate-resilient rural development in India.

Ms Meghna Kshirsagar, Senior Advisor, Climate Change & Circular Economy, GIZ India, emphasized that sustainable, inclusive community development required an ecosystem of cooperation, as isolated efforts could not drive meaningful change. She highlighted that eco-villages not only transformed landscapes but also empowered communities with clean water, better waste management, and low-carbon solutions.

Ms Mandira Nagrath, Lead – Sustainable Community Development Program (Prabhat), HUL, highlighted that strong community participation was crucial to the initiative's success. She noted that the project focused on driving behaviour change, beginning with household waste segregation and progressing to proper collection, management, and recycling.

Mr Gerald Guskowski, Cluster Coordinator – Environment, Climate Change, Natural Resource Management, GIZ, stressed that sustainability was vital for long-term success, warning that companies failing to integrate it into their business models risked obsolescence. He emphasized that large-scale transformation required synergy with government policies and schemes to ensure lasting impact and scalability.

Mr Amit Thakur, Employee Relations Head, South Asia, HUL, underscored HUL's commitment to aligning its operations, business, and community engagement with India's broader development goals. He highlighted that shared values simplify the journey and enhance impact, a principle strongly reflected in the success of this partnership.

Mr Sankalp Dubey, Junior Advisor, Climate Change & Circular Economy, GIZ India, emphasized the power of collaboration, noting that collective efforts achieve far more than isolated initiatives. He stressed that community support and trust were essential, not just for implementing projects but also for ensuring their long-term sustainability.

Mr Kaushik Kumar, Pillar Lead – Environment and Sustainability, HUL, highlighted that the project aimed to build sustainable, resilient communities around HUL factory sites by tackling key environmental challenges. He noted that trust was fostered through capacity development and pilot interventions, ensuring active community involvement at every stage.

Dr Rajesh Kumar, Executive Director, Adarsh Seva Samiti, highlighted the challenges of initiating projects in rural areas, requiring engagement with the Panchayat administration and formal approvals. He noted that 94% of households now segregate waste, supported by a dedicated team, with sustained efforts continuing for the past 18 months.

Mr Amardeep Asati, Project Manager, Parmarth Samaj Sevi Sansthan, emphasized that the local community played a pivotal role in establishing the eco-village model. He highlighted water conservation as a major challenge in the Bundelkhand region and reaffirmed it as a key priority for their efforts.

Dr Heera Lal Patel, IAS, Special Secretary, Irrigation and Water Resources Department, Govt of Uttar Pradesh, stressed that changing community mindsets was essential for building sustainable villages, as long-term success depended on local ownership. He highlighted the need for an integrated approach to water, land, and forest management to foster resilient communities.

Ms Chhaya Bhanti, CEO and Founder, Vertiver Pvt. Ltd., emphasized that the success of sustainability projects relied on understanding community mindsets and building strong data to attract large-scale investments. She highlighted that public-private partnerships depended on credible data and evidence to secure meaningful financial support.

Dr Upasna Singh, Associate Professor, School of Public Policy, IIT Delhi, highlighted ongoing efforts at the Adaptation for Climate Change Centre to understand the effectiveness of climate interventions. She emphasized the need to assess institutional roles at different levels to validate scaling strategies and drive meaningful action.

Mr Vivek Venkatramani, Associate Director, Climate Resilience Practice, WRI, stressed that the success of public-private partnerships depended on ensuring sustainability beyond the initial project phase. He highlighted the



importance of community empowerment and ownership in building long-term resilience, particularly in waste management, agro-based enterprises, and renewable energy solutions like solar power.

Mr Pranab Nayak, Programme Manager, ITC CSR, highlighted the partnership with CGI (2013-2017) to develop the climate-smart village programme, which now benefits 10 lakh farmers across 19 states. He emphasized the government's role in scaling up successful models, enabling expansion from 17 villages to over 10,000 through public-private partnerships.

Ms Tanya Sharma, Senior Manager, Iora Ecological Solutions Pvt. Ltd., highlighted carbon budgeting as a tool to quantify emission reductions and leverage global carbon finance for climate-resilient eco-villages. She noted that converting wet waste into compost and eliminating open dumping led to a reduction of over 200 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent annually, demonstrating significant impact.

The compendium, 'Mainstreaming Climate Resilience for Rural India: A Compendium of Models and Nomenclatures' was launched during the thematic track.

Launches and Announcements



WSDS Special Issue of *TerraGreen* launched during the Inaugural Session of WSDS 2025



Launch of *TERI Energy & Environment Data Diary and Yearbook (TEDDY) 2023-24* on Day 2 of WSDS 2025



Felicitations of Youth Climate Conclave Winner at the Valedictory Session of WSDS 2025



Reading of Youth Pledge at the Valedictory Session of WSDS 2025



TERI and Container Corporation of India Ltd signed a Memorandum of Understanding for jointly setting up 'CONCOR-TERI Centre of Excellence for Green and Sustainable Logistics'



Reading of Act4Earth Manifesto 2025 during the Valedictory Session of WSDS 2025

Special Events



Welcome address by Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, TERI at the Fireside Chat with Prof. Jim Skea, Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change



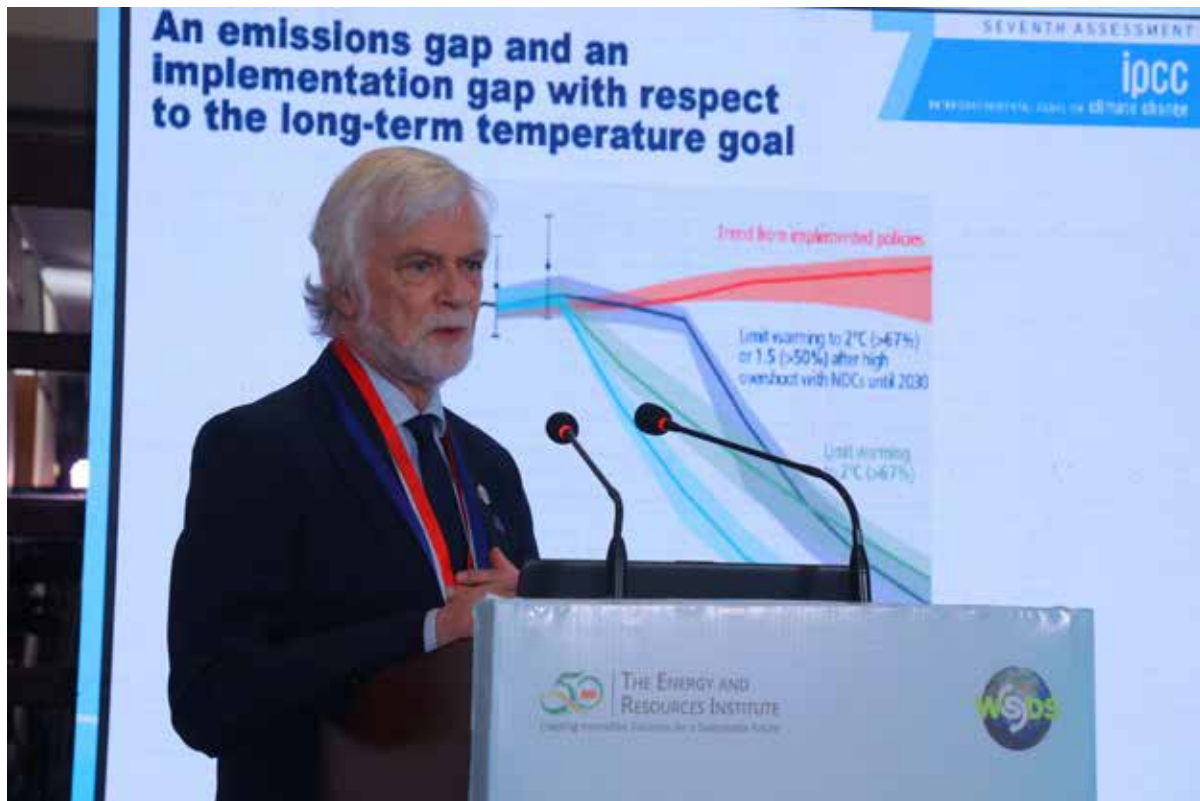
Fireside Chat with Prof. Jim Skea, Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and Amb. Manjeev Singh Puri, Distinguished Fellow, TERI



Fireside Chat with Prof. Jim Skea, Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change



Mr Santhosh Muzumdar, Director of Government Relations and Sustainability, Johnson Controls addressing the participants



Prof. Jim Skea, Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change at CEO Forum



CEO Forum in progress

Act4Earth Manifesto

The 24th Edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS 2025) marks a pivotal moment in global sustainability efforts. As the world faces intensifying climate challenges and widening development gaps, partnerships must take centre stage. Collaboration—across governments, businesses, civil society, and communities—is essential to accelerate solutions, scale innovations, and drive systemic change.

To mobilize action, foster ambition, and enable impactful partnerships, we are launching the **Act4Earth Manifesto 2025**—a renewed commitment to solutions that are just, science-driven, and future-ready. WSDS 2025 has served as a platform to unite global stakeholders, forging pathways for a sustainable and climate-secure future. The time for partnerships is now. The time for action is now.

WE PLEDGE TO ACT4EARTH BY

- 1. Leveraging technology for a low-carbon future:** Through advanced technologies like AI, renewable energy, and climate-smart solutions, we can drive low-carbon growth while protecting nature.
- 2. Healing and nurturing nature:** By integrating knowledge, policy, and innovation for a just and climate-resilient future. Through regional cooperation, ocean and ecosystem restoration, and inclusive action, we will shift from extraction to regeneration, from overconsumption to harmony. Together, we advance nature-inspired solutions that sustain life—on land, in water, and beyond.
- 3. Bridging the gap between financial markets and real-world climate needs:** Enhancing infrastructure and directing investments towards sustainable and effective solutions.
- 4. Establishing an inclusive climate finance framework at COP30:** To build a resilient future, COP30 must ensure predictable funding for developing nations through an inclusive, transparent, and accessible climate finance framework.
- 5. Ensuring climate justice through equitable carbon markets:** Carbon markets must uphold equity and fairness, directing finance and technology transfer to vulnerable communities while maintaining transparency and accountability.
- 6. Strengthening partnerships for climate action:** Among governments, financial institutions, and communities, implementing effective policies and encouraging private sector participation to mobilize national and international funding for impactful climate action.
- 7. Advancing multilateralism and environmental ethics:** Rejecting rampant speciesism while ensuring that economic growth is aligned with green guardianship.
- 8. Powering progress through partnerships:** Scaling up, evaluating impact, ensuring oversight, driving deployment, and shifting behaviours for real change.
- 9. Building resilient infrastructure:** Incorporating lifecycle analysis, disaster resilience components, cooling solutions, and capacity building with stakeholders as key pillars for new resilient infrastructure in the country.
- 10. Embedding sustainable development in policymaking:** Sustainable development must be the blueprint—embedded in policy processes and action, with policies that align, not collide.



Next Steps: Towards the Silver Jubilee

Following the Summit, the team will focus on disseminating the key messages from the 24th edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) through social media, the website, and mailers.

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) launched the Act4Earth initiative at the 21st edition of WSWS, championing climate action and the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Act4Earth comprises two key components: COP30 Compass and SDG Charter. This initiative aims to foster meaningful discussions and drive solutions that strengthen SDG-climate synergies.

Under COP30 Compass, TERI researchers will undertake research and engage with stakeholders on the Road to Belém, examining critical issues in climate negotiations. Meanwhile, under SDG Charter, researchers will focus on advancing dialogue and research on multilateral reforms to enhance global climate governance.

Beyond Act4Earth, the team will also shape the thematic agenda for the landmark 25th edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit—its Silver Jubilee edition—scheduled for 2026.

Gallery

XVIITH CONVOCATION OF TERI SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDIES



CULTURAL EVENING



SESSIONS IN PROGRESS





EXPO AREA





Important Links

WSDS 2025 Website

<https://wsds.teriin.org/2025/>

WSDS 2025 Agenda

<https://wsds.teriin.org/2025/agenda-2025.php>

WSDS 2025 Speakers

<https://wsds.teriin.org/2025/speakers.php>

Act4Earth Manifesto 2025

<https://wsds.teriin.org/2025/act4earth-manifesto.php>

Daily Summit Bulletins

- Day 1: <https://wsds.teriin.org/2025/wsds-2025-day-1-bulletin.php>
- Day 2: <https://wsds.teriin.org/2025/wsds-2025-day-2-bulletin.php>
- Day 3: <https://wsds.teriin.org/2025/wsds-2025-day-3-bulletin.php>

Press Releases

<https://wsds.teriin.org/2025/news-pressrelease.php>

Videos

<https://wsds.teriin.org/2025/video.php>

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Special Initiative



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Outreach Partners



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SUMMIT SERIES (2001–2025)

The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS), launched in 2001 by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) as the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit. WSDS has established itself as a premier agenda-setting platform on sustainable development, rooted in the Global South. Nearing a quarter of a century, WSDS has built a legacy of mobilizing global leadership and thought partners to address pressing environmental challenges.

As the only independently convened international Summit of its kind, WSDS has brought together an influential assembly of 59 Heads of State and Government, 149 Ministers, 13 Nobel Laureates, 2158 Business Leaders, 3730 Speakers, and 41889 Delegates. The Summit plays a pivotal constructivist role in shaping global discourse, fostering climate ambition, and pioneering solutions through a science-policy interface that connects knowledge with action. Through the Act4Earth initiative, WSDS continues to generate impactful knowledge to advance a sustainable and equitable future.

The Summit Overview Document captures key insights from the proceedings, including critical discussions and a 'call to action', offering stakeholders pathways to sustain and amplify the momentum generated at the Summit.

59
Heads of State
and Government

149
Ministers

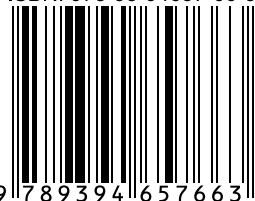
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