



Urban centres of the world are key to achieving SDGs: TERI

It has been estimated that half of the India of 2030 is yet to be built and climate resilient systems need to be integrated into city planning

New Delhi, October 7, 2016: Rapid urbanisation in the country will be one of the most dominant trends in the coming years. It is expected that about 40% of the population in 2030 would be urban as against 30% currently. This key discussion took place during the session “**Sustainable Development Goals and Implications for Cities**” at TERI’s flagship event “**World Sustainable Development Summit**” that carries the theme “**Beyond 2015: People, Planet and Progress**”.

Through this summit, TERI is trying to foster an environment in which governments and stakeholders across sectors can engage in informed discussions and identify their individual and collective roles in achieving sustainable development in line with global climate change mitigation efforts.

It is estimated that half of the urban centres in India that will exist in 2030 are yet to be built, which presents a humungous opportunity for sustainability related interventions. With increasing population density in cities, climate resilient systems need to be developed in urban areas to address climate change impacts. As recognised by the Paris Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals have laid out a roadmap that can ensure an equitable future.

In the opinion of **Dr Shipra Narang Suri, Vice President, General Assembly of Partners toward Habitat III and Co-Chair, World Urban Campaign**, the issues of sustainability, inclusion, and resilience now figure in the global conversation for a better future. There is a pressing need to involve the broadest possible spectrum of stakeholders that can achieve the vision of ‘Cities for All’, as envisioned by the Habitat III agenda.

Talking about Sustainable Development Goals as a roadmap for progress, **Mr Durga Shanker Mishra, Additional Secretary (UD), Ministry of Urban Development, India**, said “Cities contribute to 65% of the GDP, but there are no facilities to cater to the needs of their inhabitants. We need to incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals as indicators for urban development. The only way forward is to involve citizens in city planning, and create an ecosystem that meets the needs of the people”

Highlighting the need for bringing in energy efficient and climate resilient systems in urban areas, **Dr Ajay Mathur, DG, TERI** said, “Sustainable development is the key to ensuring the continued well-being of the people and the planet. SDGs and the Paris Agreement have recognised development imperatives alongside the need to preserve the environment. Being on the path to meeting Sustainable Development Goals is critical to improve the everyday lives of all citizens. It is therefore

important to address the root causes of issues like transport and air quality that are vital to identifying sustainable solutions.”

The session was attended by Mr Yuri Afanasiev, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative; Ms Anita Arjundas, President & CEO, Mahindra Lifespaces; Mr Cyrille Bellier, Deputy Executive Director, Strategy, Partnerships & Communication Directorate, AFD; Mr Andreas Klugescheid, Vice President Governmental Affairs, BMW AG; Dr Shipra Narang Suri, Vice-President, General Assembly of Partners towards Habitat III & Co-Chair, World Urban Campaign; and Ms Xueman Wang, Senior Carbon Finance Specialist, The World Bank, Sustainable Development Network.

Stressing on the need to focus on the business case for development, Ms. Anita Arjundas, President and CEO, Mahindra Lifespaces, said “Competitiveness of the country depends on the prosperity of cities. We need to have public and private entities working together to create an energy efficient model for India’s urban areas.” She was speaking on the occasion of the announcement of TERI-Mahindra Centre of Excellence for research on efficient building designs and green building materials.

WSDS aims to be a common platform to identify opportunities for consensus and collaboration to balance the realities of ecosystem preservation with aspirations for holistic economic development.

The Summit has been witnessing attendance by a range of luminaries from different fields, such as Mr Tomasz Kozlowski, Ambassador of the European Union to India; Mr Karmenu Vella, commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission; Mr Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India), Government of India; Mr Jaco Cilliers, Country Director, UNDP India; Ms Xueman Wang, Senior Carbon Finance Specialist, The World Bank, Sustainable Development Network and Mr Dipak Dasgupta, Former Principal Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance, India & Former Board Member, Green Climate Fund. Taking place from October 5 to 8, 2016, at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, the WSDS is also an attempt to initiate discussions on methodologies to be adopted in order to envisage a plan to realise the Global Goals beyond 2015. The idea is to create a common platform for countries to identify opportunities for consensus and collaboration to balance the realities of ecosystem preservation with aspirations for holistic economic development.

About WSDS

WSDS (World Sustainable Development Summit) has been the flagship conference of TERI since 2001. It is a global forum that seeks to provide long-term solutions to protect this planet. Held annually, WSDS is the only event of its kind in the world with participation by global stakeholders—multilateral and bilateral development organizations, governments, the corporate sector, non-governmental organizations, and academic and research institutions. Now, globally esteemed as a credible summit on global issues related to sustainable development, it continues to provide hope to communities lagging behind on development indicators.

About TERI

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is a leading think tank dedicated to conducting research for sustainable development of India and the Global South. TERI was established in 1974 as an information centre on energy issues. However, over the following decades, it made a mark as a research institute, whose policy and technology solutions transformed people’s lives and the environment. TERI’s key focus lies in promoting clean energy, water management, pollution management, sustainable agriculture and climate resilience.