



World Environment Day 2018 – Sustainable Urban Landscapes & Smart Cities

3 June 2018 (9:00 AM to 12:30 PM)

Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi

Background

Today, more than half of the world's population lives in urban settlements. By 2050, as a result of continued rural-urban migration and population growth, cities are expected to home as much as two thirds of the global population, making urbanization one of the twenty-first century's most transformative trends.

While cities are centres for economic activity, innovation and growth, urban populations impact their environment significantly through their consumption of food, water and energy. Rapid urban growth and unsustainable consumption of natural resources risk to leave cities incapable of responding to the needs of its inhabitants. Without due attention, increased demands on urban environments may lead to poor air quality, waste challenges, and shortages of energy, water and food. Cities consume two thirds of the world's energy and emit more than 70 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Polluted urban environments, in turn, have a significant negative impact on people's health and quality of life. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will, hence, largely depend on environmentally sustainable urban development.

Forty per cent of the Indian population is expected to live in urban settings by 2030. By 2050, India's population is expected to grow to 1.7 billion, adding further pressure on the country's urban capacity. The Government of India's Smart Cities Mission aims to develop 100 model cities that are citizen friendly and sustainable, across the country. 'Smart Cities' use information and communication technology (ICT) to promote sustainable and inclusive development through improving resource efficiency, protecting natural resources, and reducing waste and emissions in an intelligent way. By effectively applying ICTs to support urban solutions, smart cities can be key enablers for achieving the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

On the occasion of the World Environment Day 2018, TERI and the UN Environment Program are organizing a half-day event to bring together multiple stakeholders to highlight key aspects of environmentally sustainable urban development in India, and what it will take to connect these dots.



Session I is planned for 1 hour and will bring together government and UN perspective on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the environmental dimensions of the SDGs. This session will provide a vision for sustainable urbanization in India. How are Smart Cities translating global best practice to local approaches? What can governments do to galvanize action by the various actors? What can the UN system do to help?

Session II is planned for two hours as a panel discussion that will bring together representatives of national and local governments, the UN system, the private sector, NGOs and academia. The discussion will focus on planning and development of environmentally Smart Cities through partnerships among different stakeholders across sectors, communities, and tiers of governance.
