Environment, development closely interlinked: PM

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NEW DELHI, 31 JAN: Protection of the environment and promoting development need not amount to a zero sum game, the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, today said while noting that resource efficiency was a necessary condition for sustainable development.

“What is required is regulatory regimes that are transparent, accountable and subject to oversight and monitoring,” Dr Singh said inaugurating the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). “Indeed, regulatory regimes are often the basic necessary condition to ensure that environmental and economic objectives are pursued in tandem,” he added.

The 13th edition of the DSDS focuses on the theme, The Global Challenge of Resource ~ Efficient Growth and Development. It provides an efficient platform for thought leaders and policymakers to discuss effective policy mechanisms to reduce energy and resource footprint.

“Touching upon several issues linked to sustainable development, including efficient use of resources, climate change and economic growth, the Prime Minister said the global environmental agenda and the global development agenda were now closely inter-linked, with the economic, environmental and social pillars of sustainable development providing a sound framework. “The Rio principles of 1992 are still seen as relevant and fundamental, and were reaffirmed at Rio+20,” he added.

A global growth model, which is inclusive and sustainable, would assist developing countries pursue their objectives, Dr Singh said, calling for enhanced efforts to develop technologies that ensure efficiency gains, which allow for more equitable distribution and use of scarce and available resources.

While talking of efficient use of resources, the Prime Minister alluded to biological diversity, which was an important environmental resource for developing countries and touched the lives of common people. “We have to ensure that this is preserved and used carefully, gainfully and sustainably,” he noted. In this context, he referred to an outcome at the 11th Conference of Parties to the UN Convention on Biodiversity in Hyderabad last year, which was the recognition of biodiversity as a driver of sustainable development and environmental protection and an agreement to create institutional mechanisms that would facilitate financial and technological flows to developing countries for protecting biodiversity, “We hope that the decisions taken will be fully implemented,” he asserted.

Turning to the issue of climate change, Dr Singh said India was committed to meeting its domestic mitigation goal of reducing the emissions intensity of GDP by 20-25 per cent by 2020. Stating that climate change had become the face of many challenges in the India’s pursuit of sustainable development, the Prime Minister asserted that this problem could only be tackled through coordinated global action.

In his address, TERI director general, Dr R K Pachauri said the world was on a path of intensive growth and development, which may go against the objectives of sustainable development.