PM: Growth & environment not mutually exclusive

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Prime Minister Manmohan Singh batted for both environment and development insisting these were not mutually exclusive. "Protecting the environment and promoting development need not amount to a zero sum game," he claimed while inaugurating the Delhi Sustainable Summit organized by The Energy and Resources Institute (Teri).

But in the same breadth he put down the ministry of environment a peg or two when he said that, "What is required is regulatory regimes that are and subject to oversight and monitoring."

Dr Singh also came out forcefully to state that India was committed to meeting its domestic mitigation goal of reducing emissions intensity of GDP by 20-25 per cent by 2020 compared with 2005 levels. Issuing a veiled warning to richer industrialized countries, the Prime Minister observed that if they failed to meet their commitments under the Kyoto Protocol it would be difficult to persuade developing nations, industry and the public at large to follow a low carbon trajectory.

While Dr Singh expressed adoption of a second commitment period till 2020 under the Kyoto Protocol for emission reduction by western nations, he insisted, "Real progress cannot be achieved if developed countries are not willing to enhance their ambition levels." With the Teri summit focusing on Resource-Efficient Growth and Development, Dr Singh also spoke out strongly on the issue of resource accessibility. "Resources may become accessible only to a small section of people leading to the exclusion of a large number of poor people," he said adding "Resource efficiency is a critical element of inclu-..."