The High Level Corporate Dialogue was opened by Dr R K Pachauri by embedding his belief in a Corporate–Government affiliation towards sustainable growth. He said, “We have arrived at a junction, where it’s not just the government and institutions, but the change will be brought about by the corporate sector.”

He further added, “Society and the corporate sector both will have to bear the burden of climate change.” In conclusion, he appealed to the leaders of business and urged all countries to take the lead, not only as a challenge, but for a cleaner and greener way of life.

Mr R Mukundan highlighted that concentration on corporate objectives of social responsibility and economic development must be carried out simultaneously to enable community engagement of corporate sector to bring about a change at different fulcrums of the supply chain.

Mr Rana Kapoor viewed the corporate dialogue as—“The starting point of a marathon, where we get together with our diversities and then walk towards a common goal.” He added that financial institutions serve as the baskets of the economy. He highlighted that YES BANK, voluntarily incorporates “responsive banking” in its functioning and aims towards affiliating with corporates, providing them banking facilities, keeping in mind the impact of climate change.

Dr Henrik O Madsen stated, “Business is being increasingly accepted as a part of sustainable development.” He expressed his
opinion that success in undertaking global risks would help businesses prosper, provided its purpose is aligned with the long-term interest of the community.

Mr Paul Polman expressed his views on India’s potential to become the biggest economy by rising to the challenge. While discussing the initiatives undertaken to reduce the carbon footprint, not only by countries but also by consumers. He expressed his belief that the momentum is building at a faster pace than at any other time in history.

Mr Jayant Sinha highlighted how innovation for sustainability is the true need of the hour. He further added that technology and sustainable growth should complement each other. 

THETMATIC BREAKAWAYS

The High Level Corporate Dialogue (HLCD) provides a platform for industry captains to brainstorm ideas for conducting business while protecting the environment. This year the theme of the HLCD was: ‘Delhi to Paris: Corporate Vision on Climate Change’. Tackling climate change is an inclusive, multi-stakeholder process, and the active participation of the corporate sector is essential. The 10 sessions chaired by Sir Jonathon Porritt, drew a wide range of business actions that were observed across the groups whose priorities were discussed.

Efficient Waste Management

Co-Chair: Mr Suketu Shah, Managing Director, Oxive Environmental Management Pvt Ltd

The discussion focused on the ways to call for a corporate outlook towards efficient waste management.

Improving the Efficiency of Energy Use

Co-Chair: Mr R Mukundan, Managing Director, TOSA Chemicals Ltd

The discussion focused on improving the efficiency of energy use. As their short-term priority, the group envisioned a plan to increase the specific energy efficiency by 30 per cent across all industry sectors. The group’s long-term priorities included development of conducive financing and procurement policies for improving energy efficiency in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMES), voluntary reporting by the industry intended to enable informed decision making by policymakers on issues such as phasing out of subsidies on conventional energy, and increasing the level of green energy production from six per cent to 30 per cent by 2030.

Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change

Co-Chair: Mr Venkatesh Kini, President, Coca-Cola India

The discussion focused on adaptation. The group agreed that adoption of a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approach will indeed help identify the climate risks based on geography, and that a thrust be given on corporate governance, creation of standards for credit and insurance, ways of assessing risks, and stakeholder engagements by businesses for awareness. Adaptation measures to assist in measuring and strategizing actions were explored.

Ensuring Water Availability in a Changing Climate

Co-Chair: Ms Naina Lal Kidwai, Chairman, HSBC India & Executive Director on the board of HSBC Asia-Pacific & Ms Namita Vikas, Senior President & Country Head, Responsible Banking, YES BANK

The discussion focused on the problem of water scarcity in India and how the water footprint of corporates could be reduced.

The group arrived at a consensus that measurement of water footprints within and across the business value chain and aggressive implementation of measures to improve water use efficiency will comprise the set of short-term goals. The long-term goals include the introduction of water pricing through market mechanisms and forging industry partnership with government to minimize water usage in the agriculture sector.

Financing the Energy Transition and Sustainable Development

Co-Chairs: Ms Naina Lal Kidwai, Chairman, HSBC India & Executive Director on the board of HSBC Asia-Pacific & Ms Namita Vikas, Senior President & Country Head, Responsible Banking, YES BANK

The discussion focused on financing the sustainable energy transition in
India. One of the short-term goals stressed by the group was to include RE/EE programmes specifically in priority sector lending from financial institutions. The pros and cons of Green Bonds in the Indian context were discussed. The importance of private finance was highlighted as well as the need for stability in government regulations to facilitate this.

**Expanding the Use of Renewable Energy**

Co-Chair: Mr Ardesher Contractor, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer, Kiran Energy Solar Power Pvt. Ltd

The discussion focused on the steps required to improve the share of clean and renewable energy, and how industries can support the ‘Make in India’ campaign by investing in renewable energy sector manufacturing. The group deliberated on the success of the level of implementation of existing guidelines and policies, thus calling for a holistic approach.

**Sustainable Buildings**

Co-Chair: Mr Ajit Gulabchand, Chairman & Managing Director, Hindustan Construction Company Ltd

The group explored the role of corporate India to ensure that sustainability imperatives are embedded in the planning and execution of city development. The group also emphasized the role of education and capacity-building of employees, customers, vendors, technocrats, financial institutions, and bureaucrats. The group urged TERI and USGBC to create solutions to implement smart cities, encouraging quarterly corporate dialogues.

**Towards Sustainable Mobility**

Co-Chair: Mr Anil Kumar Gupta, Chairman & Managing Director, Container Corporation of India Ltd

The group discussed the changes that might be required to help in integrated transport planning for emerging industrial clusters/mining areas around the country. The short-term goals included the need for legislation up to the last mile. The long-term goal comprised improving the capability for sustainable transport systems, incentivizing development of railways, and considering transport systems as a backbone for long-distance transport systems.

**Ensuring and Expanding Access to Energy**

Co-Chair: Mr Roop Salotra, President & CEO, SRF Ltd

The group discussed customized solutions to suit the needs and promotion of energy efficient technologies among the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Low-carbon technologies in SMEs embody a strong relation with suppliers and focus on CSR initiatives. Mr Onno Rühl, Country Director of World Bank India, illustrated the Bangladesh Solar energy system which portrays a successful model of engagement in the supply chain.

**Low-Carbon Technology in SMEs**

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**Concluding Session Panelists**

(L-R) Dr Bindu N Lohani, Dr Ajay Mathur, Mr Onno Rühl, Sir Jonathan Powrit, Dr Henrik O Madsen, Mr Susheel Kumar & Dr R K Pachauri
Ms Marianne Jensen said that the aim of the workshop was to determine how the corporate sector can create a water safe sustainable society. For wastewater management and river cleaning, the speakers recommended—implementation of efficient water management strategies; efficient use of sludge for fertilizer and energy; improved rainwater harvesting systems for groundwater augmentation; water and environment-related courses in colleges and universities; lifecycle cost analysis for wastewater treatment systems; and sticking to proven technologies and higher standards. The workshop concluded with the note that the corporate sector should be keen on enhancing water use efficiency.

The track included sessions on: ‘Integrating Environment Sustainability Framework’ and the ‘Role of ICT in technology deployment in the Government of India’s 100 smart city agenda’. Dr M Ramachandran emphasized the need for empowering and building specialized capacity at the urban local body level. Mr Amitabh Kant highlighted the need for embedding cities with public transportation, effective water and waste management, good information flow combined with smart governance as instruments for building smart cities. The discussions also explored the role of open data approaches, performance measurement, collaboration with a variety of stakeholders, and the need for foreseeing challenges while formulating policy.

In the second session chaired by Ms Mili Majumdar, a combination of planned infrastructure and ICT and increased use of renewable energy were discussed as elements of smart cities. Various applications of ICT which have been experimented in cities like Jaipur, Beijing, Chandigarh, and Lavasa were discussed.

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The session was moderated by Ms Shereen Bhan, Managing Editor, CNBC-TV 18. It was an interactive session and questions were posed by the moderator to Mr Paul Polman, Chief Executive Officer, Unilever & Chairman, WBCSD; Mr Bibek Debroy, Member, NITI Aayog; and Dr R K Pachauri, Director-General, TERI & President, TERI BCSD.

The moderator posed a question on the criticisms that led to the expulsion of 657 companies from UN-global enterprises. Mr Paul Polman highlighted the reasons that led to their expulsion, which included recklessness of regulations, and also emphasized the need for institutions to continue helping internal environments to reduce carbon footprint, water problem, insecurity, and so on.

Next, Ms Shereen Bhan asked what fastest growing economies should do in order to protect their environment and natural resources. To this, Mr Paul Polman cited various foreign aids that could facilitate this.

The other question posed by the moderator was about how India intends to balance environment and the upcoming developmental visions, such as smart cities, digital India, and electricity for all. In response, Mr Bibek Debroy reflected upon the annual per capita income (US $1,600) of India and urged the developed nations to open up their markets. He also expressed concerns about the direct general benefits to the population.

The session concluded with a question on the expectations from Paris. Dr R K Pachauri responded by strongly emphasizing the importance of climate change mitigation measures for a better environment.