



# WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2019

**ATTAINING THE 2030 AGENDA: DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISE**

February 11-13, 2019 | India Habitat Centre,  
Lodhi Road, New Delhi, India



## Key Takeaways

### WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2019 THE WAY FORWARD

By this time next year, in 2020, we would have exactly one decade left to make good on the 2030 promise. The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) 2019 was essentially a loud and decisive clarion call – to governments, corporations, thinkers, influencers, policymakers across the globe, naturally – but also to cultures and individuals, economies, and communities.

The message was clear – it is time to pull ourselves up by the bootstraps, draw a long breath, and get ready for a decade long sprint to the 2030 Agenda deadline. Five areas were identified to streamline global efforts along, which defined the mega themes of the Summit – Climate, Environment, Energy, Habitat, and Resource Efficiency.

Here are the key learnings the delegates took home after three days of intense and instructive deliberations.



**Land, air and water** – the formative elements of a robust environment, have to be preserved and protected with the responsible care of the ancients, while employing the tools and strategies that the modern challenges demand. Many speakers, most notably the Hon'ble Vice President of India, appealed to us all to reacquaint ourselves with the sustainability ethos which was the hallmark of all ancient civilizations, especially the Eastern Cultures.



**Transitioning to cleaner fuels** is critical for us to climb down to the safe global warming threshold of 1.5 °C. Everything from decarbonization efforts, to climate finance, to the technological innovations this necessitates – has this common end in sight. The future is solar energy, and India leads the way. Clean energy forms the core of sustainability efforts as it strikes at the heart of climate change – all other efforts serve as supplementary to this.



**Climate Finance** has to be ramped up. The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) form the lynchpin of the Paris Agreement. If countries, especially from the developing world, are to meet these contribution goals, we have to quickly find ways to place readily available financing at their disposal. Emission-intensity reduction, non-fossil electric capacity, increasing carbon sink – such contributions need policy frameworks and technical know-how, necessitating smooth financing.



**Resilient Cities** – Smart urbanization is safe urbanization. At a time when extreme weather events are on the rise with air and water contamination besides land degradation preying on the health of denizens – cities can become dangerous places to live indeed. Cities with robust infrastructure that can facilitate efficient mobility are key to the future.



**Climate vulnerable countries** like small island nations have to be taken along on this journey. “As they say in Fiji, we’re all in the same canoe”, said PM Frank Bainimarama of Fiji while accepting the 2019 Sustainable Development Leadership Award from TERI. These countries are the litmus paper for the world to gauge the advances of climate deterioration – securing their present amounts to securing the future of the planet at large.



**Sustainable Development equals equity** – Overdevelopment for some and underdevelopment for numberless others, are the twin banes of the world. We’re realizing that poverty mitigation is impossible without climate justice. Conversely, the co-benefits of climate justice and sustainable growth progressively encroach upon the space for poverty and get accrued to all sections of society.



**Safe, just societies** only can fight climate change. Inclusivity, social cohesion, and security, cultivate an environment where the best of human possibilities blossom. Such conditions in a society are conducive to sustainable development as they can tap into the full power of human potential and cooperation.



**Emerging economies** will show the way. The developing world, particularly India and China, sees a golden opportunity in sustainable growth and development to leapfrog over the shoulders of the West – this impetus alone can reassure us that developing nations accord high priority to climate action. The SDGs will be accomplished as the world at large is pulled along in the slipstream of the rapidly developing economies’ tremendous sustainability efforts.