

## Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2009 Highlights

The summit called for a global concerted effort to enable transition to low carbon economies, and enhance adaptive capacities of vulnerable communities through sustainable financing mechanisms and technological resources. Themed '*Towards Copenhagen: an equitable and ethical approach*' the DSDS 2009 saw participation of stakeholders from various parts of the world comprising of Head of States, representatives from multilateral and bilateral development organisations, governments, the corporate sector, non-governmental organisations, academia, Nobel Laureates and research institutions.

The three- day summit explored options for an ethics based framework for future climate regime addressing Adaptation and Mitigation challenges, especially in the developing countries and the Africa region. On the adaptation front, the Summit explored priorities, capacity building needs and adaptation measures in Asia and Africa.

The International Climate Change Exhibition (ICCE) and the curtain raiser to DSDS 09, The World CEO Forum were inaugurated by Sh. Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State for Commerce, Industry and Power. The ICCE saw participation of around 61 major companies, International NGOs and government agencies like French Pavilion, Cleantech, Finland, Philips Electronics India Limited, Freeplay, Nokia, ONGC, GTZ, and The Royal Norwegian Embassy. The exhibition demonstrated new technologies, products, and services aimed at mitigating greenhouse gas emissions.

Themed 'Climate Change - Fast tracking business action', the World CEO Forum, discussed corporate initiatives to tackle climate change. Over 100 CEO's and business leaders from across the globe identified the best practices and the ways forward for participation of the business community in combating climate change, especially in the context of the current economic downturn. Recognising the urgency to generate awareness and build consensus on the climate change agenda in India, prior to the Summit, TERI-BCSD India held a corporate consultation, with the 84 member companies of the Business Council, on NAPCC to highlight business role towards the eight missions. It includes options, potentials, costs and co-benefits involved in these missions and highlight the need for business sector actions to integrate adaptation and mitigation options in their corporate planning. The popular version of the document was tabled during the curtain raiser session.

On February 5, Sh. Pranab Mukherjee, Hon' ble Minister for External Affairs, officially inaugurated DSDS 2009. HE Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General United Nations, received TERI's Sustainable Development Leadership award for 2009 for his pioneering work on climate change. Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, Princess, Kingdom of Thailand; HE Ms Tarja Halonen, President of Finland; HE Mr Anote Tong, President of the Republic of Kiribati; HE Mr Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia; HE Mr Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General, United Nations; HE Mr Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, Former President of Maldives and HE Mr Moritz Leuenberger, Former President of Switzerland were present at the inaugural.

The summit had ministerial presence from over two dozen countries where thought provoking discussions on the politics of global cooperation in combating climate change were addressed. Ministers from UAE, Japan, India, Germany, Norway, Egypt, Bhutan,

Czech Republic, Switzerland, Sweden and Finland stressed on creating a timely shared vision -- based on the tenets of common but differentiated responsibility, and a need of cooperation amongst ministers of environment and finance towards creating a negotiated consensus on more carbon-efficient economies. A need to integrate climate change and development finance, resulting in stronger financial transfers to developing countries was expressed. Also the necessity of including critical social and economic issues such as food security, livelihood and poverty issues, within the ambit of climate change negotiations was emphasised.

Day two discussed key challenges in Africa. African leaders, especially the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, leaders from Mozambique, Mali and Rwanda stressed that without the financial support from the developed world, climate change and humanitarian dimensions in their part of the world cannot be addressed. Some of the strategies in their national action plans to combat climate change include mobilisation of financial resources for adaptation measures, creation of environmental infrastructure, simplification of CDM procedures, transfer of technologies, and measures for addressing the impact on health from climate change. There was also an overwhelming affirmation that the promises of development aid to Africa from the developed world have not been fulfilled. Hence these countries explored the possibility of a - *South cooperation with Indian and China*, which have more appropriate experience and technologies to share.

Nobel Laureates Mr. Kofi Annan, Prof Mario J Molina and Dr James A Mirrlees highlighted the mechanisms for effective commitment and agreement, and the financial challenges in the 'Road to Copenhagen'. They stressed for a need for an alternate institution which could implement carbon taxation and cap trade in an equitable and agreeable manner. Mr. Kofi Annan in his address emphasized on the "polluter pays" principle, those who are polluting the most must pay the cost.

Day three emphasised that climate change is here to stay and that we must act now. Developing countries are the major victims of climate change even though they are not responsible for causing it and social development and poverty eradication are the first overriding priorities. Institutions must adapt to changes, though there are limits of adaptation given the manageable conditions and the tipping points.

Overall, by bringing together the important players from various sectors and focusing on essential building blocks, DSDS 2009 identified key challenges and opportunities resulting due to climate change, the global response required, and the actions to enhance financial resources and transfer of technology.