

CONCEPT NOTE – MINISTERIAL SESSION

Leadership in Developing Countries: Reconciling Opportunities and Challenges of Climate Resilient Development

Day: 17 February, 2022 (Thursday)

Time: 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm (IST) | [Click here](#) for time in your location

Overview

According to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), adaptation is defined as the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate change and its effects. Resilience, conversely, is defined as the “the ability of a social or ecological system to absorb disturbances while retaining the same basic structure and ways of functioning, the capacity of self-organization, and the capacity to adapt to stress and change”. Due to the accumulated greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, as well as the phenomenon of Earth’s inertia, climate change impacts in the form of extreme weather events are felt all over the world.

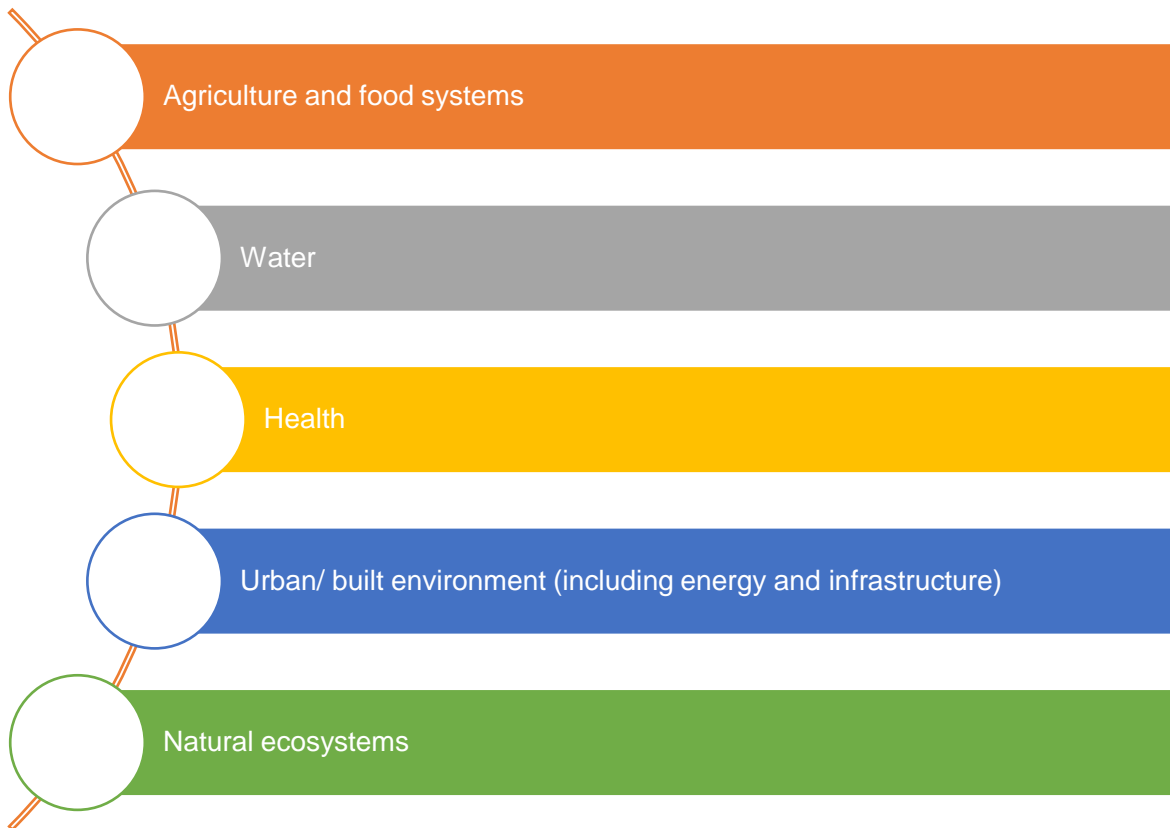
By altering and intensifying risk patterns, climate change and the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated other stressors such as poverty, and inequities, impacting livelihoods, infrastructure and ecosystems, as well as threatening the ability of countries to achieve their sustainable development goals. Hence, building adaptive capacities and resilience, especially for the most vulnerable and low-lying countries, becomes crucial. Although strides have been made to include mitigation in the context of the Paris Agreement temperature goals, adaptation and resilience have traditionally not been treated on the same footing as mitigation.

Resilience is the capacity of a system, be it an individual, a forest, a city or an economy, to deal with change and continue to develop. It is about how humans and nature can use shocks and disturbances like a financial crisis or climate change to spur renewal and innovative thinking. The integration of adaptation and mitigation responses can generate mutual benefits, as well as introduce co-benefits with development policies. In many cases, reducing the risk of climate change can enhance management of other risks, as well. According to IPCC, the scope for adaptation and resilience is decreasing with time, and it will be difficult to act once the limits to adaptation are crossed.

Need for a systemic approach to address greater vulnerability of developing countries

In developing countries, livelihoods and socioeconomic activities depend on climate sensitive sectors. Thus, developing countries are vulnerable to climate variability. Climate vulnerability coupled with poverty and increasing inequalities makes interventions important despite the challenges. Effects of climate change lead to decelerating development and less developed regions tend to have a weaker adaptive capacity and are more prone to climate impacts thus leading to a vicious cycle. To ensure a climate resilient development, it is crucial to consider issues that are complex, interconnected, and require interventions at the temporal and spatial levels. Five systems are crucial: (1) agriculture and food systems; (2) water; (3) health; (4) urban/ built environment; (5) natural ecosystems.

Crucial systems for climate resilience



International initiatives largely focus on resilience of the built environment. For developing countries, it is also essential that there is a larger focus on systems with a larger bearing on livelihoods as well as socioeconomic implications such as agriculture & food systems and health along with natural ecosystems, water and urban systems. Although the role of the public sector is crucial, it is also important to augment the role of the private sector and incentivize their involvement in resilience including through nature based solutions.

Role of multi-stakeholder processes

International cooperation is an important link to provide critical support to partner countries in the form of finance, technical know-how, as well as capacity building. The public and private sectors, civil society organisations, communities and households all play important roles in addressing these challenges to achieve climate-resilient development that benefits the most vulnerable. Developing countries require urgent access to long-term, affordable finance to implement climate-resilient recovery measures.

Guiding Questions

1. What are the major opportunities and challenges faced by developing countries in taking systemic and multi-stakeholder approaches to mainstream resilience into development planning? Please share experiences from your country.
2. Can there be a business case for climate resilience measures for systems such as agriculture and food systems, health, vulnerable segments in cities and nature based solutions? If yes, are there any best practices on this?

3. How can climate resilience be synergized with discussions on Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation?
4. How can international cooperation lead to ‘far-reaching actions’ so that benefits percolate to the grassroots through measures at national, state, and community levels.
5. What are the limits to resilience? Has time come to talk about ‘strategic retreat’ and compensatory mechanisms?

Format of the Session

The session will involve a moderated discussion which will start with remarks (4–5 minutes) by the Chair/moderator. The Chair will then invite each speaker to deliver the Ministerial Address for 5–6 minutes. After this, a 15-minute rapid fire round will follow where the moderator/ chair asks 2 questions based on issues emerging from the discussions and asks for a ‘one sentence answer’ from all speakers in the panel. Strict time management is to be followed. There will be an on-screen timer for the same.

Session Speakers

Moderator

- Dr Prodipto Ghosh, Distinguished Fellow, TERI

Ministerial Addresses

- Dr Yasmine Fouad, Hon’ble Minister, Ministry of Environment, Egypt
- Ms Khadeeja Naseem, Hon'ble Minister of State for Environment, Climate Change and Technology, Maldives
- Ms Mariam bint Mohammed Saeed Hareb Almheiri, Hon’ble Minister, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, United Arab Emirates

Special Addresses

- Mr Seydou Bari SIDIBE, Advisor to the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Republic of Guinea
- Dr Junaid Kamal Ahmad, India Country Director, The World Bank
- Mr Kamal Kishore, Member Secretary, National Disaster Management Authority