YOUTH PLENARY

CLIMATE JUSTICE AS THE NORTH STAR FOR INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY

Speakers
Ms Heeta Lakhani, Founder & Director, The ClimAct Foundation
Ms Prachi Shevgaonkar, Founder, Cool the Globe
Mr Ivan Ransom, Founder, Resilience 2020 - Mexico
Ms Sunaina Saxena, Editorial Team, TERI School of Advanced Studies

Moderator
Dr Ash Pachauri, Founder, POP Movement

Venue: Stein Auditorium

The “Youth Plenary: Climate Justice as the North Star for Intergenerational Equity” was a dynamic and inspiring session that brought together a diverse panel of youth leaders and how the young minds in the panel will speak on solution-oriented change and inspiring actions.

Ms Prachi Shevgaonkar, Founder, Cool the Globe, explained how it all started for her when she was a student and with her father, she was able to produce 10% reduction in individual carbon footprints. Her effort ‘Cool the Globe’ emphasizes on the transformative impact of collective actions. She asserts that the real power of climate action lies in unity and converting it to opportunities and change on ground. Ms Heeta Lakhani, Founder & Director of The ClimAct Foundation, emphasized the need to empower young people for leadership in climate negotiations. Her organization trains youth to become youth negotiators who further delve at important platforms such as COP. Mr Ivan Ransom, Founder of Resilience 2020 in Mexico, shared insights of his initiative in Eco Technologies while promoting autonomy and sustainability. The speakers believed that climate justice is at the centre stage in all what they are setting their contributions, and fostering collaboration, the session underscored the pivotal role of youth in shaping a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

In conclusion, the Youth Plenary acted as a platform for mobilizing and recognizing the potential of young people in addressing climate crisis. By amplifying their voices, recognizing their contributions, and fostering collaboration, the session underscored the pivotal role of youth in shaping a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

The session included launch of TERI School of Advanced Studies (TERI SAS) magazine Vasundhara themed “EquiClimate-Vulnerabilities if Vulnerables”, introduced by Ms Sunaina Saxena, Editorial Team, TERI SAS. In addition, the presentation of Youth Plenary awards and GO-WSDS certificates recognized the commitment of young participants to climate activism and leadership. The session concluded with felicitating the “Cool it for the Climate” competition awardees.
The world is on the brink of a polycrisis and women continue to be invariably underrepresented in decision-making positions. There must be greater emphasis on gender equality, women leadership, and entrepreneurship for the SDGs to combat this polycrisis. Women’s participation and leadership in the green sector will bring enhanced cooperation, collaboration, and inclusivity that are essential to meet climate targets. However, the stark gender disparity in political, economic, and social spheres continue to act as barriers in women’s participation and contribution, thereby restricting their growth and development. With environmental and climate spillovers in recent times, women’s critical role as climate action leaders needs acknowledgment and encouragement. A gender lens to understand women’s role in achieving enhanced climate outcomes and innovation is necessary. Gender equality and equity with more women in leadership positions can ensure improved strategies in solving sustainability issues. Transitioning to green development requires more women as leaders, investors, and entrepreneurs. Diversity in perspectives, lived experiences, and approaches brought about by women makes their involvement in participatory policymaking for climate action and sustainability more critical.

The session deliberated on challenges and actionable solutions in advancing women’s leadership in climate action and SDG progression. The session also examined the role of women from the lens of bio-economics.

Launch of TSAS Vasundhara Magazine
A growing interest in ESG has promoted greater interest and enhanced engagements between investors and businesses. Development, and these included greater focus on financing would help businesses accelerate their actions on sustainable.

The panellists emphasized that behavioural change, within employees of corporates is another crucial starting point to enhance sustainability momentum. There is a need for corporates to internalize sustainability and climate change practices that require sensitising employees about clean and green practices. Discussions also revolved around skilling the next generation of individuals to help build and sustain resilient human resource that can easily adapt to future job requirements and changes.

The session concluded with the launch of the TERI CBS video highlighting the steps being undertaken by companies to decarbonize their operations.

Key pillars that would help businesses accelerate their actions on sustainable development include greater focus on financing green projects, improved company disclosures on sustainability, and enhanced engagements between investors and businesses.

There is a need to improve project execution framework. If we want to achieve the goal of having 175 GW of renewable energy by 2030, then it is necessary to have better framework for contract enforceability that will accelerate the business commitment.

There is a need to focus on policy alignment and legal frameworks... Long-term agreements need to become flexible to help account for the changes in technologies, and the resulting drop in tariffs that may take place.

There is a need to ensure holistic development and a happy sustainable organization where there is diversity and green inclusive leadership.

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The plenary session titled “Spotlight: Energy Transitions for People, Peace, Prosperity and our Planet” brought to the fore that India has emerged as a leader in climate action. With this premise and perspective in place, “Energy Transitions for People, Peace, Prosperity and our Planet” was aptly called the spotlight session at the 23rd edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS). The address delivered by Shri R K Singh, Hon’ble Cabinet Minister (Power, New & Renewable Energy), Government of India highlighted how India has been a champion in energy transition and climate action. “Forty-four per cent of India’s power generation capacity is from non-fossil sources (renewables),” pointed out the minister. He added how “India is one of the lowest emitters of greenhouse gases in the world and will always remain so.”

A special announcement at the end of the session unravelled the intention of an MoU (memorandum of understanding) signing between the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) for setting up the Centre of Energy Transition in Hyderabad.

Certificate distributions in Youth Plenary
The session emphasized the necessity of integrating individual behaviours into global efforts to address sustainability challenges. It acknowledged that consumption-driven development models, particularly prevalent in the Global South, are unsustainable and require a shift towards more holistic approaches. Participants stressed the importance of nature-based solutions, blending progress with nature, and India’s role in showcasing alternative development models.

Furthermore, the session highlighted the interconnectedness of environmental, social, and economic issues, advocating for a multidimensional approach to problem-solving. It called for collaboration among governments, businesses, researchers, and stakeholders to foster sustainable practices and lifestyles.

Key points included simplifying processes for individuals to make sustainable choices, promoting nature-based solutions, and recognizing the interconnectedness of environmental problems. Additionally, the session emphasized the role of technology in upstream and midstream efforts such as resource efficiency and circular economy.

Participants underscored the need for a global campaign to promote understanding of sustainable lifestyles, emphasizing lifecycle approaches to consumption and production. They called for a focus on downstream components of value chains, lifecycle approaches to consumption and production. They promote understanding of sustainable lifestyles, emphasizing positive behavioural changes, and supporting the development of new business models for sustainability.

For the sake of tackling climate crisis and ensuring food security, I believe there is no single solution that resolves everything. But I am sure that further communication and collaboration amongst researchers and stakeholders in various sectors will be crucial.
The valedictory session of the World Sustainable Development Summit 2024 marked the culmination of three days of intensive discussions, collaborative engagements, and visionary leadership towards addressing the pressing challenges of sustainable development and climate justice. As the flagship convening by TERI, the Summit has been at the forefront of shaping global conversations on sustainability for over two decades. Against the backdrop of a world grappling with a multitude of crises, including planetary emergencies, setbacks in achieving sustainable development goals, and escalating conflicts, the valedictory session underscored the urgency of promoting environmental stewardship at all levels and across all spheres. The umbrella theme of the Summit, “Leadership for Sustainable Development and Climate Justice,” resonated throughout the session as leaders reaffirmed their commitment to driving ambitious action towards a more sustainable and equitable future.

Leadership plays a pivotal role in driving the necessary transformations to achieve SDGs and ensure climate justice. Guided by climate ethics that involve intergenerational responsibility, actions acknowledge the obligation to safeguard the planet and demand a holistic approach that integrates ethical considerations and values. Achieving sustainable development demands concerted efforts involving governments, the corporate sector, communities, and citizens. Forward-thinking leadership and effective management are indispensable across all sectors, ensuring the integration of climate-sensitive objectives into strategic initiatives and decision-making.

As the Summit drew to a close, participants embraced the call to action, pledging to work collaboratively to implement the outcomes and recommendations set forth during the event. The Valedictory Session presented key messages for the pathway is and how to evolve along such a pathway. We need far more work and effort by the global scientific community to actually develop the scenarios that show us what the necessary legislations. These things make ambitious bold goals and pass the necessary legislation. The message is loud and clear—addressing the policy crisis requires polycentric leadership. The proceedings over the past three days delved into various topics such as the energy trilemma, climate solutions, ecosystem-based approaches, as well as the energy trilemma, climate solutions, ecosystem-based approaches, as well as sustainable development, nature and ecosystem-based approaches, as well as sustainable lifestyles and consumption. The message is loud and clear—addressing the policy crisis requires polycentric leadership. The proceedings over the past three days delved into various topics such as the energy trilemma, climate solutions, ecosystem-based approaches, as well as sustainable development, nature and ecosystem-based approaches, as well as sustainable lifestyles and consumption. The message is loud and clear—addressing the policy crisis requires polycentric leadership.