

# Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2001

Poverty: the global challenge for governments, industry, scientists, and civil society

Organized by TERI, New Delhi, 7-9 February 2001

Online at <http://www.teriin.org/dsds>

## Highlights . . .

From the Director, TERI . . .

Two days of the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit have gone by and a number of themes and approaches have been discussed both in the broad area of sustainable development as well as on the specifics of poverty alleviation. It would, perhaps, be inadequate and unjustified to draw a single common thread from the deliberations that have taken place, but one theme that seems to have run through these two days relates to the ethics, values, and philosophy that should drive human actions towards sustainable development. A message that seems to be getting clearer is that while economic forces and social pressures would be paramount in determining human actions in the 21st century, rediscovering certain ethical principles and values that society seems to have abandoned would be a critical prerequisite. If this be the case, then, perhaps, our efforts should focus on a much larger scale in arousing a global response towards a new ethical

era in growth and development and, particularly, as economic and societal pressures promote higher and higher consumption. Perhaps one reason why the period since the Rio Summit has not yielded desired results is because a new ethic to govern human behaviour has not really developed. Therefore, we need to direct our intellectual and organizational resources to meeting this single objective. However, poor nations cannot be denied opportunities for a dignified level of existence. They would have to consume more goods and services, placed as they are at the lowest rung of consumption today. But even the poor need to address the challenge of conservation of natural resources. They certainly have the right ethics for combining the two objectives effectively.



(R K Pachauri)

In brief . . .

### Keynote address 4: Dr Sam Pitroda

Dr Sam Pitroda described poverty as a challenge for governments, industry, scientists, and civil society, and expressed his concern at India moving into the 21st century with high levels of poverty. He focused on the importance of technology in poverty eradication and in meeting basic needs of health and housing. He felt the issue of poverty could be addressed only to a small extent by technology, policies, personal initiatives, and luck; the main thrust, had to be in controlling population growth and increasing literacy. Dr Pitroda described education as the fundamental agency to change mindsets and facilitate development. Dr Pitroda concluded by stressing that the key challenge today was that of providing the rewards of technology to the real stakeholders.

### Plenary session 2: Science, Technology, and Enterprise Development for the Poor

Prof. Y K Alagh highlighted the importance of technology and requirements of organizational and financial rules for poverty alleviation. Prof. Yoichi Kaya remarked on the necessity of a cooperative effort in the field of technology adaptation or technology innovation with equal contributions from the developed and the developing world.

Dr Joe Madiath emphasized the importance of renewable energy technologies for providing electricity to remote areas and of communication technologies (satellite telephone) for ensuring connectivity of the rural areas.

Mr David J Stanton stressed the role of small- and medium-scale enterprises in creating significant commercial and employment opportunities in developing countries.

Dr Joachim Treusch said that scientific success and technical implementation of some of the most important areas of research in the 21st century are based on sound knowledge base in physics.

### Plenary session 3: Corporate Social Responsibility and Poverty Alleviation

Mr Bjorn Stigson highlighted the various initiatives taken by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development to facilitate CSR (corporate social responsibility). He emphasized the need for business to undertake CSR in a spirit of enlightened self-interest. Mr Adrian R A Court described the growing importance of socially responsible investment. He stressed that the criteria for screening these investments should reflect investor values, which are culture-specific.

Mr Tejendra Khanna emphasized that in view of the low level of social infrastructure in India and the limited budgetary resources of the government, business had a responsibility to contribute to social investments. Dr Ritu Kumar mentioned a recent initiative of TERI-Europe to catalogue the current CSR practices in India and develop capacity-building modules to foster its wider acceptance. Dr Sophia Tickell emphasized that CSR should not be synonymous with corporate philanthropy but should be about structural moves towards poverty eradication.

### Luncheon address: Dr Wakako Hironaka

Dr Joachim Treusch highlighted the need to improve education, especially in rural areas. Dr Wakako Hironaka expressed her sympathy over the Gujarat tragedy. Comparing it with a

similar earthquake in Kobe, Japan, she said that the tragedy had sensitized Japan to city planning, fire regulations, R&D improvements, and earthquake-resistant buildings. She ascribed environmental destruction to a combination of factors such as population, poverty, and economic growth in the absence of regulatory measures. Expressing concern over the rapid degradation of the environment, she said global issues related to environment required immediate address. Lack of coordination, poor governance, and conflict among actors had hamstrung proper action. Joint efforts between developing and developed countries would greatly help alleviate poverty. She also stressed on the importance of forming a principle that tackles conflicting interests and designing a sustainable model that pursues common ethics.

Plenary session 4: Effective Governance and Communications for Promoting Sustainable Development

All the speakers expressed the urgent need to demystify the concept of sustainable development such that it becomes people-centred. Ambassador Mitsuhei Morata linked sustainable development to a civic sense of ethics, justice, and responsibility. He also said that nations lacked a sense of commitment and responsibility towards sustainable development. Research should be able to reach and be understood by the very people for whom it is intended. Prof. Kauffman stressed that utilization of research has to be preceded by the creation of an appropriate policy and legal framework, transparency of process, enforcement of law, and creation of educational capabilities. Dr Brenda Gael McSweeney highlighted the need for strengthening the cooperation between civil society and governments. The role of bringing the two together has to be played by the media. It has to invest more time and effort in understanding sustainable development and accord it high priority. Dr Leena Srivastava summed up the proceedings by reiterating the importance of effective governance to sustainable development.

Keynote address 5: Mr Tsutomu Makino

The Hon'ble Minister of Power, GoI, Mr Suresh Prabhu, emphasized that the greatest challenge today is to eradicate poverty while simultaneously ensuring sustainable development. Mr Makino's speech was primarily drawn from three examples on the relationship between the economy and industrial technology in post-war Japan, namely the miniaturization of technology, technologies for energy conservation, and

environment-friendly technologies. Mr Makino discussed the industrial policies, before and after the 1990, that played crucial role in the above technological developments. He spoke on the brief history and role of NEDO in sustainable development based on fostering human resources, technologies and ideas, industries and businesses, and technology transfer.

Dinner addresses: Mr Arun Jaitley, Mr P Chidambaram, and Mr Björn Stigson

Mr A Jaitley, Minister for Law, Justice, and Company Affairs, GoI, said that even though we have the necessary legislation in place, the current necessity is to create a greater awareness on the need to protect the environment. Mr Stigson said that environmental concerns earlier seen as problems by industries are now viewed as opportunities. He hoped to see the Indian business community active internationally on environmental issues. Striking a note of discordance, Mr P Chidambaram said we should see sustainable development from the perspective of a poor country. The poor will relate to sustainable development only if their basic needs are met and they are assured of a dignified existence. Human development is a prerequisite to sustainable development. For India, growth is imperative, though a high price might have to be paid in terms of more pollution and ecological degradation.

As they said it . . .

'Technology is the greatest social leveller – second only to death.'

. . . *Dr Sam Pitroda, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, WorldTel Limited, UK*

'Poor people do not want poor technology, they want most appropriate technology that is not always low cost.'

. . . *Dr Joe Madiath, Executive Director, Gram Vikas, India*

'We have to ensure that environmental degradation does not derail the movement of poverty eradication. In this, technology shall have to play a major role.'

. . . *Mr Suresh Prabhu, Hon'ble Minister for Power, Government of India*

Look forward to . . .

**Keynote address 6 9.00 a.m. – 9.45 a.m.**

**Chairperson** Dr A Ramachandran, Chairman, TERI  
**Speaker** Nobel Laureate Prof. Paul Crutzen, Director, Max Planck Institute for Chemistry, Germany

**Plenary session 5 9.45 a.m. – 11.15 a.m.**

**Financing Sustainable Development**

**Chairperson** Mr Ian Johnson, Vice President, Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development, The World Bank, USA  
**Panellists** • Dr Andrew J Bennett, Chief Natural Resources Adviser, DFID, UK • Mr C Ramachandran, Executive Director, ADB, The Philippines • Mr Nick Robins, Head, Socially Responsible Investment Team, Henderson Global Investors, UK • Dr E A S Sarma, Former Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Government of India

**Tea 11.15 a.m. – 11.45 a.m.**

**Plenary session 6 11.45 a.m. – 1.15 p.m.**

**Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security, and Knowledge for Rural Development**

**Chairperson** Prof. Larry Bacow, Chancellor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA  
**Panellists** • Mr Horacio E Navarrete, Global Business Director, Small Holder Agriculture, Monsanto, USA • Mr Sompal, Member, Planning Commission, Government of India • Dr Florence Wambugu, Director, ISAAA AfriCenter, Kenya

**Luncheon address 1.15 p.m. – 2.15 p.m.**

**Chairperson** Mr S Sundar, Distinguished Fellow, TERI

**Guest of Honour** Mr Peter Sutherland, Hon'ble High Commissioner of Canada to India

**Speaker** His Excellency Mr Gilbert Parent, Ambassador for Environment, Foreign Affairs, and International Trade, Canada

**Plenary session 7 2.15 p.m. – 3.45 p.m.**

**Energy for the Masses**

**Chairperson** Prof. Umberto Colombo, former Minister for Universities, Science, and Technology, Italy  
**Panellists** • Dr Hoesung Lee, President, Council on Energy and Environment, Korea • Mr Vikram Mehta, Chairman, Shell, India • Dr Nebojsa Nakicenovic, Project Leader, Transitions to New Technologies, IIASA, Austria • Dr Antonio V del Rosario, President, EDUFI, The Philippines

**Keynote address 7 3.45 p.m. – 4.45 p.m.**

**Chairperson** Ambassador Farooq Sobhan, Former Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh

**Speaker** Dr Karan Singh, President, The People's Commission on Environment and Development, India

**Tea 4.45 p.m. – 5.15 p.m.**

**Valedictory session 5.15 p.m. onwards**

(Including Book Release – *Global sustainable development: directions and innovations for change*)

**Chairperson** Mr I K Gujral, Hon'ble former Prime Minister of India  
**Panellists** • Mrs Sheila Dikshit, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Delhi, India • Mr Ola Ullsten, Hon'ble former Prime Minister of Sweden • Dr R K Pachauri, Director, TERI