



# G20'S COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE SUSTAINABILITY - A ROADMAP TO DECISIVE ACTION

G20 countries are home to two-thirds of the world's population, 85% of global GDP, 75% of international trade, and account for around 45% of coastlines and over 21% of the Exclusive Economic Zone. In this context, the collective resolve towards Environment and Climate Sustainability has been rightly recognised as a key priority under the G20, to secure a better future for our planet and people across the planet.

Under its Presidency, India is hosting the 4th Environment and Climate Sustainability Ministerial meeting today in Chennai. Prior to the fourth and final meeting in Chennai, three meetings of the ECSWG have been held in Bengaluru, Gandhinagar and Mumbai.

The G20 nations participating in the Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group, have shown an unwavering commitment towards achieving environmental sustainability, since the inception of the Indian Presidency. Across the three working group meetings and various inter-session meetings, the vision of the Narendra Modi-led Indian government, which includes the need to focus on solutions in order to address climate and environmental issues in an ambitious and decisive manner, has found resonance. The discussions held during the working group meetings focused on innovative themes and best practices for the restoration of land and maintenance of water security and aimed at fostering collaborative partnerships to combat climate change.

The G20 is a suitable platform for multilateral cooperation, bringing together the world's major economies to collectively address the interconnected climate and environmental concerns. As a country, we have taken several pro-environment initiatives and actions. Just to list a few, India has banned single-use plastics, notified the Extended Producer Responsibility and E-Waste Management rules, achieved the ethanol blending target ahead of schedule and is working on the development of the Green Credit programme integrating the principles of LiFE into economic activities, among others. On the wildlife conservation front too, there have been notable achievements. Due to the success of Project Tiger, India, is now home to 70% of the world's tiger population. Similarly, our nation houses 60% of the Asiatic elephant population.

Taking forward the mantra of working jointly and collectively to realise common goals on the environment and climate front, PM Modi envisioned and launched the International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition of Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), Mission LiFE and the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA).

The ECSWG meetings build on the precedence set by past presidencies. Our focus on Land Degradation, Ocean 20 Dialogue, Resource efficiency, and Water management, is a testimony to that.

By fostering collaboration among member nations, international organizations, and other stakeholders, the deliberations around Arresting Land Degradation, Accelerating Ecosystem Restoration and Enriching Biodiversity; Pursuing Sustainable and Climate-Resilient Water Resource Management; Promoting a Sustainable and Climate Resilient Blue/Ocean-based Economy and Encouraging Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy, the G20 has displayed a sense of urgency towards battling the severe environment and climate challenges that the world is facing.

During the discussions, focus was given to ways and means of addressing land degradation due to forest fires and mining. The G20 countries came together to share best practices related to the restoration of these landscapes. A compendium of the same is going to serve as a ready reckoner for all countries. Water resource management issues were discussed and the G20 countries came together to discuss sustainable water management and share best practices.

Under the theme of Blue/Ocean-based Economy, discussions have been held to evolve the High Level principles which would help countries transition to a sustainable and resilient Blue/Ocean-based Economy. The principles will guide further development of action-oriented strategies for the Blue/Ocean-based Economy that can contribute to sustainable development, poverty alleviation, and the conservation of marine ecosystems.

The concept of a circular economy is a key driver of sustainable development. India's G20 Presidency focused on priority areas related to Steel, Extended Produce Responsibility and Circular Bio-economy, under the Resource Efficiency theme. The establishment of Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy Industry Coalition, is envisaged as a global, cross-sectoral and industry led initiative to enhance on-ground action for technical knowledge – based and financial collaboration.

Throughout the working group meeting, G20's commitment to multilateralism and cooperation was reaffirmed. It was acknowledged that no single nation can address environmental challenges in isolation. Collaboration among member nations, international organizations, and stakeholders is crucial to achieving the larger shared goals. The concept of LiFE or 'Lifestyle for Environment' – promoted by the Indian Presidency was highlighted across all the priority areas identified under the ECSWG.

The outcomes from the ECSWG reflect the collective determination of G20 countries to foster partnerships, exchange best practices, and leverage collective action to tackle climate change and environmental concerns effectively.

The discussions and the outcomes represent significant milestones that can potentially be markers to measure progress on initial areas. The development of comprehensive policy frameworks integrates environmental considerations into national and international agendas. By aligning policies with our shared environmental objectives, we can drive systemic change and foster sustainable development. As trustees of the planet, we need to show our collective determination for taking decisive action that alone can safeguard the planet for future generations.

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