

Union Environment Minister inaugurates TERI's World Sustainable Development Summit 2026 and MoEFCC's Him-CONNECT platform

Him-CONNECT a Structured Platform to translate Research into Scalable Solutions; Bridge between Science and Society: Shri Bhupender Yadav

World not on track to limit warming to 1.5°C; Climate Challenge is of Scale and Speed, not Science, says Environment Minister

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Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Bhupender Yadav today inaugurated the Silver Jubilee edition of TERI's World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) and Him-CONNECT, a dedicated platform organised by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) to connect researchers working in the Himalayan region with start-ups, industry leaders, investors and policymakers.



The dignitaries on dais during the Inaugural Session featured Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, Vice President, The Cooperative Republic of Guyana; Shri Nitin Desai, Chairman, TERI; Dr. Vibha Dhawan, Director-General, TERI; and Shri Siddhartha Sharma, CEO, Tata Trust, among others.

In his inaugural address, the Minister noted his long association with The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and said WSDS has, over the last 25 years, grown into a unique forum from the Global South that brings together governments, industry, academia, civil society and communities to translate the science of sustainability into policy, partnerships and practical action.

Highlighting the Ministry's initiative as part of WSDS 2026, Shri Yadav said 'Him-CONNECT' has been conceived as a structured platform to translate research supported under the Ministry's National Mission on Himalayan Studies (NMHS) into solutions that can be implemented at scale. He thanked the exhibitors from the Himalayan States and Union Territories participating in Him-CONNECT and said their presence demonstrates the strength of innovation emerging from mountain ecosystems.

Him-CONNECT creates a bridge between science and society by bringing together researchers, start-ups, entrepreneurs, investors, development agencies and policymakers. The initiative strengthens the link between research and real-world impact, and aligns with India's approach of placing communities at the centre of environmental action, he said.

Taking note of the Global Climate Challenge, Shri Yadav said that the first Global Stocktake under the Paris Agreement has made it clear that globally, we are not on the trajectory required to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Emission reductions remain insufficient. Adaptation finance remains inadequate. SDG implementation is uneven.



The Minister said transformation must go beyond small policy changes and bring structural change in energy systems, economic models, consumption patterns and global governance frameworks. Referring to the Summit theme - *Transformations: Vision, Voices and Values for Sustainable Development* - he said it reflects a strategic necessity at this defining moment for humanity and the planet.

Explaining the meaning of transformation, Shri Yadav said that while it implies structural change in English, in Indian thought “parivartan” signifies a deeper evolution of consciousness. For India, sustainability is a civilisational ethic. Transformation does not mean abandoning development, but redefining it within ecological limits, with social justice and inter-generational equity, he added.

The Minister outlined India's **Vision**: achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel energy capacity by 2030, reducing emissions intensity of GDP by 45 per cent from 2005 levels by 2030, achieving net-zero by 2070, advancing the National Green Hydrogen Mission and building climate-resilient infrastructure. Globally, he said, transformation requires tripling renewable energy, doubling energy efficiency, scaling up adaptation finance and reforming multilateral development banks to unlock climate finance. Climate ambition and climate finance must move together, he stressed.

On the theme's second pillar, **'Voices'**, the Minister said the Global South stands at the frontline of climate impacts while continuing its development journey. India has consistently upheld the principles of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities, climate justice, equitable carbon space and inclusive carbon markets. The voices of small island states, least developed countries, indigenous communities and youth must shape global frameworks, he said.

On **'Values'**, Shri Yadav said technology can accelerate transformation and finance can enable it, but values define its fairness. Referring to India's G20 Presidency theme, 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam - One Earth, One Family, One Future', he said sustainability frameworks must be fair, transparent and reflect different development realities.

Shri Yadav said that as a nation committed to building a **'Viksit Bharat'**, India is advancing reforms across **four pillars** - *Energy Transformation, Circular Economy Transition, Nature-Based Solutions and Digital Environmental Governance*. He said that the next 25 years must be about moving from *pledges to performance, from targets to trajectories and from ambition to accountability*. He said that the Silver Jubilee of WSDS should mark acceleration and reaffirmed that India stands ready to partner with all nations for a sustainable and resilient future.

On the occasion, the Minister inaugurated the 'Him-CONNECT' exhibition and reviewed different exhibits from scientists and researchers from Himalayan states and Union territories.







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