
UNIT 15 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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15.1 INTRODUCTION

We can recall from the previous units and can categorically state that say that climate change challenges the existence of humanity; it is a reality and calls for an urgent action at global and national level. According to UNFCCC, “the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate International response, with a view to accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions.” In this context, the year 2015 marked a milestone in humanity’s efforts towards building a better and more sustainable future for everyone. In 2015 “the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” were agreed by 193 member states of the United Nations and complemented by commitments made in the Paris Agreement which map out a broad spectrum of economic, social and environmental objectives to be achieved by 2030. “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development having 17 interconnected Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets is a global plan of action for people, planet and prosperity”. Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specified in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, climate change is not only one of the SDG, but it also impacts most of the other SDGs as well. It is a threat enhancer, with the potential to negatively affect humanity’s greatest challenges including health, poverty, hunger, and inequality and ecosystem preservation, among others. Addressing climate change also offers humanity’s greatest chance to positively impact these goals.

India also adopted two transformative agreements within the span of a few months: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Climate

Change Agreement. The 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement share the purpose of creating a more resilient, productive and healthy environment for present and future generations. These two agreements though adopted separately, nevertheless, share the common goal of building a climate safe future that is more sustainable, resilient and prosperous for all. The SDGs are global goals and they are built upon the erstwhile Millennium Development Goals. These goals are exhaustive, universal and integrated and emphasize on core areas of poverty and inequality, economic growth, innovation, sustainable consumption and production, climate change, peace and justice and partnerships. In this unit, we will discuss the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; genesis of Sustainable Development Goals; SDG 13 which demands for “urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts”; and India’s progress and preparedness for achieving SDG 13.

15.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the genesis of sustainable development and sustainable development goals;
- discuss the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals;
- recognise SDG 13-take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; and
- review India’s progress and preparedness on SDG 13.

15.3 THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The term “Sustainable Development” was first coined in 1972 at the United Nations Conference on Human Environment at Stockholm. The most important publication on “Sustainable Development” is the publication by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) or the Brundtland Commission report in 1987 titled “Our Common Future”. The World Commission on Environment and Development was initiated by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1982, and its report, Our Common Future, was published in 1987. It was chaired by then Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland, thus earning the name the “Brundtland Commission.” The report was published in an effort to link the issues of economic development and environmental stability and the oft-cited definition of sustainable development was provided as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations General Assembly, 1987, p. 43). In other words, it is improving the quality of life of the present generation without excessive use or abuse of natural resources, so that they can be preserved for the next generation. Its roots were in the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment where the conflicts between environment and development were first acknowledged. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (the so-called “Earth Summit”) issued a declaration

of principles, a detailed Agenda 21 of desired actions, international agreements on climate change and biodiversity, and a statement of principles on forests. Ten years later, in 2002, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, the commitment to sustainable development was reaffirmed.

**Box 15.1: Sustainable Development: From Our Common Future
(WCED, 1987)**

- *“Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The concept of sustainable development does imply limits - not absolute limits but limitations imposed by the present state of technology and social organization on environmental resources and by the ability of the biosphere to absorb the effects of human activities. But technology and social organization can be both managed and improved to make way for a new era of economic growth. The Commission believes that widespread poverty is no longer inevitable. Poverty is not only an evil in itself, but sustainable development requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations for a better life. A world in which poverty is endemic will always be prone to ecological and other catastrophes”.*
- *“Meeting essential needs requires not only a new era of economic growth for nations in which the majority are poor, but an assurance that those poor get their fair share of the resources required to sustain that growth. Such equity would be aided by political systems that secure effective citizen participation in decision making and by greater democracy in international decision making”.*
- *“Sustainable global development requires that those who are more affluent adopt life-styles within the planet’s ecological means - in their use of energy, for example. Further, rapidly growing populations can increase the pressure on resources and slow any rise in living standards; thus sustainable development can only be pursued if population size and growth are in harmony with the changing productive potential of the ecosystem”.*
- *“Yet in the end, sustainable development is not a fixed state of harmony, but rather a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs. We do not pretend that the process is easy or straightforward. Painful choices have to be made”.*

15.4 GENESIS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In 2000, the Millennium Summit was held in New York, which resulted in the UN Millennium Declaration. The Millennium Declaration resulted in a set of

targets to be achieved by 2015 that included environmental sustainability, the eradication of extreme poverty and equality for women, now known as the Millennium Development Goals. In 2000, 189 countries agreed under the umbrella of the United Nations on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by signing the Millennium Declaration. According to the UN Declaration, the MDGs were to be achieved in a timeline of 15 years and, thus, they expired in 2015. The MDGs were composed by eight goals: seven social goals (namely eradicating hunger, promoting education and gender equality, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, creating a global partnership for development) and one environmental goal (ensuring environmental sustainability). The MDGs reflected, indeed, the idea at that time that health and education were crucial drivers of development, thus sustainability and development were to be achieved by goals mostly focused on the improvement of individuals' conditions. The era of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which mobilized attention on addressing the challenges of extreme poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease came to an end in 2015.

World Summit on Sustainable Development which was held in Johannesburg renewed international commitment in the pursuit of sustainable development with the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI); 2012 resulted in an outcome document "The Future We Want". In the document, the States reaffirmed the commitments to all previous sustainable development agreements, plans and targets. They also committed to develop a suite of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) building on the priorities identified in Agenda 21 and the JPOI, and decided to replace the Commission for Sustainable Development with a 'high-level political forum' to progress implementation of Agenda 21 and the JPOI, and the achievement of the SDGs. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was agreed at the United Nations in New York in September 2015.

15.5 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Since its inception in 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has provided a blueprint for shared prosperity in a sustainable world. The 17 Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development came into force on 1 January 2016. These SDGs are "universal set of goals and targets agreed by 194 UN member states to guide their development policies and initiatives over the next 15 years". The 2030 Agenda focuses on the "elimination of hunger and reduction of poverty and inequality (opportunity, resource access, gender, and youth) in all their forms". The 2030 Agenda also buttress the Paris Agreement on climate change by "promoting and facilitating energy efficiency and clean energy". It also aims to augment the resilience to extreme weather events and climate change; protect the habitat and ecosystem; enhance resource use efficiency; and enable sustainable production and consumption.

If we look at the history of SDGs, the Heads of State and Government representatives, held a meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 25-27th September 2015 and they agreed upon a new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was built around 17 goals and 169 targets (UN,

2015). The 2030 Agenda and its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), are much broader in scope and ambition, encompassing the eradication of poverty and hunger and improved health and nutrition; reduction of inequality; the building of peaceful, just and inclusive societies; the protection of human rights; the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are:

- Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere;
- Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture;
- Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages;
- Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;
- Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls;
- Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all;
- Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all;
- Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all;
- Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation;
- Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries;
- Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;
- Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns;
- Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts;
- Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development;
- Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss;
- Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels; and
- Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

The 2030 Agenda advocates “sustainable development in all of its three dimensions, for all countries (developing and developed), based on the

fundamental recognition and protection of human rights, dignity and equity”. Further, SDGs endeavour to create suitable environment for “sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, taking into account different levels of national development and capacities” (<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7808e.pdf>). These SDGs are ambitious and universal in nature and at the same time they direct towards a path for nations to achieve fair, equitable, inclusive and environment friendly development. In other words, we can say that human and environmental rights underpin the foundation of the SDGs that demand robust and integrated actions nationally and also charted out the role of different actors in the process. The SDGs being interdependent in nature require actions at all levels to attain the development outcomes.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answers.
2) Check your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Give an overview of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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2. What are Sustainable Development Goals?

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15.6 SDG 13: TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

According to the Sustainable Development Goals Report, 2019, the most urgent area for action is climate change. There is an urgent need to contain the greenhouse gases emissions, so that the global average temperature don't overshoot 2.0°C. The impacts of climate change are catastrophic and irreversible; increasing frequency and magnitude of disasters; ocean acidification; land degradation and coastal erosion; and loss of biodiversity. The climate change effects the poor and disadvantaged group. They have potential to impact the agricultural production leading to food shortages, famines and hunger. Further, climate change is projected to displace up to 140 million people by 2050. According to the World Meteorological Organization, 2018 was the fourth warmest year on record, with the past four years (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018) being the four warmest years on record. The world continues to experience rising sea levels, extreme weather conditions and increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases. Climate change is a crosscutting and immediate threat to the achievement of the SDGs, and to the survival and well-being of island nations and coastal communities. This calls for urgent and accelerated action by countries as they implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and their commitments to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Climate change is happening right now, and its effects are clearly visible. The global mean temperature for 2018 is estimated to be 0.99 ± 0.13 °C above the preindustrial baseline, arctic temperatures exceptionally high relative to long-term average, and many countries experienced their warmest year on record. The impacts are being felt all over the world and addressing these require a robust two-pronged approach: reduction in the greenhouse gas emissions, and adaptation planning. As of February 2019, 185 parties had ratified the Paris Agreement. Parties to the Paris Agreement are expected to prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions (NDCs). As of 27 February 2019, 182 Parties (181 countries plus the European Commission) had communicated their first NDCs to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat (UNFCCC).

Climate action requires efforts on mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation – climate finance, technology and capacity building. Just as problems are interrelated, the solutions to poverty, inequality, climate change and other global challenges are also interlinked. Valuable opportunities exist to accelerate progress by examining inter-linkages across goals. For example, tackling climate change requires a shift to clean energy, reversing the trend in forest loss, and changing our production and consumption patterns. Promoting sustainable agriculture can help reduce both hunger and poverty, since close to 80 per cent of those who are extremely poor live in rural areas. Increasing access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene can save millions of lives per year and improve school attendance.

Sustainable Development Goal 13 (SDG 13 Climate Action) commits to take “urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts”, emphasizing globally agreed need to mitigate anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the damages caused by climate change, while acknowledging that the “United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.” The UNFCCC acknowledges that “the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions.”

To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and implement the Paris Agreement, developed and developing countries alike will need to transform their energy systems, ecosystem management, agriculture and land use, urban management, material use, gender outcomes, health, education, governance and other areas. Goal 13 in particular focuses on the “urgent action” required to “combat climate change and its impacts”, thus incorporating both climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation. Its scope includes three targets: 13.1- strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters in all countries; 13.2- integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning; and 13.3- improve education, awareness raising and human institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning.

Box 15.3: Global Warming of 1.5°C Special Report

According to the “Global Warming of 1.5°C Special Report” from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the world has already warmed by 1°C, increasing the episodes and intensity of extreme weather events. The report states that limiting global warming to 1.5°C is still possible but would require “rapid and far-reaching” transitions in how we manage land, energy, industry, buildings, transport and cities. Specifically, global net human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide would need to fall by about 45 per cent from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching “net zero” around 2050.

Achieving all other SDGs will be much more challenging without urgent climate action, including those related to poverty, hunger, access to water, terrestrial and marine ecosystems, health, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, among others. Conversely, many of the goals and targets can also be achieved in ways that would enable adaptive responses to climate change. The energy transitions envisaged in SDG 7 would contribute significantly to lowering greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions relative to business-as-usual pathways.

From the perspective of protection of climate system and GHG emission reduction, UNFCCC and SDG 13 endeavour to strengthen and augment the resilience and adaptive capacity. The developing countries and low income countries in their pursuit to sustainable development, require climate change interventions, which demand both “financial and technological inputs”.

BOX 15.4: Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is acknowledged as the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

13.2: Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning.

13.3: Improve education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning.

13.a: Implement the commitment undertaken by developed country Parties to the UNFCCC to a goal of mobilizing jointly USD100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible.

13.b: Promote mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change related planning and management, in LDCs, including focusing on women, youth, local and marginalized communities.

Source: http://www.cisd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/SDG_13_Climate_-_Issue_Brief_-_06.09.2016_-Final_-_UNEP.pdf

15.7 INDIA'S PROGRESS AND PREPERADNESS TOWARDS SDG 13

In the previous section, you have got an idea of SDG - 13. In this section, we will discuss, India's preparedness and progress towards SDG 13. We know that India has signed and ratified the Paris Agreement, making it obligatory for it to reach its commitments. India is also a signatory among 192 nations to the 2030 Global agenda for Sustainable Development. The Government of India has entrusted NITI Aayog, with coordinating the SDG Agenda in India and has asked the states to prepare action plans and has also embarked upon exercise to develop national indicators for the 17 Goals, besides undertaking consultations on specific goals. NITI Aayog is expected to come up with the long-term vision (2015-30) and medium term plan (2015-22), in response to which it recently developed a short-term action agenda. NITI Aayog has carried out draft mapping of goals and targets against existing schemes and these goals have been assigned to respective ministries. There is also action at the state level, with states asked to put forward their plans for implementing the SDGs to NITI Aayog, looking at the SDGs as a guiding framework for their long term development strategy. This includes a proposal to introduce an SDG charter for each government ministry. The MoEFCC has been assigned the responsibility of three goals (Goal 12, 13 and 15) directly where they need to coordinate with different ministries on individual targets. Further, they have partial responsibility of another seven goals for which they will engage with other ministries. NITI Aayog is also given the responsibility to develop an energy policy in the light of India's commitment to the Paris Agreement. The MoEFCC has designed the Nationally Determined Contributions with consultations from state governments, ministries and civil societies.

15.7.1 National Action Plan On Climate Change (NAPCC)

In this section, we will discuss the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and other initiatives by the Government of India. The NAPCC consists of eight National Missions namely:

- Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission;
- National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency;
- National Mission on Sustainable Habitat;
- National Water Mission;
- National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture;
- National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem;
- National Mission for a Green India; and
- National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change.

Under these initiatives, the Government has been able to make significant progress for achieving SDG and SDG 13. Apart from these initiatives, the Indian

government setup the National Clean Energy Fund (NCEF) in 2010 to finance and promote clean energy initiatives along with allocation of resources for clean energy research. Under Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission (JNNSM), installation of solar photovoltaic (SPV) lights and small capacity lights were done. The scope of the NCEF also includes projects under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), which are being implemented under the flagship programmes of “Grid Interactive and Distributive Renewable Power” and “Research, Design, Development in Renewable Energy”. Several of the NAPCC missions (Energy Efficiency, Water and Greening India, for example) offered opportunities for urban-scale engagement, including one (the Mission on Sustainable Habitat) that focussed explicitly on cities.

Following the development of the NAPCC, in 2009, the Government of India asked state governments to follow this process in their respective states, focussing specifically on developing policies and plans that align with the eight NAPCC missions and the development priorities of each state. As of October 2016, 32 states and union territories in India have State Action Plans on Climate Change that have been endorsed by the National Steering Committee on Climate Change (MoEFCC, 2016). The state plans seem to focus largely on good sustainable development strategies, on adaptation rather than mitigation, integrating their climate change action plans with the overall development goals of the state.

Despite the fact that India has done well on many sustainable development goals and climate goals, much is yet desired to achieve sustainable development in the real sense. First and foremost is the need for a clear road map to implement the SDGs with identified roles for the state governments, and a monitoring mechanism to measure progress. Public education and awareness are second to none in terms invoking people in achievement of the SDGs. The SDGs are more complex than to be achieved by the policies and government programmes alone. The countries need to harness energy, understanding and participation of all stakeholders including the NGOs to make sustainable development a reality.

Under the SDGs’ framework, actions under Goal 13 are largely based on the outcomes of the climate change negotiations in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement give us the tools to address the challenges posed by climate change, poverty and inequality. We must use them judiciously. And, as UN Secretary-General António Guterres said “we need more action, more ambition and more political will. This will take unprecedented levels of collaborative, multilateral action. It will take increased efforts not by nations alone, but by all segments of society”.

15.7.2 Intended Nationally Determined Contribution

The Prime Minister of India, speaking at the SDGs Summit in the UN, in September 2015 said, “Today, much of India’s development agenda is mirrored in the Sustainable Development Goals. Since independence, we have pursued the dream of eliminating poverty from India. We have chosen the path of removing poverty by empowering the poor.” India’s institutional framework on climate change is focused on achieving its pre-2020 commitments and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) rather than achieving SDGs in general or SDG 13 in particular.

India's effort in integrating climate change measures in national policies have been focused on achieving pre-2020 commitment and its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) as also reflected by the national indicators. India agreed in Copenhagen (2009) to reduce its energy intensity by 20-25% by 2020 over 2005 level. Through its INDC (2015), it voluntarily committed to reduce its energy intensity by 30-35% by 2030 (over 2005 level), achieve 40% cumulative electric power installed capacity for the fossil fuel based energy resources by 2030 (conditional and transfer of technology and international finance), and create an additional carbon sink of 2.5–3 billion tonnes of CO₂ through additional forest cover. The National Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC, 2008) and State Action Plan/s on Climate Change are constrained by financial support, appropriate institutional structure, meaningful monitoring and clear road map.

Box 15.5: India's Commitments

India agreed to reduce its emission intensity by 20-25% by 2020 over 2005 level. In the Paris Agreement, India's NDC committed to achieve three targets:

- 33% - 35% reduction in the energy intensity of its GDP by 2030 over 2005 (20-25% by 2020 over 2005 in the Copenhagen Accord);
- 40% cumulative electric power installed capacity for the fossil fuel based energy resources by 2030 (conditional and transfer of technology and international finance);
- Additional carbon sinks of 2.5–3 billion tonnes of CO₂ through additional forest cover.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answers.
2) Check your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Give an overview of SDG 13.

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2. Discuss India's preparedness for achieving SDG 13.

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15.8 LET US SUM UP

It is clear that climate change threatens decades of development progress and jeopardizes inclusive and sustainable growth. The SDGs framework provides the best path for addressing this climate emergency in ways that help everyone, in particular women, children, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and

those living in small island developing states. We have discussed in this unit the genesis of sustainable development and sustainable development goals; recognised the urgency for climate action through SDG 13; and reviewed the progress and preparedness of India towards the SDG 13.

15.9 KEYWORDS

MDGs : The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), endorsed by governments at the United Nations in September 2000, aim to improve human well-being by reducing poverty, hunger, child and maternal mortality, ensuring education for all, controlling and managing diseases, tackling gender disparity, ensuring sustainable development and pursuing global partnerships.

Paris Agreement (PA) : At COP21 in 2015, after many years of negotiations, countries signed the momentous Paris Agreement, setting out the global expectations for dramatically reducing carbon emissions. The Paris Agreement entered into force in November 2016 and lays out the overarching global goals and framework for international climate action in the post-2020 period. Under the PA, countries have pledged to keep global temperature increases below 2 degrees from pre-industrial times.

Green Climate Fund : Established by the UNFCCC, as an operating entity of the financial mechanism to assist developing countries in mitigation of and adaptation to practices to climate change.

15.10 SUGGESTED FURTHER READING/ REFERENCES

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15.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has provided a blueprint for shared prosperity in a sustainable world. The 2030 Agenda focuses on the “elimination of hunger and reduction of poverty and inequality (opportunity, resource access, gender, and youth) in all their forms”. The 2030 Agenda and its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), are much broader in scope and ambition, encompassing the eradication of poverty and hunger and improved health and nutrition; reduction of inequality; the building of peaceful, just and inclusive societies; the protection of human rights; the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources. The 2030 Agenda advocates “sustainable development in all of its three dimensions, for all countries (developing and developed), based on the fundamental recognition and protection of human rights, dignity and equity”. Further, SDGs endeavour to create suitable environment for “sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, taking into account different levels of national development and capacities”.
2. The Sustainable Development Goals are “universal set of goals and targets agreed by 194 UN member states to guide their development policies and initiatives over the next 15 years”. The 17 Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development came into force on 1 January 2016.

Check Your Progress 2

1. Sustainable Development Goal 13 (SDG 13 Climate Action) commits to take “urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts”, emphasizing globally agreed need to mitigate anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the damages caused by climate change, while acknowledging that the “United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.” The UNFCCC acknowledges that “the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions.”

Goal 13 in particular focuses on the “urgent action” required to “combat climate change and its impacts”, thus incorporating both climate change

mitigation and climate change adaptation. Its scope includes three targets: 13.1- strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters in all countries; 13.2- integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning; and 13.3- improve education, awareness raising and human institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning.

2. India has signed and ratified the Paris Agreement, making it obligatory for it to reach its commitments. India is also a signatory among 192 nations to the 2030 Global agenda for Sustainable Development. The Government of India has entrusted NITI Aayog, with coordinating the SDG Agenda in India and has asked the states to prepare action plans and has also embarked upon exercise to develop national indicators for the 17 Goals, besides undertaking consultations on specific goals. The MoEFCC has been assigned the responsibility of three goals (Goal 12, 13 and 15) directly where they need to coordinate with different ministries on individual targets. Further, they have partial responsibility of another seven goals for which they will engage with other ministries. NITI Aayog is also given the responsibility to develop an energy policy in the light of India's commitment to the Paris Agreement. The MoEFCC has designed the Nationally Determined Contributions with consultations from state governments, ministries and civil societies. India has launched the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) which consists of eight National Missions.

India's institutional framework on climate change is focused on achieving its pre-2020 commitments and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) rather than achieving SDGs in general or SDG 13 in particular. India's effort in integrating climate change measures in national policies have been focused on achieving pre-2020 commitment and its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) as also reflected by the national indicators. India agreed in Copenhagen (2009) to reduce its energy intensity by 20-25% by 2020 over 2005 level. Through its INDC (2015), it voluntarily committed to reduce its energy intensity by 30-35% by 2030 (over 2005 level), achieve 40% cumulative electric power installed capacity for the fossil fuel based energy resources by 2030 (conditional and transfer of technology and international finance), and create an additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes of CO₂ through additional forest cover.