

## **Preface**

In 1992, leaders of government, international agencies and non-governmental organisations, from around the world met at Rio de Janeiro. This conference resulted, amongst other things, in the adoption of Agenda 21 — a global plan of action to confront the pressing needs of the world and prepare for the challenges of the next century in order to attain the long-term goal of sustainable development. The objectives of Agenda 21 were sought to be achieved with the active involvement of all stakeholders — national and local governments, international organizations, business, non- government organisations and citizen groups.

Ten years later, the international community comes together once again at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. The objective of the summit is to review the developments of the past decade and to forge a cohesive set of global partnerships to achieve a comprehensive implementation of Agenda 21.

This report is an attempt to document India's experience in implementing Agenda 21. The report begins with an overview of India's resources and its economic, governance and social profile. A broad picture of India's approach to Agenda 21 is also provided. Thereafter, individual chapters deal with the different facets of Agenda 21 – environmental, economic and social – and analyze initiatives, achievements, concerns and future directions for each sector vis-à-vis sustainable development concerns drawn from Agenda 21.

This study was commissioned and coordinated by the Government of India in the Ministry of Environment and Forests and supported by the UNDP. The draft document was prepared by TERI based on a consultative process involving all the relevant Ministries of the Government of India. The draft was finalized after several discussions at two forums — the Working Group, chaired by the Joint Secretary (International Cooperation) MoEF, and the Monitoring Committee, chaired by Secretary, MoEF. Concerned Ministries, the Planning Commission and UNDP were represented at these forums.

It is hoped that this document will provide a comprehensive assessment of India's experience in integrating Agenda 21 objectives. This assessment demonstrates India's commitment to Agenda 21 and brings out the possible initiatives that need to be taken in the future to sustain and implement this commitment.