

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

In view of significance given to achieving United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in National Education Policy, AIU is organizing National and Zonal Vice Chancellors' Meet-2021-22 on the theme of SDGs. The theme for the Annual General Meet and National Seminar of Vice Chancellors is ***Realizing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through Higher Education Institutions***. As per scheme of things, in the Annual Meet, all the 17 SDGs will be taken up for discussion in 5 sessions. As a run up to the Annual Meet, a set of 4 closely related SDGs will be deliberated in each of the Zonal Meets-East, West, Central and North. East Zone Meet is dedicated to discussion on SDGs-7,13,14 & 15.

ASSOCIATION OF INDIAN UNIVERSITIES

Association of Indian Universities (AIU) was established in 1925 and since its inception, it has been playing a vital role in shaping Indian higher education by being an integral part of all major decision-making bodies. As a representative body of Indian universities, it plays the main role as a common platform for cooperation and coordination among Indian universities and liaise with government and also national and International bodies of higher education in other countries in the matters of common interest. AIUs most important function is to accord equivalence to Degrees/Qualifications offered by the universities across the world with those offered in India. AIU conducts inter-university sports and cultural events at national and international level. Stalwarts like Dr.Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Dr.Zakir Hussain, Dr.Syamaprasad Mukherjee, Dr.K.L. Shrimali served as its Presidents in past. All the Indian universities benefit out of its contribution, at present it has membership of about 854 Indian universities and 17 universities from other countries viz. Bhutan, UAE, Kazakhstan, Mauritius, Malaysia Nepal, as Associate Members.

TEZPUR UNIVERSITY

NAAC A grade accredited Tezpur University is in the Napaam area of Sonitpur, Assam and is ranked 73rd (Overall category) and 46th (University category) in NIRF-2021. Tezpur University was established by an Act of Parliament in 1994, with the intent of initiating courses that equip students of Assam for better employment opportunities as well as to give them a chance to engage in interdisciplinary research. The university offers ten UG, 35 PG and 24 PhD programmes, apart from two PG diploma and three certificate courses across several disciplines in its departments and centres. There are four Schools of Studies, viz., Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences, Management Sciences, and Sciences, with a total of 26 Departments, along with several Centres in areas like Endangered Languages, Inclusive Development, Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship, Public Policy and Governance, Learning Centre, Women Studies, as well as a DST-funded Technology Enabling Centre.

THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations is an international organization founded in 1945. Currently made up of 193 Member States, the UN and its work are guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding Charter. The UN has evolved over the years to keep pace with a rapidly changing world. But one thing has stayed the same: it remains the one place on Earth where all the world's nations can gather together, discuss common problems, and find shared solutions that benefit all of humanity.

EAST ZONE VICE CHANCELLOR'S MEET

The present Meet is the East Zone Vice Chancellors' Meet. The theme for this Meet is ***Realizing SDGs through HEIs for Ensuring Clean Energy, Green Environment and Creating Sustainable Ecosystem***. The theme is an overarching theme for the SDGs-7,13,14 & 15. The discussions will primarily address the role of HEIs in the perspective of their contribution. Besides, there will be stocktaking of global progress towards achieving these goals; share knowledge, success stories and good practices; identify particular areas of concern and main challenges; and suggest ways forward in terms of action points for HEIs, government and other stakeholders. Action points for HEIs will be for all the three dimensions of HEIs i.e., Teaching, Research and Community Development and operational aspects in the administration of universities.

The two-day event will include following 4 sessions:

Session -1: Contribution of HEIs in Ensuring Access to Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG-7)

Session -2: Contribution of HEIs in Taking Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change (SDG-13)

Session -3: Contribution of HEIs in Conserving Marine Resources for Sustainable Development (SDG-14)

Session -4: Contribution of HEIs in Protecting Terrestrial Ecosystems and Halting Biodiversity Loss (SDG-15)

SESSION DETAILS

Session 1

7 AFFORDABLE AND
CLEAN ENERGY



Contribution of HEIs in Ensuring Access to Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG-7)

Goal 7 aims to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. The achievement of this goal means ensuring access to electricity, clean fuels and technologies for cooking, and increasing the use of renewable energy through both international cooperation and expanded infrastructure and technology for clean energy. While India is on the fast trajectory of development, availability of uninterrupted power supply is essential to maintain the momentum of accelerated growth process. India needs electricity to fuel the growth of every industry, be it large-scale or small, manufacturing, healthcare or education, etc. There are many roadblocks in unleashing the full potential of India's power and energy sector. Energy access therefore constitutes a core component of not only the sustainable development agenda but nation development also. It is time for a new global partnership on sustainable energy for all, guided by Sustainable Development Goal 7: Ensuring everyone has access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services by the year 2030. The deliberations in this session will therefore be on:

1. Challenges and opportunities of energy sector in India and how HEIs can contribute towards meeting the challenges?
2. Strategies for ensuring an efficient and affordable energy system with low carbon foot prints.

Session 2

13 CLIMATE
ACTION



Contribution of HEIs in Taking Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change (SDG-13)

Goal 13 calls for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, and also to build resilience in responding to climate-related hazards and natural disasters. The goal demands a collective responsibility to reinforce adaptive capacity and resilience to natural disasters and hazards related to climate change. Achievement of this goal will depend on effective measures to fight climate change through prudent national planning and appropriate strategies and policies. Increasing awareness on mitigation, impact reduction, early warning and adaptation to climate change is essential. India is on fast growth trajectory thereby; it is one of the most vulnerable nations to climate change impacts. The Government of India has also adopted a National Action Plan on Climate Change to address this issue directly, as well as a National Mission for Green India. These national schemes are complemented by a host of specific programmes on solar energy, enhanced energy efficiency, sustainable habitats, water, sustaining the Himalayan ecosystem, and to encourage strategic knowledge for climate change. However, the efforts so far in the direction of meeting the challenges of climate change have been sporadic and incoherent. We urgently need a new paradigm, which is global, inclusive, cooperative, environmentally sensitive and above all scientific. The deliberations will therefore address on:

1. Measures to be taken by HEIs to improve education, awareness and institutional capacity on climate change-mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and devising early warning signals.
2. Unearthing the Indian traditional knowledge systems conducive for protection of environment?

Session 3



Contribution of HEIs in Conserving Marine Resources for Sustainable Development (SDG-14)

Goal 14 seeks to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. This goal requires government, industry and community acknowledgement of the value and importance of coastal areas and oceans. Oceans cover more than two-thirds of the earth's surface and contain 97% of the planet's water. India has a long coastline of about 7,517 km in length which sustains and provides a source of livelihood to over 250 million people. They are life source of planet and are essential for making the planet livable. Over 3 billion people depend on marine life for their livelihood. However, there has been a 26% increase in acidification after the industrial revolution. The 'Blue Economy' is an emerging concept which encourages better use of ocean or 'blue' resources for a number of economic opportunities and livelihood. Achievement of this goal will require collaboration to improve research capacity, scientific knowledge and sharing of marine technology to not only enhance ocean health but also to improve the marine biodiversity. The deliberations will address on:

1. Role of HEIs in creating resources and manpower to exploit the potential of India's long coastline to strengthen Blue economy.
2. Developing more scientific systems for facilitating blue economy through related aspects such as freezing, packaging, developing online mechanism for predicting the movement of online oil spills etc.

Session 4



Contribution of HEIs in Protecting Terrestrial Ecosystems and Halting Biodiversity Loss (SDG-15)

Goal 15 focuses on managing forests sustainably, restoring degraded lands and successfully combating desertification, reducing degraded natural habitats and ending biodiversity loss. Crucial to this goal is integrating biodiversity and ecosystem values into local and national planning, poverty reduction plans and development processes. Land and forests are the foundation of sustainable development. Deforestation and desertification caused by human activities and climate change pose major challenges to sustainable development and affect the lives and livelihoods of millions of people. In India, the intensification and expansion of land degradation has harshly affected agricultural productivity, which may jeopardise agricultural livelihoods in the country. India is home to around 8% of the world 's biodiversity, which includes many species found nowhere else in the world. The deliberations will therefore, address on:

1. Urgent and significant actions to be taken by HEIs to protect terrestrial ecosystems and halting biodiversity loss, reduce the degradation of natural habitats, and prevent the extinction of threatened species.
2. Researches, capacity building and awareness programmes to be initiated in HEIs for this purpose.

Participation and Organization

Vice Chancellors of Indian Universities, Experts from United Nations System, Line Ministries in Government of India, Apex Bodies of Higher Education, and Academia will be speakers and Session Chairs. Experts from the UN system and other international organizations will also be invited to contribute. Discussions will be conducted in English. Sessions will be through virtual mode.