

# Green economy is an enabler for sustainable growth: Doha Bank CEO



Seetharaman gestures while delivering a special address at the '20th World Congress on Environment Management and Climate Change' organised recently by the Institute of Directors (IOD) in New Delhi.

The Qatar Central Bank (QCB) is seeking to issue green bonds as part of efforts aimed towards achieving sustainable development, according to a Doha Bank top official.

Speaking at the '20th World Congress on Environment Management and Climate Change' organised recently by the Institute of Directors (IOD) in New Delhi, Doha Bank CEO Dr R Seetharaman delivered a special address, citing issues on global growth and climate change.

Seetharaman noted that the QCB is also enhancing co-operation with Qatar Development Bank to foster economic diversification through green financing and promote sustainable investment, and devise incentives for the financial and manufacturing firms to promote such financing.

Similarly, Seetharaman said Doha Bank is demonstrating "fair, open, efficient, and consistent" business practices to mitigate climate change and promote sustainable development through corporate social responsibility.

"Doha Bank advocates and practices green banking, which is one of its core business

philosophies that would support the sustainability into the future. It has tracked the developments pertaining to various Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings and involved with various COP meeting delegations, including COP 18 in Doha," Seetharaman said.

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He also said the bank has worked on the 'ECO-Schools Programme' with Unesco, which works with educational institutions to build awareness of key environmental issues and create action plans that are school-specific to help mitigate the overall impact on the environment.

"Following the Paris climate agreement in 2015, European financial supervisors have been increasingly scrutinising the banking sectors to understand

their exposure to climate risks and their preparedness for a transition to a low-carbon energy system," Seetharaman said.

Seetharaman said G20 countries, which account for 85% of global GDP and 80% of CO2 emissions, should adopt a combination of pro-growth and pro-environment policies in developing their overall growth and development strategies. "Infrastructure is at the heart of economic growth and yet there has been chronic underinvestment in most G20 countries. Bringing together growth and climate change agendas rather than treating climate as a separate issue could add 1% to average economic output in G20 countries by 2021 and thereby contribute to green economies," he said.

Seetharaman said the world's major greenhouse gas emitters are China, the US, the EU, and India. Global green bond issuances exceeded \$155.5bn in 2017 with the US, China, and France leading the issuances, he noted.

He said India's move to promote gas usage is in line with the commitment made at the Paris meeting on climate change, which aims to reduce the country's carbon

emission intensity by up to 35% from 2005 levels by 2030 and producing 40% of the power from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.

Seetharaman said India and France have launched an 'international solar alliance' to boost solar energy in developing countries at the COP 21 Paris summit. In 2017, the Securities and Exchange Board of India came out with listing criteria for green debt securities.

"Institutions adopt environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria for sustainable finance, which considers social conscious lending or investments. Environmental criteria look at how a company performs as a steward of the natural environment.

"Social criteria examine how a company manages relationships with its employees, suppliers, customers, and the communities where it operates. Governance deals with a company's leadership, audits, internal controls, and shareholder rights. The board should be part of the ESG framework and equip themselves with the concept of sustainable finance. It should have the right composition, structure, and process to oversee ESG," he added.