

## BANKING ON KNOWLEDGE

## Qatar aligning to sustainable development agenda amidst thrust given at COP23

By Dr R Seetharaman

The 23rd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP23) to the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) took place at the headquarters of the UNFCCC Secretariat in Bonn, Germany. It was presided over by the Government of Fiji. The UN Climate Change Conference will include the 23rd session of the COP23 to the UNFCCC, the 13th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP13).

Fiji had suffered damages of well over \$1bn after Cyclone Winston struck in 2016. The nations agreed this month to launch the next steps towards higher climate action ambition before 2020 at the close of the annual UN climate conference. The 'Talanoa Dialogue', inspired by the Pacific concept of constructive discussion will set the stage in Poland in 2018 for the revis-



ing upwards of national climate action plans needed to put the world on track to meet the pre-2020 ambition and the long-term goals of the two-year-old Paris Agreement.

The Paris Agreement's central goal was to keep the global average temperature rise below 2 degree Celsius and as close as possible to 1.5 –the lower limit was critical for survival by many small islands and vulnerable countries.

The countries not only welcomed progress in long-term finance, but also urged greater efforts to deliver the agreed \$100bn per year by 2020 for support to developing countries to take climate action. America has pledged it will bring together private and public sector leaders to ensure the US remains a global leader in reducing emissions and delivers the country's climate goals under the Paris Agreement.

The other key developments at COP23 include launch of Ocean Pathway Partnership, Local Communities and Indigenous People's Platform and Gender Action Plan.

The launch of the Ocean Pathway Partnership aims, by 2020, to strengthen ac-



tion and funding that links climate change action with healthy oceans including through the UN Climate Change process and via more explicit aims and ambitions in national climate action plans.

The crucial role of women in combating climate change will be formally supported through the Gender Action Plan. This is important given that women tend to be especially vulnerable to climate change impacts and should not be excluded from decision-making regarding actions and solutions. The plan aims to make women part of all climate change projects and decisions internationally and nationally.

Local Communities and Indigenous People's Platform is a practical achieve-

ment that aims to support the full and equal role of indigenous people in climate action while recognising the responsibility of governments to respect the rights of indigenous peoples in these decisions.

The governments of Germany and the United Kingdom, along with other partners, announced \$153mn to expand programmes to fight climate change and deforestation in the Amazon rainforest.

The key-take away at this conference has been action to get on track towards the objectives of the Paris Climate Change Agreement and to ultimately achieve the 2030 Agenda.

Sustainable development goals are

urgent, time is really running out and everyone simply must do much better together to drive climate action further and faster ahead now.

The high-level Conference on Financing for Development and the Means of Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was held at Doha-Qatar, this month, which came out with a set of ten "Doha Messages" aimed at strengthening the coherence and cooperation for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development.

The State of Qatar attaches great importance to the implementation of the international development goals and will align national priorities with the sustainable development agenda 2030.

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