

## **Release: At Unlock Bengaluru, stakeholders seek sustainable solutions to mobility, water and energy needs of the city**

**Bengaluru, 8 July 2017:** Metropolitan cities in India are reeling under the impact of rapid urbanization today. In Bengaluru, where the population has doubled over the past decade, the demand on housing, water, air quality, infrastructure and transportation has increased manifold. This situation is only set to worsen, unless a course for sustainable growth is charted. **Unlock Bengaluru** (#UnlockBLR), a day-long conference organized by WRI India Ross Centre to drive sustainable and equitable development in Bengaluru, brought together a variety of stakeholders – including state and city authorities, bureaucrats, architects, thinkers, business organizations, town planners and civil society organizations – to discuss the way forward for the city.

Setting the tone for the conference, **Mr. Raghunath Deshpande**, Minister for Industries, Karnataka, **Prof. T.G. Sitharam**, Karnataka State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (KSSIDC) Chair and Senior Professor, Department of Civil Engineering at Indian Institute of Science, **Mr. Jamshyd Godrej**, Chairman, WRI India and **Dr. O P Agarwal**, CEO, WRI India led a discourse on strengthening sustainable development in Bengaluru.

The discourse brought into focus the environmental, health and safety concerns in the city caused due to air pollution, road congestion, lack of sanitation, water and other resources. With Bengaluru's Namma Metro becoming fully functional recently, the issue of developing a robust last-mile connectivity plan, and the need for up-to-date, tech-based, new mobility designs were also discussed. Debates were held around new and revised government policies like Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), Real Estate (Regulatory and Development) Act (RERA), etc. and how they could be geared towards improving planning, reducing clutter and enhancing the quality of life of the citizens.

[WRI India](#) has participated in the Bengaluru dialogue since 2007, when the then-Chief Secretary Mr. P.B. Mahishi invited WRI India's [EMBARQ](#) experts to review the Comprehensive Traffic and Transport Plan. In 2017, commemorating its 10<sup>th</sup> year in India, the conference showcased WRI India's work in sustainable urban development, with Bengaluru as its focus city. The event saw the release of:

- 'Unlocking Urbanization', a paper on the challenges faced by fast-urbanizing Bengaluru and the approaches and practices that could promote sustainable development.
- 'Unlock Bengaluru: Cityscape', a resource utilizing spatial mapping, data analytics, research and on-ground evidence to help city planners, urban thinkers and citizens to make informed decisions regarding the infrastructure.

A half-day session on Station Access and Mobility Program (STAMP) also identified innovative last-mile connectivity ideas to address Bengaluru's mobility problem.

Reiterating the need for better mobility solutions in Bengaluru, **Prof. T.G. Sitharam**, said, "Road connectivity, especially in sub-urban areas, is extremely important for Bengaluru's



growth today. We need to constantly think of innovative and long-term models to improve mobility in the city by using multi-modal transport solutions.”

Talking about the need for sustainable growth, Sitharam added, “Bengaluru city has grown in size and density. The only way forward is to adopt sustainable and equitable methods of distributing urban resources like energy and water. A constant multi-stakeholder dialogue with the help of organizations like WRI is of prime importance.”

Pressing issues like addressing congestion, limiting sprawl and improving efficiency by making key decisions on land-use, infrastructure, transport and energy were discussed by the participants. **Dr. O.P. Agarwal**, the newly appointed CEO of WRI India, summed up the discussion, saying: “We need to ensure that growth in Bengaluru, as well as in other Indian metropolises, is balanced, organic and sustainable. Regular interactions between the government, thinkers, businesses and civil society will benefit all and help build cities that are smart, compact and connected.”

Through this one-day conference, WRI India Ross Center hopes to engage in conversation around the issues related to public transport, urban expansion, clean energy and water, climate change and new mobility in Bengaluru.

For further information, contact:

**Nitya Kaushik**, Communications, WRI India: 9819902763, [nitya.kaushik@wri.org](mailto:nitya.kaushik@wri.org)

## About WRI

The World Resources Institute is a global research organization that spans more than 50 countries, with offices in the United States, China, India, Brazil, and more. Our more than 450 experts and staff work closely with leaders to turn big ideas into action to sustain our natural resources—the foundation of economic opportunity and human well-being | [www.wri.org](http://www.wri.org)

WRI India Ross Center is part of WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities. WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities works to make urban sustainability a reality. Global research and on-the-ground experience in Brazil, China, India, Mexico, Turkey and the United States combine to spur action that improves life for millions of people.

Based on longstanding global and local experience in urban planning and mobility, WRI India Ross Center uses proven solutions and action-oriented tools to increase building and energy efficiency, manage water risk, encourage effective governance and make the fast-growing urban environment more resilient to new challenges. Aiming to influence 200 cities with unique research and tools, WRI India Ross Center focuses on a deep cross-sector approach in four megacities on two continents, and targeted assistance to 30 more urban areas, bringing economic, environmental and social benefits to people in cities around the globe | [www.wricitiesindia.org](http://www.wricitiesindia.org)