ET Edge INSIGHTS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

AN ET EDGE INITIATIVE

At YES BANK, we believe sustainability must guide the entire organisation to achieve meaningful, long-term outcomes

In today's climate-conscious world, how do you see the role of businesses evolving?

Climate change is disrupting the business-as-usual approach and forcing us to redefine the paradigms of the 21st century economy. Businesses are increasingly being held accountable, not just for their financial performance but also their environmental and social impacts. In addition to bottom-line growth, the new-age organization is expected to deliver on a more holistic, triple-bottom-line, by creating positive value across the spheres of people, planet and profits. As the corporate sector responds to calls from investors and regulators for enhanced Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) performance and disclosures, we can expect more companies to integrate ESG and climate principles into their governance frameworks, operations, products and services, and their value chains. As custodians of capital, financial institutions will also have to play a central role in embedding climate considerations into the movement of financial flows within the larger economy.



Prashant Kumar, Managing Director & CEO, YES BANK

Which breakthroughs in sustainability or climate action do you predict will have the biggest impact on corporate decision-making?

In terms of India's ambitious climate commitments and the government's proactive policy framework on climate action, in my view, three policy-led breakthroughs are set to reshape corporate decision-making due to their potential to redirect green capital flows and fast-track climate-focused technological innovation. First, mandatory emission intensity targets for energy-intensive sectors such as aluminum, cement, chlor-alkali, amongst others, will act as a significant enabler for driving energy transition, and developing financial products that support decarbonisation of these sectors. Secondly, India's Climate Finance Taxonomy will help define what economic activities qualify as 'green,' paving the way for enhanced capital flows towards projects that help India achieve its 'net zero by 2070' target. And lastly, as low-carbon technologies become cost-competitive and emissions data gets more standardized, sustainability will move from the margins to the core of investment and credit decisioning.

How is collaboration within and across organizations helping advance sustainability and inclusivity goals?

Collaboration lies at the heart of integrating sustainability principles within an organization. At YES BANK, we believe that the thrust on sustainability and sustainability-led outcomes, must resonate within the ethos of the entire organisation, if they are to be achieved. Collaboration is critical to move beyond silo-thinking and towards adopting an integrated approach, where domain-specific ESG considerations are incorporated into key result areas of business units. This cross-functional approach ensures that environmental and social goals are not confined to one department but integrated across the business. Collaboration with external stakeholders is equally important for driving sustainability goals. For instance, in India, collaborative efforts are emerging through public-private roadmaps, inter-ministerial working groups and joint industry forums for creating India-specific metrics and frameworks, which are helping reduce information asymmetry and mobilizing larger ticket green financing. At an organisation-level, engaging clients and suppliers through ESG awareness and capacity-building programs can further drive progress and deliver tangible positive outcomes across the value chain.

How can digital tools and technology amplify engagement among younger stakeholders in sustainability programs?

I believe the next generation is already deeply interested in sustainability, while also being digitally empowered. The corporate sector can therefore leverage digital tools to not only drive further awareness amongst the youth, but also to create real opportunities for them to actively participate in the sustainability movement. Digital learning modules and engagement campaigns on environment and climate action can be used to embed sustainability into the workplace culture. Youth can also be incentivised to participate in community development programs through digital platforms for employee volunteering. Product innovations such as the Green Deposit, also provide an innovative way for the youth to contribute to India's climate agenda by helping them invest their savings in a product whose proceeds are earmarked for lending to green sectors. When youngsters are provided the right tools and trusted to lead sustainability efforts, they don't just participate, they innovate. That is the mindset we need to nurture.

How does strong leadership influence the successful integration of sustainability into core business operations?

"Integrating sustainability into business requires a long-term value mindset. Leaders must adopt a holistic vision aligned with evolving ESG and climate priorities, while balancing long-term sustainability in lieu of short-term returns. Involving the wider ecosystem and embedding ESG and climate KPIs into leadership goals can turn sustainability into lasting competitive advantage."

Leadership rooted in sustainability builds unity, ownership, and lasting impact

Devansh Jain, Executive Director, INOXGFL Group stated that while the long-term competitiveness now depends on sustainability-driven transformation, the most effective solution is to treat sustainability as a strategic investment and not a compliance cost

In today's climate-conscious world, how do you see the role of businesses evolving?

Businesses today have moved beyond traditional profit motives to become key enablers of climate action. The new corporate responsibility lies in embedding sustainability within strategy — from operations to innovation. This evolution demands that companies not only reduce their environmental footprint but also create long-term value for communities and ecosystems. As climate goals tighten globally, businesses must act as catalysts of change, driving decarbonization, promoting resource efficiency, and investing in cleaner technologies. The ones that embrace this shift early will lead the new industrial era.



WITH GLOBAL CLIMATE GOALS TIGHTENING, BUSINESSES MUST LEAD THE SHIFT TOWARD DECARBONIZATION, RESOURCE EFFICIENCY, AND CLEANER TECHNOLOGIES. THOSE THAT ADAPT EARLY WILL SHAPE THE NEW INDUSTRIAL ERA

Which breakthroughs in sustainability or climate action do you predict will have the biggest impact on corporate decision-making?

I see two key breakthroughs shaping corporate priorities — advancements in energy storage, and hybrid solutions. These technologies will redefine how industries approach decarbonization. Equally, the rise of digital monitoring tools and lifecycle analytics will make sustainability metrics more transparent and measurable, influencing boardroom strategies. Companies that integrate these innovations will be better equipped to align profitability with planet-positive outcomes.

What are the biggest challenges businesses face when trying to implement greener practices, and what solutions work best?

The biggest barriers are cost, technology access, and behavioral inertia. Transitioning to green alternatives often requires upfront investment and systemic change, which many hesitate to undertake. However, under the leadership of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the systematic changes undertaken by the Government of India have transformed the way businesses operated in India. And by leveraging government incentives, creating green finance models, and fostering a culture of accountability help overcome these hurdles. Moreover, while the long-term competitiveness now depends on sustainability-driven transformation, the most effective solution is to treat sustainability as a strategic investment and not a compliance cost.

How can digital tools and technology amplify engagement among younger stakeholders in sustainability programs?

Digital platforms are transforming how we engage youth on sustainability. Gamified learning, real-time tracking of environmental impact, and social media-led campaigns empower younger stakeholders to participate meaningfully. Technology creates visibility and ownership — from carbon footprint calculators to blockchain-enabled transparency in green initiatives. By integrating sustainability with digital touchpoints that resonate with youth, organizations can build a more informed, inspired, and action-oriented generation of climate champions.

What key initiatives can accelerate the shift toward a truly sustainable and circular economy?

A circular economy requires systemic interventions — sustainable manufacturing, recycling infrastructure, and policies that reward reuse and regeneration. At the corporate level, integrating circular design, adopting renewable inputs, and investing in waste-to-value technologies are vital. Collaborative supply chain innovation and producer responsibility programs can further close the loop. Most importantly, aligning these initiatives with transparent ESG goals ensures accountability and measurable progress toward circularity

How does strong leadership influence the successful integration of sustainability into core business operations?

Leadership defines the pace and authenticity of sustainable transformation. When sustainability is championed from the top, it becomes embedded in the organization's DNA. Strong leaders set the tone — not just through vision but through measurable actions, transparent reporting, and empowering teams to innovate responsibly. Sustainability-led leadership inspires cultural alignment, drives cross-functional ownership, and ensures that growth and green goals progress hand in hand.

DIAL's Sustainability Playbook: Building the Airport of the Future, Today

In an interaction with Videh Kumar Jaipuriar, CEO of Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), he highlights how innovation is not just part of their strategy but the driving force behind redefining what a truly "green airport" stands for. From climate-smart infrastructure to AI-enabled operations, this excerpt offers a glimpse into how DIAL is shaping the future of sustainable aviation



What concrete steps can businesses take today to accelerate the journey toward a low-carbon, sustainable future?

The journey toward a low-carbon future begins with decisive, integrated action. Businesses must embed sustainability into their strategic and investment decisions rather than treat it as an add-on. This means adopting renewable energy sources, building green and energy-efficient infrastructure, and optimizing operations through data and digital technologies. At Delhi International Airport (DIAL), for instance, we have transitioned to 100% renewable electricity, reducing around 150,000 tonnes of CO emissions annually. We have also invested in LEED-certified green buildings, extensive rainwater harvesting systems, and a zero-liquid discharge sewage treatment plant, ensuring efficient use of natural resources. Collaboration across value chains is equally vital — particularly in aviation, where collective action is needed to tackle Scope 3 emissions. To drive such transformation, we leveraged green financing, raising USD 450 million through overseas green bonds to fund renewable energy projects and efficiency measures. These steps demonstrate how environmental stewardship can coexist with economic prudence and long-term growth.

How is your organization embedding climate-conscious practices into its day-to-day operations?

At Delhi Airport, sustainability is not a standalone initiative — it is woven into our daily operations. Every aspect of airport management, from design to passenger movement, incorporates climate-conscious thinking. We operate entirely on renewable electricity, while over 92% of our airside vehicles have been converted to electric, supported by an expanding network of charging stations. Our 16.6 MLD zero-liquid discharge plant recycles wastewater for cooling and landscaping, complemented by 650 rainwater harvesting structures that conserve groundwater. In waste management, we recently achieved Net Zero Waste to Landfill Platinum certification, reaffirming our commitment to a circular economy. On the operational front, we have deployed AI-driven systems such as the Airport Predictive Operations Centre (APOC) and Unified Total Airside Management (UTAM) to optimize aircraft turnaround, reduce delays, and cut emissions from taxiing. These initiatives have collectively enabled DIAL to reduce nearly 95% of its Scope 1 and 2 emissions, making it the world's first airport of its scale to achieve ACI Level 5 Carbon Accreditation — a global milestone in sustainable airport operations.

What innovative strategies are you using to ensure sustainability is at the heart of your business model?

Innovation is central to DIAL's sustainability journey — it's how we've redefined what a "green airport" means in practice. From the design stage, we've prioritized green infrastructure, with over 7.6 lakh square metres of LEED-certified building area. Our newly refurbished Terminal 1 has received LEED Platinum certification, reinforcing our leadership in green design. We have introduced Bridge Mounted Equipment (BME) such as Fixed Electrical Ground Power Units and Pre-Conditioned Air systems to replace aircraft Auxiliary Power Units on ground, reducing emissions by around 60,000 tonnes of CO annually. Our AI-led APOC and UTAM systems not only optimize operations but also improve passenger experience and resource utilization. Financial innovation is another pillar — we raised USD 450 million through green bonds, channelled into renewable energy, energy-efficient infrastructure, and waste reduction projects. Moreover, our multi-modal connectivity, which sees about 20% of passengers accessing the airport via the Delhi Metro, saves nearly 95,000 tonnes of CO each year. For DIAL, sustainability is not just a responsibility — it's a competitive advantage that drives efficiency, profitability, and long-term value creation.

Which measures are critical for building climate resilience and adapting to environmental changes?

"Building climate resilience requires preparing for future challenges while transforming current operations. At DIAL, we are advancing mitigation and adaptation measures to strengthen infrastructure against environmental stress and resource scarcity. We are expanding renewable energy use, exploring green hydrogen and electrification, and designing climate-resilient facilities. Resource systems like zero-liquid discharge, rainwater harvesting, and waste circularity reduce external dependency. Through data-driven management and industry collaboration on SAF, we ensure Delhi Airport remains resilient and leads India's low-carbon transition."

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE



H.E. RASMUS ABILDGAARD KRISTENSEN
Danish Ambassador to India

"It was a privilege to speak at the ET Edge Sustainability Summit and represent Denmark as Country Partner. Denmark places great importance on its partnership with India, especially as both nations advance sustainable growth, innovation, and green technologies. We remain committed to working closely with India by strengthening cooperation between government, businesses, research, and civil society. Danish companies already offer key solutions, and our Green Strategic Partnership will deepen this collaboration further."



RAJIV RANJAN MISHRA
MD, Apraava Energy

Apraava Energy embeds sustainability at the core of its business model, directing 100% of new capital towards non-carbon-generating assets like renewables, transmission and smart metering. We were among the pioneers in the power industry to leverage pool financing and green bonds to fund low-carbon projects. Our periodic enterprise-wide double materiality assessments shape our ESG roadmap, aligned with business activities driven by responsible procurement practices and need-based community interventions. This approach ensures long-term resilience and sustainable value creation.



NITIN GUPTA
Co-founder and CEO, Attero

Digital technology is the bridge between awareness and action for younger stakeholders in sustainability. When platforms make environmental impact visible, measurable, and rewarding, participation naturally scales. For instance, through initiatives like Selsmart and MetalMandi, Attero's technology is simplifying responsible disposal and resource recovery. These platforms not only create transparency and traceability but also make sustainability tangible, something young people can actively contribute to, track, and take pride in as part of their everyday digital lives.



APOORVSHREE CHATURVEDI
Director – Global Operations, UFlex Group

We, at UFlex, believe in driving targeted product platforms to address sustainability challenges for our customers and the broader market; cost changes are always a feature at the outset, but can be driven down with larger volumes. Many sectors also contend with evolving regulations and a fragmented recycling infrastructure. What consistently drives progress is collaboration, co-developing solutions, investing in advanced technologies, and building circular systems that the entire value chain can adopt with ease.