

# Towards Sustainability and Climate Literacy: The Defining Mission of Our Generation

SRM University-AP, empowering a sustainable future with green infrastructure, research excellence and climate-conscious education

Climate change is not merely a crisis - it is the defining battle of our existence, and it is happening even more quickly than we feared. Earth's temperature has been rising at a clear and measurable pace, with an approximately 1.1°C rise over the past decade (2015-2025) being the hottest period in recorded history.

No corner of the world is immune to the devastating consequences of climate change. Temperatures have spiked in many countries in Southeast Asia, with India witnessing an intense heatwave as temperatures reportedly touched 50°C in parts of Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, raising concerns over extreme weather conditions. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) have

issued a red alert for northwest and central India due to the persistence of severe heatwave conditions in several regions.

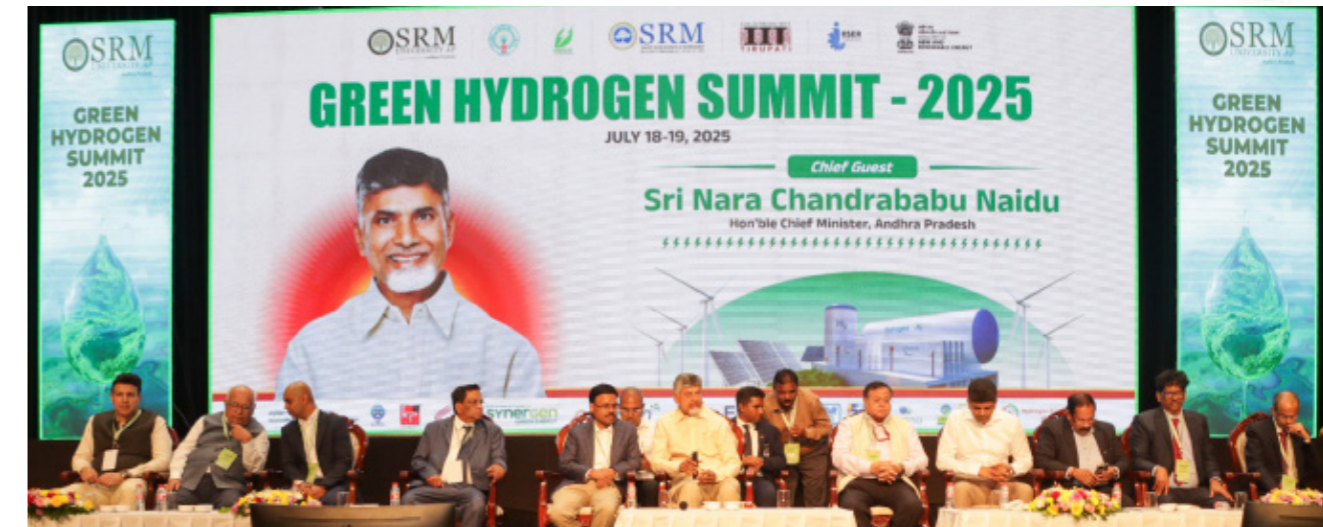
These rising temperatures catalyse environmental degradation, natural disasters, weather extremes, food and water insecurity, economic disruption and conflict. Sea levels are rising, the Arctic is melting, coral reefs are dying, oceans are acidifying, and forests are burning. As the intense cost of the climate crisis reaches irreversible highs, now is the time for bold collective action.

In humanity's own David and Goliath struggle, a civilisation armed with little more than solar panels, wind turbines, and sheer collective

will stands against the towering, seemingly unstoppable giant of the climate crisis — and, unlike the biblical tale, this time victory is far from guaranteed, but not impossible.

As the UN Secretary-General António Guterres pointed out in his speech at the Climate Action Summit, "the climate emergency is a race we are losing, but it is a race we can win".

With this year's World Environment Day heavily focusing on the theme "Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For Our Future", the world is ready to steer towards climate action. Today, sustainability is no longer a term confined to environmental discourse - it is an urgent, collective responsibility that falls on society, from



governments and corporations to communities and individuals alike. How we respond to this moment will not only determine the resilience of our ecosystems, but the very future of the generations to come.

Education is a key driver for combating climate change and fostering sustainability. Under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and UNESCO, climate change education is recognised as a foundational tool to foster awareness, encourage behavioural change, and equip future generations with the skills necessary to develop sustainable solutions.

When young people understand the devastating realities of global warming, they don't just adapt; they mobilise and take action. Classrooms become the launching pad that transforms students into informed advocates who carry the urgency of the climate crisis far beyond school walls and into the heart of society.

Universities and institutes of higher education advance sustainable development through education, research, and community engagement. From developing 'miniature cities' and 'living laboratories' that test cutting-edge eco-technologies, to driving sustainability research, influencing public policy, and engaging with local communities to implement practical



solutions, these academic institutes become the vital engines that offer awareness in urban sustainability and the circular economy.

Here is where SRM University-AP stands out as a living laboratory, promoting sustainability and environmental responsibility as a core institutional value among students and faculty. Its commitment to nurture a sustainable and eco-friendly campus is reflected in the green infrastructure, waste management, and renewable energy to reduce its ecological footprint while fostering a healthy, sustainable culture.

With its sustainability-embedded academic curricula and multidisciplinary academic programmes that incorporate principles from environmental science, engineering, biology, chemistry, and mathematics, such as the B.Tech. in Energy Engineering, M.Sc. in Environmental Science and M.Tech. in Environmental and Sustainable Engineering, the university equips young minds with knowledge and skills

for environmental innovation practices.

Emphasising global sustainability priorities, the university has undertaken pioneering initiatives in AI Education, Quantum Computing, Green Hydrogen and Emerging Technologies. From establishing India's first Quantum Reference Facility and quantum secure communications test bed to introducing programmes in Defence Systems, Energy, Health, and Semiconductor Engineering, SRM AP is driving a transformative shift in education.

At SRM University-AP, students, faculty members, and staff participate in eco-conscious practices to create a more sustainable environment. The university's core institutional value aligns with the global call for climate responsibility and environmental consciousness.

The university aims to educate and motivate the next generation of environmentally conscious leaders in developing innovative solutions that significantly reduce the global carbon footprint for a greener and more resilient future. With an established roadmap built through strategic planning, sustainable infrastructure, research, and community engagement, SRM AP envisions a greener, cleaner, and more resilient future for all.

