



**24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)  
2–15 December 2018, Katowice, Poland**



*Dr VV Sadamate, participated in the 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held at Katowice, Poland, organized from 2 to 15 December 2018. Here he shares his experiences.*

**CONTEXT**

COP24 is the informal name for the 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the supreme body of the UNFCCC Convention. The COP holds its sessions every year and ensures effective implementation of the provisions of the Convention. Implementations of these provisions are regularly reviewed by the nations. COP24 conference took place from 2 to 15 December 2018 at Katowice, Poland.

I attended International Climate Change COP Meetings held earlier (COP19 Warsaw, COP21 Paris, COP22 Marrakesh) as a Senior Member of the National Council for Climate Change, Sustainable Development and Public Leadership (NCCSD) Ahmedabad, India. This year too I had an opportunity to represent NCCSD in COP24 conference. Thanks to Dr KN Shelat, Executive Chairman, NCCSD for his support and encouragement.



**12th plenary meeting of the COP (upon conclusion of the joint statements plenary)**

## MY OBSERVATIONS

### Continental Presence of Nations, NGOs and Activists at COP24

As in the past COPs, this time too there was a continental representation of international and inter-governmental agencies, nations, large number of NGOs, research organizations, indigenous communities and climate activists. A huge sport stadium at Katowice was the venue that accommodated country pavilions in E block, the NGOs in C block and the formal meetings in B block. Media Centre, computer centre, recreation centre, negotiation rooms, committee rooms, etc were nicely organized and provided for. The participants were provided free transportation facilities through public buses, trains and tram services in Katowice and nearby towns.

### India Pavilion

Design of India Pavilion was one of the best and stood out very well in the pavilion block surrounded by pavilions of other countries such as Poland, Malaysia, etc. The activities at India Pavilion were organized very systematically. Every day there were side events organized by select ministries and organizations of the Indian Government. The sessions were chaired by senior functionaries and interventions were organized by technical experts. The audience mainly comprised of delegates from India and from developed and developing countries. Representatives from African and South East Asia took active part in the proceedings. India pavilion deliberated on themes related to the following agriculture and allied sectors:

- Technology Need Assessment and Innovations for Managing Climate Change
- Mountain Eco Systems – Himalayan Regions
- Climate Smart Agriculture and Food Security
- Forestry Based Climate Actions in India
- Climate Resilient Rural Development
- Implementing Climate Actions: Opportunities and Challenges
- Mainstreaming India's Climate Action
- Innovations in Adaptation to Climate Change
- Energy Conservation and Efficiency: Innovative and Sustainable Approaches & Challenges
- Renewables in India: Innovations and Challenges
- Prospects of Solar Energy in India and Across the World
- Water Resource Conservation and Management for Climate Resilient Development
- Capacity Building for Climate Change

### National Council for Climate Change, Sustainable Development and Public Leadership (NCCSD)

I represented NCCSD both in the preliminary discussions and in the final event. NCCSD participated in a series of preliminary meetings held at Ministry of Environment & Forest and Climate Change and shared their experiences of earlier COPs and facilitated NCCSD's agenda.

At Katowice, the NCCSD was represented by:

- Dr KN Shelat, (IAS Retd.) Executive Chair, NCCSD, Ahmedabad, India
- Dr VV Sadamate, Former Adviser Agriculture, then Planning Commission, GOI
- Sh. JS Gosalia, Managing Trustee, Vivekanand Research & Training Institute (VRTI), Mandvi, District Kutch, Gujarat and

- Sh. S Jha, Remote Sensing Specialist, VRTI, Mandvi.

NCCDS was allocated the Stall Number C-117 in the NGO block that comprised about 200 NGOs representing various nations, interests and thematic specialties. Continuous video film on various topics was played on TV screen during the visiting hours and more than 10,000 visitors visited NCCSD stall. Over 500 DVDs and printed material were picked up by a stream of visitors.

Also, the stall displayed charts, posters, folders, leaflets and pamphlets on various subject matters such as:

- Technologies for climate smart agriculture
- Capacity Building of farmers and field functionaries
- Women empowerment
- Success stories from the tribal areas
- Strategies for doubling farmer income
- Elements of climate smart agriculture
- Climate variability and technology options
- International collaboration especially with Florida University and outcome thereof
- Combating climate risks
- Extension efforts in re orienting farmers and field functionaries



**Dr Shelat, Sh. Gosalia and Sh. Jha at NCCSD Stall**

### Side Event Organized by the Rural Development Ministry on 6 December 2018

The following three specific interventions were made by the NCCSD team:

1. **Dr KN Shelat** (Formerly Principal Secretary, Government of Gujarat): He highlighted on the genesis and operation of integrated rural development programmes and their importance in promoting Climate resilient agriculture. Technological interventions and adaptation strategies, capacity building, community participation, role of women, importance of agriculture and allied sectors in risk management in India were also covered. Further, he emphasized on transformation of rural areas through natural resources management and livelihood enhancement.
2. **Dr R Shende** (Former Director UNEP & Associate of NCCSD): Speaking on behalf of NCCSD and TERRE (another NGO that Dr Shende is chairing), spoke about the climate-smart interventions initiated by his organization in a small village in Satara District of Maharashtra where cinema celebrities like Amir Khan is associated with community development for climate action. He emphasized that all sections of society should be involved in the climate change adaptation process.
3. **Dr VV Sadamate** (Agricultural Extension Specialist and Former Adviser Agriculture Planning Commission, Government of India): I dealt in detail on convergence of agriculture and allied sector programmes in watershed for enhancing climate resilience, mainly based on my experience of working as Agricultural Convergence Expert in the Rural Development Ministry. I submitted the following points for enhancing climate resilience in the watershed programmes:

- Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), a multi sectoral programme (currently a part of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana) focused on rain water harvesting, related soil conservation measures, sustainable NRM efforts to enhance productivity of rainfed areas and community participation across the production systems.
- In this programme, community participation is encouraged through SHGs, User Groups, Local Self Governments, Commodity Organizations, involving Farmer Groups, NGOs etc.
- Watershed provided a sound platform for convergence of other sectoral programmes for obtaining higher impact in rainfed rural areas.
- Success of a watershed depends on how systematically other sectoral programmes are integrated which may include agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry/ Dairy Development and fisheries, rural development, skill development, sericulture, etc, as per the micro-agro eco situation.
- For effective convergence at the field level in a watershed, the following strategies are required:
  - Orient stakeholders on mutual benefits
  - Document existing farming systems
  - Enlist specific activities under various GoI/State schemes to be converged in a particular watershed
  - Develop Convergence Matrix and assign responsibilities to the field formations
  - Work out MOUs between the converging departments
  - Implement strategies and structures for effective convergence, watershed team would need to take a lead
  - Involve community at all the stages of the project phase with focus on converging efforts
  - Workout operational flexibility required to be given to the field formations of various development departments for joint efforts and issue of requisite policies and instructions
- Convergence stories have been successfully demonstrated in the States of Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, etc.
- Convergence in a given watershed provided adequate resilience to climate change integrating the production systems and provided risk cover too.



### Implementing Climate Actions: Opportunities and Challenges (Side Event Organized by NABARD on 7 December 2018)

Two Specific Interventions made by the NCCSD Team included as follows:

**Sh. JS Gosalia** (Executive Trustee, VRTI): He specifically highlighted on the empowerment efforts made by NGOs in organizing farmers into farmer groups and farmer producer organizations and building their capacities for climate smart agriculture.

**Sh. S Jha** (Remote Sensing Specialist, VRTI): He focused on specific climate advisories for crops, horticulture and animal husbandry enterprises based on scientific mapping of technologies and whether parameters and making farmers aware of such applications through awareness campaigns and demonstrations. Further, Jha underlined importance of climate related services as a tool for developing climate resilience.



### **Participation in Country and International Farmer Alliances**

NCCSD team members selectively participated in technical discussions held in various country pavilions and in various international agency forums. Primarily our interventions were focused on farmer empowerment for climate actions, involvement of NGOs/CSOs, making climate smart agriculture technology driven and developing farmer alliances country specific and regional.

### **Climate Action Studio - UNFCCC Forum on voices views of observers –organizations**

Dr KN Shelat spoke to Climate Action Studio on 8 December 2018 about the need for international initiatives to prioritize agriculture and use it as a natural tool for carbon absorption. He mentioned that greenery cover is reducing gradually and therefore CO<sub>2</sub> absorption is getting reduced. Hence there is a need to balance through increasing the forest cover or agriculture activity. But preference should be given to agriculture because it provides livelihood to farmers. He also spoke about how Civil Society Members in India like Shroff Voluntary Organization Consortium (SVOC) are working in convergence with government and semi-government organizations for increasing the income of farmers. Refer YouTube link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EznU6RMEfVA>

### **PARTICIPATION IN GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE (GACSA)**

Dr KN Shelat and I participated in a side event organized by GACSA. The discussion was led by Co-Chair of the Alliance. Introductory remarks were given by Deputy Director General, Natural Resources

Management, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Members of the Expert Panel comprised representatives of the World Bank, Farmers Organizations, Cornell University Experts, etc. Equivocally, all the panelists emphasized on the following issues:

- Empowering farmers for climate actions
- Building capacity of farmers and other stakeholders
- Fostering community involvement and women participation
- Improving and strengthening extension services all across the countries and production systems
- Building private sector partnerships for combating climate change.

Dr. KN Shelat in his intervention suggested involvement of youth in agriculture and emphasized on measures like skill building, empowering, providing farm mechanization and marketing opportunities for farm youth so that their involvement could be properly channelized in agriculture and allied sectors.

### **MEETING WITH GACSA COORDINATOR, FAO Rome**

I held detailed discussions with Ms. Federica Matteoli, Coordinator of GACSA at NCCSD stall, Katowice, Poland on 12 December 2018. The issues covered included programmes and activities of NCCSD, climate change actions on the ground, role of extension services at the operational levels, targeting an international paper on Climate Change and Extension services, empowering farmers and farmer organizations to take on climate actions, taking a few pilots in various countries with GACSA and Cornell support etc. Ms. Federica suggested enlisting extension strategies for grounding climate actions; through a detailed email later.

Further, Ms. Federica agreed to indicate a few extension contacts to us, especially from Indonesia, North America and to some panelists those contributed significantly in GACSA dialogue held on 11 December 2018. I also informed them about my previous association with Cornell. During that visit, I met with (a) Mr. Martien van Nieuwkoop of the World Bank when the Ministry of Agriculture in India was implementing extension reforms through a World Bank support in India and (b) Dr. Daniel Gustafson, DDG, FAO earlier during his tenure as FAOR, India. I was also instrumental in organizing a wider debate on SDGs and Climate related Extension services at Kandy in Sri Lanka in May 2018. With these experiences in view, it was agreed to carry forward NCCSD collaboration and partnership with GACSA/FAO.

### **INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION WITH SISTER NGOS**

I held detailed discussions with Mr. Saddypineda, Senior Executive representing Forest and Climate Change NGO, Honduras, Central America. He expressed a keen interest in NCCSD's field activities on climate action and the capability building programmes operated by VRTI for the farmers and the development functionaries carried out in collaboration with Florida Agriculture & Mechanical University FAMU. Mr. Saddypineda agreed to get back to us soon.

### **IMPLICATIONS OF COP24 FOR AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION (in the context of changing climate)**

1. There is an urgent need to revisit agricultural extension services globally with focus on strengthening their capacity to assimilate and deliver climate change and adaptation advisories

2. The field functionaries need to be thoroughly reoriented on location specific adaptation measures as applicable to the relevant production systems, and their capacities built through the research organizations,
3. Farmers, farm women and farm youth should be empowered, motivated and incentivized for adaptation measures and adoption of climate smart agricultural practices across the sectors,
4. National and international agencies should float large number of pilots on extension interventions for demonstrating climate change adaptation strategies,
5. Large number of partnerships are also required to be promoted at various levels, especially at the county or block levels on climate change adaptation and supportive/applicable media/ICT interventions intensified,
6. GACSA promoted centres of excellence on climate smart agriculture like Cornell should replicate their successful pilots in developing countries in collaboration with agricultural universities and credible NGO partners having sound presence on the ground,
7. There is a need for initiating large number of network projects on Climate adaptation and relevant extension interventions with support from donor agencies,
8. Community empowerment and involvement models for climate action, successfully tried and demonstrated in various countries should be documented and learning shared systematically through GACSA
9. National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) and National Initiative for Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) learnings and experiences should be replicated promoting Climate Smart villages. NGOs, Agricultural Technology Management (ATMAs) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) may promote one such village jointly in each block in India.

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