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## PRESS RELEASE

### RE-GREENING INDIA: WATER FOR ALL

#### *A CRITICAL NEED FOR COHERENCE IN POLICIES AND ACTIONS*

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**New Delhi. February 23, 2019.** Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies (RGICS) and Club of Rome (CoR), here at India International Centre (IIC) have successfully organized the seminar on “**Re Greening India: Water for All**”. “*Re-Greening India*” is a series of seminars, jointly conceived by RGICS and CoR to promote sustainable use and management of *Jal* (water), *Jungle* (forest), and *Jameen* (land). This seminar was adorned by many speakers of eminence like Dr. Mihir Shah who has been a former member of the Planning Commission and has chaired the high-powered committee on “India’s Water Reforms”, Dr. Ashok Khosla, Chairman of Development Alternatives, and renowned experts like Pankaj Pachauri, Abhilash Khandekar, Prof. A.K Gosain, Dr. Himanshu Kulkarni, Lt. Gen Arun Sahni from Club of Rome, India, and Vijay Mahajan, Director of RGICS.

The seminar themed as “Water for all” has been very timely, especially in the background of the severe water scarcity that the country is currently grappling with. India, accounting for around 17% of the world population has been endowed with just four percent of the world’s fresh water resources clearly highlighting the need for its judicious use. According to international standards, more than fifty per cent of the twenty river basins have water scarcity conditions with availability less than 1000 m<sup>3</sup> per annum. According to a report of the Union Water Resources Ministry, total water demand in the country is estimated to increase by 34 percent by 2025 and over 78 percent by 2050, indicating a major gap of around 30 percent with respect to the replenishment rate capacity signaling a serious water crisis in the nation.

In the seminar, Dr. Ashok Khosla and Mr. Pankaj Pachauri discussed on the issue of the increasing demand and declining availability of utilizable water resources, as well as the effects of climate change and prospects of ensuring “Water for all”. Prof. A.K Gosain, Dr. Himanshu Kulkarni and Lt. Gen Arun Sahni deliberated at length over the knowledge gaps and practical difficulties that prevent rational policy making and ensuring adequate resources for all. Dr. Mihir Shah and Mr. Khandekar in the last session of the seminar presented with a thought provoking exposition on the necessary policies and institutions that may be put in place to realize the goal of securing ‘water for all’ by 2025. The seminar was concluded by the Director of RGICS, Mr. Vijay Mahajan who stressed on the fact that policy making is a continuous process of improvement, and for it to be effective, it has to be inclusive and informed. He summarized the key ideas of the seminar along with a concluding discussion on future policy strategies, which are required to use water resources in a more sustainable way.

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