

Regulatory Efficiency and Conservation Can Co-exist: Union Minister Bhupender Yadav at PAFI Forum

Calls on industry to lead green innovation while outlining India's domestic and international climate action roadmap

New Delhi, September 25, 2026 — Speaking at the Public Affairs Forum of India's (PAFI) 13th Annual Forum, Chief Guest **Bhupender Yadav, Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**, addressed a session titled **"India's Green Growth Story: Sustainability, Competitiveness and Global Leadership."** The Minister underscored the need for steady dialogue between government and industry, stable policy frameworks, and green innovation to transform environmental ambitions into scalable investments.

Speaking on balancing border infrastructure with conservation, Mr. Yadav said:

"Infrastructure in our border areas—such as roads leading into the Himalayas—is essential for national security. At the same time, expanding our conservation footprint is equally critical. We have increased the number of national parks from 103 to 106, expanded our tiger reserves, and established clear demarcations for eco-sensitive zones. With 23% of our country under forest cover and 4% covered by water bodies, environmental considerations naturally arise, but growth and environmental protection must move forward together."

Highlighting regulatory efficiency and the circular economy, he noted: "Industry must transition towards innovation, research, and green-based solutions. To support this, we have created comprehensive circular economy regulations across nearly 18 new sectors, including electronic waste, construction and demolition waste, used oil, lead and battery waste, and asbestos. Furthermore, we have streamlined procedures significantly: prior to 2014, environmental clearances took over 600 days. Today, that timeline has been reduced to under 100 days, proving that regulatory efficiency and environmental safeguard can co-exist."

Detailing India's role in international climate diplomacy, Mr. Yadav emphasized: "India operates on three pillars: acting locally, delivering domestically, and collaborating internationally. Together with Sweden, India created the Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT) to foster knowledge sharing and green technology adoption in hard-to-abate sectors like cement, steel, transport, and aluminium. Internationally, India founded the International Solar Alliance (ISA), which now spans 137 countries with headquarters in Gurugram. Additionally, to help nations tackle climate disasters, we launched the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), also headquartered in India."

Addressing wildlife protection and biodiversity, he added: "Mitigation and proactive species conservation are vital components of our climate and environmental strategy. We are actively protecting key species like the Great Indian Bustard, where we recently established an elevated feeding centre in Kutch that I personally visited and am closely monitoring. Similar dedicated efforts are underway for vulture conservation. Furthermore, as a key region on the Central Asian Flyway, India remains committed to protecting habitat corridors for migratory birds traveling from Eurasia, East Asia, and Mongolia."

The session underscored that transforming ambition into investment requires deep alignment between public policy and industry execution. Industry leaders acknowledged the regulatory momentum driving low-carbon transitions and sustainable manufacturing.

The session was moderated by noted journalist **Navika Kumar, Group Editor-in-Chief, Times Network and Times Now and Navbharat** who added *‘When we are looking at India, and it's journey to Viksit Bharat. We are in the phase of India 3.0 where growth is important. But what is also important that we don't become an ecological burden on the world’*.

The session was welcomed by Rajat Prakash, Managing Partner, Athena Legal; moderated by Navika Kumar, Group Editor-in-Chief, Times Network and Times Now Navbharat.

For more information: www.pafi.in

Media Contact:

Medha Shukla – medha.shukla@pafi.in | 9993079588