ESG & Sustainability Leadership Summit – Regional Summit (Chennai)

"SDG Shocks in ESG and Sustainability: Accelerating Action Toward Resilience"

Date: 23 March 2026
Venue: SAIRAM INSTITUTIONS

Introduction

The global transition toward sustainability is unfolding amid accelerating environmental degradation, geopolitical uncertainty, public health disruptions, evolving regulatory frameworks, and supply chain vulnerabilities. These systemic disruptions—often referred to as **"SDG Shocks"**—are significantly influencing the pace and pathways through which nations and industries progress toward achieving the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

In this context, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) integration has emerged as a critical framework for ensuring long-term resilience, responsible governance, and sustainable economic growth. Organizations across sectors are increasingly required to align their operations with global sustainability expectations, regulatory mandates, and stakeholder demands.

Recognizing the need for collaborative dialogue and knowledge exchange, the **ESG & Sustainability Leadership Summit – Chennai Regional Edition**, organized by **UN Global Compact Network India (UN GCNI)** in collaboration with **SAIRAM Institutions**, aims to provide a strategic platform for policymakers, industry leaders, investors, academia, and sustainability practitioners to engage in meaningful discussions on ESG implementation and SDG-aligned development.

This regional summit will facilitate knowledge sharing, promote responsible leadership, and strengthen partnerships that can accelerate sustainable transformation across industries and institutions in Southern India.

Rationale

The journey toward ESG-aligned sustainability requires coordinated action across industries, supply chains, academic institutions, and policy ecosystems. Emerging compliance frameworks such as **BRSR Core, EU CSDDD, and IFRS/ISSB ESG Disclosure Standards** are reshaping corporate governance, reporting systems, and operational practices globally.

At the same time, climate-related disruptions such as extreme weather events, resource scarcity, and environmental degradation continue to impact infrastructure, productivity, and economic

stability. These challenges highlight the urgency for organizations to move beyond compliance and adopt ESG as a strategic approach to risk management, innovation, and responsible growth.

The Chennai Regional Summit therefore seeks to create a multi-stakeholder platform that encourages dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaborative action to address sustainability challenges and accelerate the transition toward resilient and responsible business ecosystems.

Goal and Objectives

Goal

To accelerate ESG adoption and sustainability-driven transformation by strengthening leadership engagement, knowledge exchange, and collaborative action aligned with SDG resilience.

Objectives

- Enhance understanding of SDG shocks and emerging ESG risk landscapes.
- Strengthen readiness for evolving national and global ESG compliance frameworks.
- Promote ESG implementation strategies tailored to diverse industry sectors.
- Showcase enabling technologies, financing mechanisms, and innovation driving ESG transitions.
- Foster academia–industry–government collaboration for research, innovation, and capacity building.

Value Proposition

The summit provides a unique platform connecting industry leaders, policymakers, financial institutions, sustainability practitioners, and academic institutions. Participants will gain insights into regulatory developments, sustainable finance opportunities, ESG technologies, and sector-specific sustainability practices.

For academic institutions, the summit enables meaningful engagement with industry experts, facilitating experiential learning, applied research, and innovation-driven sustainability initiatives.

Program Agenda

09:00 AM – 03:00 PM ! SDG Project Expo – LMS (SIDE EVENT - IEEE SSIT MADRAS CHAPTER)

An **SDG Project Expo** will be organized to showcase innovative and impact-driven projects developed by the **winners of Inspirathon and Innovathon competitions** under the Sairam

Innovation Ecosystem. The expo will feature student-led innovations addressing real-world challenges aligned with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

09:30 AM – 11:00 AM ! Inauguration Ceremony

The summit will commence with the formal inauguration in the presence of distinguished dignitaries, industry leaders, sustainability experts, and academic representatives. The session will set the tone for the summit by highlighting the importance of ESG leadership and collaborative action toward sustainable development.

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM ! Tea & Networking Break

11:30 AM – 01:00 PM ! Parallel Panel Discussions

Panel 1 – VRR Hall - Sri Sairam Engineering College
Topic: *Green Finance, Just Transition & Climate Investments*

This panel will explore sustainable finance pathways, climate investments, and financial mechanisms that support the transition toward a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy. Experts from banking, finance, and impact investing sectors will discuss strategies for mobilizing capital, supporting MSMEs, and enabling equitable climate transitions.

Panel 2 – SRR Hall - Sri Sairam Engineering College
Topic: *Leadership for a Sustainable Future*

This session will focus on the role of leadership, governance, ethics, and collaboration in advancing sustainability and ESG adoption. The discussion will emphasize the importance of responsible leadership, youth engagement, and academia–industry partnerships in driving long-term sustainable development and innovation.

01:00 PM – 02:00 PM ! Lunch Break & Networking

02:00 PM – 03:00 PM

Round Table Discussion – AV Hall - Sri Sairam Engineering College
This session will bring together industry leaders, sustainability experts, and academic representatives to engage in focused dialogue on practical pathways for strengthening ESG implementation, policy alignment, and collaborative sustainability initiatives.

03:00 PM – 04:00 PM ! Classroom Sessions

03:00 PM – 03:40 PM

ESG and Regulatory Compliance – Transforming Corporate Governance and Operational Systems for Sustainable Value Creation; This session will bring together industry leaders, sustainability experts, and professionals to explore how Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) frameworks are reshaping corporate decision-making, regulatory compliance, and operational practices.

03:40 PM – 04:00 PM

PRME – Embedding Sustainability Principles for a Resilient Academic and Business Ecosystem; This session will bring together industry leaders, academic experts, business school representatives, and sustainability practitioners to discuss the role of the Principles for Responsible Management Education **(PRME)** initiative in transforming management education to address global sustainability challenges. The conversation will highlight how academic institutions can integrate responsible management principles, ethics, sustainability, and climate consciousness into their curricula, research, and institutional practices.

Expected Outcomes

- Strengthened ESG awareness and implementation capacity across sectors.
- Enhanced readiness for evolving sustainability regulations and disclosure standards.
- Greater collaboration between industry, academia, policymakers, and financial institutions.
- Preparing future responsible business leaders to address climate and societal challenges.
- Development of partnerships and knowledge-sharing frameworks that support SDG acceleration.

Long-Term Impact

The summit aims to contribute to the development of a **resilient and responsible regional ecosystem** that supports sustainable growth and climate resilience. By fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange, the initiative will accelerate progress toward key SDGs including **SDG 4, SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 12, SDG 13, and SDG 17**.