

**IRF**

Independent  
Research  
Forum



**IRF: supporting change  
for a sustainable future**

# The new global agenda for sustainable development provides a crucial opportunity to address the problems of poverty, inequality, unsustainable natural resource use and climate change.

Agenda 2030 calls for a fresh approach to development that recognises the need to integrate action to protect the climate and the wider environment into actions to tackle poverty. It must also recognise the importance of equity and social justice in environmental policies.

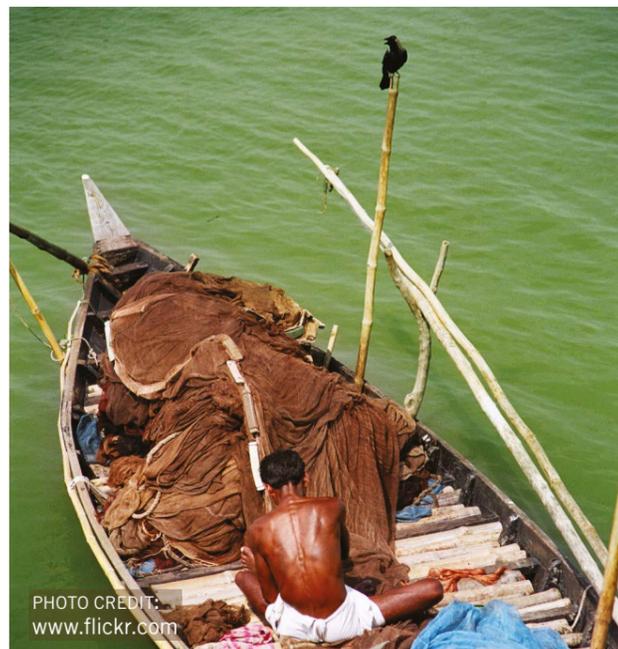
The Independent Research Forum (IRF) – a partnership between ten leading sustainable development research institutes and think tanks from around the world, formed in 2012 – brings together the expertise and experience to support governments and civil society find ways to work together to bring about this transformational shift.

## The world in 2016

We are living through a period of great change. Powerful factors, from poverty to natural disasters, emerging technologies, and climate change, are changing the operating environment for governments, business and civil society.

The 2030 Agenda, including the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed by the United Nations in September 2015 seeks to address these challenges, with a transformational approach to development. This agenda is universal – it applies to all countries and across all sectors.

*“The discussions were really informative and undoubtedly have shaped the thinking of many delegates.”* PARTICIPANT AT IRF RETREAT



## IRF

The IRF partnership brings together a breadth of scientific expertise and practical on the ground experience across the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development. Our partners’ research and policy analysis skills, combined with our experience, gives us a wealth of expertise on how to put this new sustainable development agenda into practice.

Our well-established relationships with governments, regional bodies and civil society organisations around the world, put us in a unique position to bring together the key people who matter to develop coherent, integrated agendas for change.

And our global reach allows us to share key lessons with the wider development community, bridging the worlds of science, policy and practice.



strengthen the ambition and coherence of the new global agenda through research and evidence-based facilitated dialogues.

At the global level, IRF organised a series of informal retreats for senior government negotiators and UN officials to create a space to share diverse perspectives and find common ground on complex, potentially divisive issues.

*“These retreats have enriched me so much. I wish we could move these discussions to the negotiation room in the UN.”* PARTICIPANT AT IRF RETREAT

At the national and regional levels, IRF has also supported research and learning in the Caribbean, Chile and southern Africa exploring how to translate universal goals and targets into concrete progress on the ground in different contexts.

*“I was privileged to be part of this, a space where negotiators get access to think tanks on topics like: ‘yes, we can bridge the North/South divide. Yes, we can solve these problems’.”* PARTICIPANT AT IRF RETREAT

## Our track-record

IRF’s partners have a long history of working at the international, national and regional levels to establish strong relationships and develop mutual trust, which supports broad understanding among policy makers.

As IRF, we have built on these relationships by working with experts, negotiators and sustainable development practitioners to



## IRF strengths

- our research and policy experience give us legitimacy and credibility on a range of issues;
- We have our ear to the ground and can share lessons learnt from around the world with our global network
- our geographical reach gives us breadth and a unique perspective;
- we have the ability to be both a critical observer and a neutral facilitator;
- we are politically independent from governments and from inter-governmental organisations,
- we have established ways of working that cut across issues, combining research expertise, policy analysis, dialogue facilitation and action on the ground;
- we are a well-established and effective partnership that benefits all partners through shared experience and learning

*“Excellent in terms of themes, focus, timing. Helps develop a shared understanding and commitment across country typologies.”*

PARTICIPANT AT IRF RETREAT

## Supporting the new sustainable development agenda

The transition to sustainable development will be a long-term process for every country, rich or poor, with failures and successes along the way. Learning from the experiences of different countries and sharing that learning more widely will be essential to achieving lasting progress.

IRF will work with governments, legislative bodies and civil society actors to use our experience and expertise to bring together the key players to facilitate shared learning, identify priorities and develop strategies.

We will draw on this to establish learning platforms and engage with countries, regions and civil society groups to learn and share lessons learnt from experience. We will periodically review progress, producing an independent review.



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## Who we are

Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) Trinidad, West Indies <a href="http://www.canari.org">www.canari.org</a>	A technical non-profit institute engaged in research, policy influencing and capacity building for participatory natural resource management and governance
Centro Latinoamericano para el Desarrollo Rural (RIMISP) Santiago, Chile <a href="http://www.rimisp.org">www.rimisp.org</a>	A network that links and generates knowledge for the development of Latin American territories
Development Alternatives (DA) New Delhi, India <a href="http://www.devaltd.org">www.devaltd.org</a>	A research and action organisation striving to deliver socially equitable, environmentally sound and economically scalable development outcomes
Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) Hayama, Japan <a href="http://www.iges.or.jp">www.iges.or.jp</a>	A regional and global institute conducting innovative policy development and strategic research for environmental measures
International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) London, UK <a href="http://www.iied.org">www.iied.org</a>	A policy and action research organisation promoting sustainable development and linking local priorities to global challenges
Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) Johannesburg, South Africa <a href="http://www.osisa.org">www.osisa.org</a>	An African institution committed to deepening democracy, protecting human rights and enhancing good governance in the region
Overseas Development Institute (ODI) London, UK <a href="http://www.odi.org.uk">www.odi.org.uk</a>	An independent think tank on international development and humanitarian issues
Research Centre for Sustainable Development (RCSD), CASS Beijing, China <a href="http://www.rcsd.org.cn">www.rcsd.org.cn</a>	An academy-level research centre conducting research into sustainable development, under the umbrella of the CASS research institute
Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Stockholm, Sweden <a href="http://www.sei-international.org">www.sei-international.org</a>	SEI is an independent, international research institute that supports decision making for sustainable development by bridging science and policy
World Resources Institute (WRI) Washington DC, USA <a href="http://www.wri.org">www.wri.org</a>	A global research organization that turns big ideas into action at the nexus of environment, economic opportunity and human well-being

For more information about the work of IRF see [www.irf2015.org](http://www.irf2015.org)

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