

## **Statement of Context**

Ramakrishnan Sitaraman  
Department of Biotechnology, TERI University, India

A workshop discussing the environmental problems associated with the increasing urbanization and industrialization along the course of the Yamuna river was held at TERI University on January 3-4, 2011. During the course of the workshop it became amply clear that a holistic approach involving both scientifically sound solutions and sustained social activism was sorely needed to evolve lasting solutions. We therefore approach the problem of pollution of the Yamuna river as one more of the unintended consequences of development. Indian rivers, especially the Ganga and Yamuna, are also intimately linked with Hinduism, specifically its practice of revering rivers as Goddesses. We therefore wonder whether any lessons may be learnt in the context of development by an analysis of Hindu society, philosophy and history.