

WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2022

**TOWARDS A RESILIENT PLANET:
ENSURING A SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE FUTURE**

February 16-18, 2022



EUROPEAN UNION

Thematic track title_ *EU-REI phase II: Enabling partnerships to promote standards and business best practices on resource efficiency*

16th February and 11:30am (IST)| Duration: 90 minutes

About the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS)

The **World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS)** is the annual flagship Track II initiative of **The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)**. Instituted in 2001, in 2021, the Summit series marked 20 years in its journey of making ‘sustainable development’ a globally shared goal. Over the past two decades, the Summit platform has pioneered conversations by bringing together governments, scholars, corporates, youth groups, thought leaders, and civil society representatives from across the world.

The present state of planetary health and humanitarian crises calls for revisiting the agenda around global action and equity. The 21st edition of the WSDS is being held under the umbrella theme of ‘**Towards a Resilient Planet: Ensuring a Sustainable and Equitable Future**’ from **16th to 18th February 2022** in a virtual format.

Background note:

The recent Davos 2022 summit underlines the need for developing partnerships to further the circular economy (CE) mission. The Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi cited India's commitment to deepen economic reforms allowing for ease of doing business and cement India as a reliable partner in the global supply chain. The Prime Minister discussed how India's entrepreneurship, especially among Indian youth, has achieved new heights as they effectively adapt to new technologies and innovation. Globally, India has the 3rd largest number of unicorns and over 10,000 start-ups registered in the last six months. However, this success comes with a price of unsustainable consumption and production. The Prime Minister addressed the need to move away from the linear '*take-make-use-dispose economy*' towards a circular economy and achieve '*Lifestyle for Environment*' through a P3 '*Pro Planet People*' model, providing for a ‘Green,

Clean and Sustainable Growth Process.' This can be achieved through a resource efficient (RE), CE framework that takes forward the UN agenda of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), SDG 12, fostering sustainable economic growth. The RE&CE principals are cross-cutting across sectors and address issues through life cycle approach with systems thinking. Global and regional partnerships and collaborations play a key role in uptake of RE&CE across sectors. The India EU-Resource Efficiency Initiative (REI) has allowed for such partnerships to further the EU environmental policy and circular economy action plan in India.

Phase I of the India EU-REI ended successfully as it strengthened the India-EU cooperation, developed inter-India policy dialogue, set the national level agenda for RE&CE, and achieved inter-institutional cooperation. Phase I was completed with outputs including the draft National Resource Efficiency Policy 2019 prepared by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). Phase I mainstreamed RE across key sectors and regions of the country. This is evident as currently 11 ministries are inaction drafting sectoral level strategies incorporating resource efficiency. In March 2021, NITI Aayog constituted 11 circular economy committees to develop action plan for their respective sectors. In February 2022, the Indian Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman in her budget speech¹ shared that the action plans incorporating CE are ready for ten sectors including electronic waste, end-of-life vehicles, used oil waste, and toxic & hazardous industrial waste. The CE transition is expected to enhance productivity and create opportunities for new businesses and jobs. The transition will be supported with public policies on regulations, EPR framework, and innovation facilitation. The transition to CE will address cross-cutting issues of infrastructure, reverse logistics, technology upgradation, and integration of the informal sector. Such political interest as shown by the Prime Minister at the Davos Summit 2022 and by the Finance Minister in the budget (2022-23) speech will deepen engagement between EU and India in different sectors across technologies and businesses allowing for uptake of RE&CE.

The second phase of the India EU-REI (phase II), was launched at the WSDS 2021 with the aim to continue mainstreaming RE&CE in the Indian economy and industry through a life-cycle approach, and create an ecosystem for improving resource security and minimizing environmental impacts. To fulfil this objective, phase II will continue to support work in key sectors from phase I. The EU-REI will also support India's implementation of SCP (SDG 12) and mainstream the RE agenda in India's upcoming G-20 presidency in 2023. The initiative will serve as a vehicle for EU-India Partnership on RE&CE, and initiate and strengthen knowledge exchange in common areas of interest. These include, among others, implementation of pilot measures on RE&CE at state and local levels, capacity building, dialogues among relevant stakeholders, and circular business promoted through uptake of best practices and setting of standards for secondary raw materials, reuse and recycling. Collaborations and partnerships will incentivize sustainable procurement such as public procurement, enhance cross country learnings by development and dissemination of scientific knowledge including development of infrastructure to support CE transition, reverse logistics, exchange of lessons from implementation of EPR framework in different sectors, sharing outcomes of business models, technology upgradation and informal sector inclusion, capacity building, and supporting innovation.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships from government, private stakeholders, and citizen engagement will enable green financing. Major actors in financial markets, banks, investors, micro-credit entities, insurance companies will collaborate along with public sector for multi-faceted incentives and trade-offs associated with investing in resource, CE transition, directing financial flows to

¹ https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/doc/budget_speech.pdf

support the delivery of SDGs, particularly SDG 12. Public-private partnerships will be promoted on financing mechanisms such as green bonds and micro-credit for sustainable development at local level through capacity building of community enterprises and pilot projects. Business partnerships will enhance competitiveness, manage resources sustainably, create jobs, and reduce emissions. This will help increase innovation and promote scaling and replication of circular business models and overall mainstreaming circularity in various sectors. Finally, partnerships will allow for a robust mechanism for measurement of RE through development and monitoring of indicators to monitor the progress of policies, develop data on waste statistics and material flow indicators.

With this background, WSDS 2022 thematic track will be organized to discuss potential opportunities for strengthening partnerships for India EU-REI. The thematic track will follow up on last year's launch of the EU-REI Phase II. Panellists for the thematic track will include experts from the EU and India, including key stakeholders from government and NGOs, businesses, private and public sectors.

Key questions

The key issues of discussion during the thematic track will be structured around the following:

1. As India gains momentum towards RE&CE transition, how can EU-India Partnership provide impetus to the transitioning and mainstreaming of RE &CE agenda in key sectors?
2. What are some of the challenges and opportunities associated with implementation and uptake of the RE&CE measures agenda in India and EU?
3. How can the EU-India partnership enable action for a just and inclusive transformation to a circular economy?
4. What are the key learnings/ takeaways for India from the existing platforms such as the EU stakeholder platform?
5. How can the EU-India partnership provide policy dialogues, deliberations, and support for India's upcoming G-20 presidency in 2023 and associated RE Dialogue.

Proposed Speakers

1. **Moderator:** Dr. Suneel Pandey, Senior Fellow and Director, Environment & Waste Management Division, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
2. **Speakers:**
 1. Shri Rameshwar Prasad Gupta, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
 2. Astrid Schomaker, Director, DG-Environment, EU Commission
 3. Shri Sudhir Kumar Sirohi, Advisor, NITI Aayog
 4. Shri Bhuvnesh Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
 5. Michael Bucki, First Counsellor and Head of Section, EU Delegation to India and the World Bank