



WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2022

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

February 16-18, 2022



Driving a just transition to renewable energy in India

16 February 2022 | 3:30-5:00PM 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.

About the Responsible Energy Initiative

The Responsible Energy Initiative is a multi-year programme working to ensure renewable energy in Asia achieves its full potential and creates value in a way that is ecologically safe, rights-respecting and socially just. The initiative is being run by Forum for the Future, TERI, WRI India with expert support from Landesa, Business and Human Rights Resource Centre and WWF in India.

Background note

The rise of renewables has brought great hope for our ability to tackle climate change. Scaling renewable energy is critical to the rapid transition to a low carbon economy and has the potential to expand access to affordable, clean energy; create jobs and help economies to thrive; and reduce air pollution, a primary concern for urban citizens in India.

This is a critical moment in the development of the sector. Renewable energy is scaling rapidly; financing models are shifting from public to private; and policy and regulatory mechanisms are changing. Economic stimulus packages are being developed to support recovery from COVID-19, with many focused on building the industries we need to ride the shocks of the future, including renewable energy.

At the same time, we are seeing significant risks emerge that the industry may scale in a way that does not account for environmental, social and human rights impacts, particularly in the race to revive failing economies impacted by the pandemic. From land and labour rights and livelihood challenges to toxic waste and unsustainable use of raw materials, the potential negative impacts of the sector are becoming increasingly clear.

India has the greatest potential for renewables to scale. There is an urgent need to address the potential negative social and environmental impacts, both in India and globally (due to the nature of global supply chains), to ensure that the pace of growth of the sector is not put in jeopardy. Equally, poor practices could become entrenched and the opportunity for the sector to play a key role in driving fair and just social transitions towards a low carbon future will be lost.

The renewable energy sector is poised uniquely to set norms that enable deep positive transformation creating flourishing and resilient communities and society. We believe that we (as a renewable energy sector) have the agency and the opportunity to lead the just transition and entrench the principles of justice and equity across the value chain.

Key questions

The session brings together pioneers and experts from the energy system, ones who are setting the norms, who are pushing the boundaries of traditional ESG mechanisms and ones who are critical friends, enabling the sector to develop a deep, holistic understanding of social and environmental impacts across the value chain, differential impacts on vulnerable groups and the power dynamics that impact decision making. The session will be guided by a set of exploratory questions such as:

- What might a deep just transition to renewable energy in India look like?
- What barriers and challenges does the sector face in enabling that transition?
- How might we go beyond traditional notions of profit and growth towards centering justice, dignity and wellbeing for everyone?
- What role can different stakeholders play in enabling this transition?

Speakers

The organisers of this session have invited the following members:

1. Abhejit Agarwal, Deputy Vice President - Sustainability and CSR, Axis Bank*
2. Dinni Lingaraj, Group Manager - Sustainability, Wipro
3. Mayank Aggarwal, Journalist and Contributing Editor, Mongabay
4. Ritu Kumar, Senior Director, TPG
5. Swaroop Banerjee, Vice President - Sustainability, JSW Energy
6. Senior representative from relevant government ministry or public institution*

*invited