



WSDS 2021 Thematic Track: Accelerating and Institutionalizing Resource Efficiency & Circular Economy in India

10th February 2021, 13:30-15:15 IST (Virtual Mode)

India with a population of over a billion and average annual economic growth of 6-7 % since the beginning of this century, is utilizing its limited resources faster than they replenish. Resource efficiency and circular economy (RE&CE) fostering policies and strategies would allow India to address its resource constraints and decouple economic growth from its adverse social and environmental impacts like resource depletion, pollution and livelihood displacement, etc. It is important that the policies and strategies enable business models and industry actions, including those in the post COVID times to integrate a systems thinking approach.

European Union (EU) has also seen the emergence of RE&CE enhancing policy framework that is enabling its countries to pursue economic growth in a manner that minimizes or reverses negative environmental impacts. The European Union's "Green Deal" is a new growth strategy that aims to transform the EU into a fair, carbon-neutral, healthy and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy. The Circular Economy Action Plan, considered as one of the key building blocks of the EU Green Deal, was adopted by the European Commission in 2020.

To mainstream resource efficiency across all sectors and regions of the country, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has prepared a draft National Resource Efficiency Policy 2019. India's role in RE and CE is a driving force at a global level as it is also a G20 priority.

In July 2020, the EU and India adopted a Joint Declaration to establish an 'India-EU Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy Partnership' that aims to support and strengthen dialogue and cooperation between the EU and India in these areas. Implementation of this Partnership can provide opportunities for creating an enabling ecosystem, synergies, and symbiosis for enabling RE& CE in India. EU and India can exchange lessons on the extent to which the European experience could inform the Indian context. EU's overarching policy frameworks and legislation required for circular economy transitions, along with effective models to spur technology development supported by research and innovation funding can provide immense learning for India.

With this background, WSDS 2021 thematic track on ***Accelerating and Institutionalizing RE&CE in India*** will be organized on **10th February, 13:30-15:15 IST** through a virtual mode. The thematic track will

also launch the EU-Resource Efficiency Initiative (EU-REI) Phase II, that aims to continue mainstreaming RE&CE in the Indian economy and industry based on a life-cycle approach, and create an ecosystem for improving resource security and minimizing environmental impacts. This Initiative will provide one of the key opportunities to strengthen the EU's engagement and collaboration with India on various aspects of resource efficiency and circular economy.

Panelists for the thematic track will include experts from the EU and India, including key stakeholders from government and non-governmental organizations, businesses, private and public sectors. The **key issues** for discussion during the thematic track will be structured around the following:

- Salient aspects of the India-EU Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy (RE&CE) partnership and opportunities for EU-India cooperation
- Institutional support for replication and scaling RE & CE initiatives
- Business action and entrepreneurship for mainstreaming RE & CE
- India's upcoming G-20 presidency in 2022 and key focus issues under RE& CE
- Role of RE and CE approaches in strengthening resilience to crisis

The **expected outcomes** from the thematic track include:

- Identification of **potential opportunities** for **strengthening the EU-India cooperation**
- Taking forward the **Joint Declaration** on establishing an 'India-EU Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy Partnership' **for accelerating RE&CE in Indian context**
- **Learning on** how Indian and European **businesses** including start-up companies are **trying to foster RE&CE**
- **Formal launch of the EU-Resource Efficiency Initiative (EU-REI) Phase II**
- **Awareness** is raised on the need for RE&CE approaches in India **amongst stakeholders**