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Virtual Policy Dialogue on Lifestyles and Sustainable Consumption in the Context of SDG 12

Date: 23rd September 2022 (Friday) | Time: 2:00-4:30 PM IST
Virtual (WebEx)

Draft Concept Note

About World Sustainable Development Summit

The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) is the annual flagship Track II initiative organized by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). Instituted in 2001, the Summit series has a legacy of over two decades for making 'sustainable development' a globally shared goal. Over the years, the Summit platform has brought together thought leaders, heads of state and government, scholars, corporates, youth groups, and civil society representatives from across the world. The Summit series has established itself as a responsible and an effective platform for mobilizing opinion-makers to drive ambition and advance pioneering actions to address some of the most relevant issues concerning sustainable development and climate change. The 22nd edition of the annual flagship event of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)—the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS)—will be held from 22-24 February 2023 in New Delhi. The Summit deliberations will focus on the umbrella theme: *Mainstreaming Sustainable Development and Climate Resilience for Collective Action*.

About Act4Earth and SDG Charter

Act4Earth initiative was launched at the valedictory session of WSWS 2022. Building on the discussions of WSWS, this initiative will seek to continuously engage with stakeholders from public and private spheres of life with agendas for global, regional, national, sub-national, and organizational levels. Under this initiative, TERI will engage in research activities which will systematically seek to identify and analyse good practices that can be taken up by governments for climate action and achieve the sustainable development goals. Given the vast scope of the theme of WSWS, the focus for analysis will be practices which have maximum impact across systems, sectors, and SDGs, including decision-making processes such as goals setting or even annual budgets. More details can be found [here](#).

In September 2015, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDGs are a call for action by all countries to address prevailing inequalities while protecting the planet. These goals provide a framework with targets and relevant indicators which can be followed by governments, businesses, civil society, and the public to work together to build a better future for everyone. The Decade of Action calls for accelerate sustainable solutions to all the world's biggest challenges — ranging from poverty and gender to climate change, inequality and closing the finance gap. Prior to COVID-19 pandemic, progress in achieving

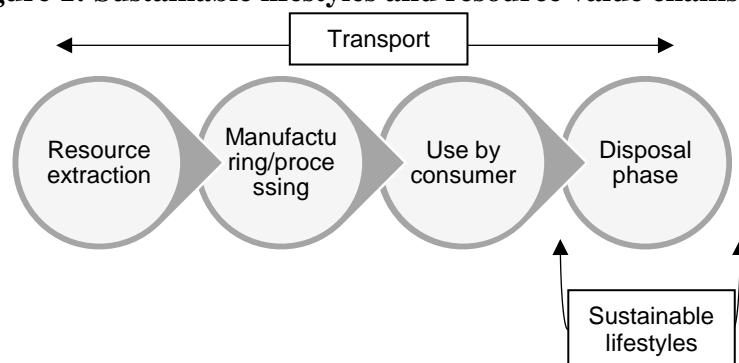
SDG-linked targets was being made in many aspects, albeit not at the speed or scale required. But the global health crisis has either put a stop, or worse, has undone much of this progress. The pandemic has shown that a health crisis has quickly exposed the fault lines in our existing systems and can trigger a human and socio-economic crisis. While the crisis is imperilling progress towards the SDGs, it also makes their achievement more urgent and necessary. Through SDG Charter, the research team contributes to more inclusive and ambitious policy frameworks towards green recovery policies and actions of governments that enhance environmental, social, and economic outcomes to build back better.

Lifestyles, Sustainable Consumption and SDG 12

There has been a focus on unsustainable patterns of production and consumption at the global level since the adoption of Agenda 21, an outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). Responsible consumption and production is now one of the seventeen sustainable development goals (SDGs). SDG 12 seeks to advance responsible and sustainable consumption and production by encouraging reduction of wasteful consumption and efficiency in production patterns by raising awareness and promoting responsible practices among governments, businesses, and consumers.

Sustainable consumption and lifestyles must be seen from the perspective of resource value chains that includes resource extraction, manufacturing, and processing, use by consumer and disposal phase (Figure 1). Broadly resource value chain consists of two ends of the spectrum: upstream and downstream. The upstream segment includes resource extraction, and the downstream segment includes end consumers and disposals. Cross-cutting aspects include design, transport, and policy and regulatory frameworks. Sustainable consumer lifestyles or sustainable lifestyles is a part of the downstream segment of the resource value chain. A working definition of sustainable lifestyles is “individual consumer choices and attitudes towards the consumption of goods and services to further human well-being while minimizing ecological footprint and waste so as to promote intragenerational and intergenerational equity for sustainable development”.

Figure 1: Sustainable lifestyles and resource value chains



Understanding motivations for individuals adopting sustainable lifestyles is a complex process since these would vary from individual to individual and choices are influenced by the surrounding environment, work culture, urban amenities, and marketing campaigns. According to AR6 WG-III report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, in 2019, approximately 34% (20 GtCO₂-eq) of total net anthropogenic GHG emissions came from the energy supply sector, 24% (14 GtCO₂-eq) from industry, 22% (13 GtCO₂-eq) from agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU), 15% (8.7 GtCO₂-eq) from transport and 6% (3.3 GtCO₂-eq) from buildings. To make the concept of lifestyles more actionable for policy makers, an approach is to take a sectoral approach where consumers or individuals make choices. Key consumer sectors that have a bearing on carbon footprint include transport, residential sector, food choices and waste management.

The idea of ‘Lifestyle for the Environment – LIFE Movement’ was introduced by India's Prime Minister during the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow last

year. The idea promotes an environment-conscious lifestyle that focuses on 'mindful and deliberate utilisation' instead of 'mindless and destructive consumption by advocating sustainable choices by "Pro-Planet People". Key concepts around LIFE includes reduce, reuse, and recycle along with circular economy. The objective of the stakeholder consultations is to distil gaps and areas on strengthening downstream actions in the context of consumption and lifestyles and SDG 12. The following questions are expected to guide the discussions.

- What metrics can be used for measuring lifestyles and sustainable consumption? How can present indicator frameworks on SDG 12 be strengthened?
- What are the implications in terms of the role of governments and policy instruments for the sectors of transport, residential buildings, food and waste management?
- How can markets play a role in driving sustainable lifestyles specifically for the sectors of transport, residential, food and waste management?
- What are the implications for India's leadership in making lifestyles and sustainable consumption a focus area for G20?

Format of the Event

The dialogue will begin with welcome remarks that will set the context and apprise the audience of the expectations from the discussions. The TERI team will make a presentation on the main findings and proposed recommendations as outlined in the policy brief. This will be followed by a session on policy perspectives and roundtable discussions involving experts and stakeholders who will provide feedback and inputs on specific questions as listed in the concept note. In the final segment of the event, the discussions will be summarized, and next steps will be communicated. The team will also circulate a post-event questionnaire for any further inputs. The inputs provided by the experts will be duly acknowledged in the final policy brief prepared by the team.