

ACT4EARTH NATIONAL DIALOGUE

Road to Dubai: From G20 to COP28

Date: 7 November 2023

Time: 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. IST

EVENT SUMMARY



Act4Earth National Dialogue Road to Dubai: From G20 to COP28

7 November 2023 | New Delhi



Norwegian Embassy
New Delhi

Bloomberg
Philanthropies

TATA CAPITAL
Cleantech Finance

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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. The only independently convened international Summit on sustainable development and environment, based in the Global South, WSDS strives to provide long-term solutions for the benefit of global communities by assembling the world's most enlightened leaders and thinkers on a single platform. Over the years, the Summit series has witnessed the participation of 56 Heads of State and Government, 126 Ministers, 13 Nobel Laureates, 1932 Business Leaders, 3023 Speakers, and 39,483 Delegates.

ACT4EARTH

Act4Earth initiative was launched at the valedictory session of the 21st edition of WSDS. Building on the discussions of WSDS, this initiative seeks to continuously engage with stakeholders through research and dialogue. Act4Earth initiative has two components: COP Compass and SDG Charter. The COP Compass seeks to inspire and mobilize leadership at all levels for inclusive transitions through ambitious and informed policies and measures, enabling paradigm shifts towards meeting the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Paris goals through mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation. The SDG Charter seeks to identify gaps and suggest ways for strengthening and mainstreaming sustainability in policy agendas for enhanced environmental, social, and economic outcomes.

FROM G20 TO COP28: KEY ISSUES

Living in a time of polycrisis, the key challenges confronting the world include planetary crises, sliding back of key sustainable development goals (SDGs), and the ever-growing international conflict threatening world peace. It is more important than ever that environmental stewardship is promoted. The G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration called for accelerating SDGs and focusing on equitable climate outcomes. Laying down the groundwork for the upcoming COP28 to be held in Dubai, the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration also highlighted the need for USD 5.8–5.9 trillion in the pre-2030 period by developing countries to implement their NDCs and USD 4 trillion per year for clean energy technologies by 2030 to reach net zero emissions by 2050. This dialogue aims to bring together perspectives on equitable outcomes for COP28 and on enabling stronger synergies between SDGs and climate action.

Suggested Citation

The Energy and Resources Institute. (2023). *Road to Dubai: From G20 to COP28 [Event Summary]*, Act4Earth and World Sustainable Development Summit. New Delhi: The Energy and Resources Institute.

Speaker Line-up

Welcome Address

- Dr Vibha Dhawan (Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute)
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Framing Presentation

- Dr Shailly Kedia (Senior Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute)
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Keynote Speakers

- Mr Majid Alnekhailawi (Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of UAE)
 - Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi (Director General, Research and Information System for Developing Countries - RIS)
 - Dr Laveesh Bhandari (President and Senior Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress)
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Panel Discussion

Chair

- Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri (Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute)

Panellists

- Ms Jayshree Nandi (Environment Correspondent, Hindustan Times)
 - Ms Archana Choudhary (Journalist)
 - Ms Karin Deckenbach (Advisor, The International Climate Initiative, German Government)
 - Dr Nitya Nanda (Director, Council for Social Development)
 - Mr Shubhashis Dey (Director, Climate Policy and Climate Finance, Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation)
 - Mr Arun Krishnan (Manager, Climate Policy Initiative)
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Vote of Thanks

- Dr Shailly Kedia (Senior Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute)

Actionable Messages

Message 1: Countries need to go beyond the usual GDP measurements and include indicators concerning well-being.

Message 2: The global climate has transformed, especially during the pandemic, and the world requires adaptation and adjustment.

Message 3: There is a strong need to focus on adaptation within the discourse on combating climate change and to work towards reaching a concrete outcome on the Global Goal on Adaptation at COP28.

Message 4: COP 28 aims to ensure that nobody is left behind and elevate previously neglected topics such as health and fragility.

Message 5: The huge disconnect between what people consume and what people produce is contributing hugely in terms of how they want their lifestyles to be amended.

Message 6: Sustainable consumption, as also reflected in the Government of India's Mission LiFE statement, was a key mechanism to accelerate SDGs and transition towards clean energy.

Message 7: There is a need to have clear and agreed definitions and commitments in place for concepts like adaptation, loss and damage funds, and climate finance.

“ India emerged as an influential voice of the Global South during its G20 presidency, and in its remaining term, we should focus on making Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) a global goal.

Dr Vibha Dhawan

Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute

“ Problem statements need to be revisited. Much of the climate negotiations is framed in the context of countries, but when we talk about adaptation, there is a need to factor communities, people, and ecosystems.

Dr Shailly Kedia

Senior Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute

“ Everyone is welcome because everyone is needed. No single party has all the solutions and success depends on contributions from every country, every community, and every citizen.

Mr Majid Alnekhailawi

Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of UAE

“ We all need to do a bit of introspection to bring ethics back into our framework, and we need it for our international relations.

Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi

Director General, Research and Information System for Developing Countries – RIS

“ The problem essentially has to do with the world order, which is not just changing at the upper level but is changing in its very DNA.

Dr Laveesh Bhandari

President and Senior Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress

“ The global challenge demands a global response from the South, the North, the East, and the West. We all have to work together as we have little choice in the matter because it is our future.

Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri

Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute

“ LiFE is something that we can fully depend on. We know that this is a no-regret policy, and this is good for our health and good for our society.

Dr Nitya Nanda

Director, Council for Social Development

“ We are already moving from billions to trillions just in the wrong direction, and it is the cost of inaction that is plundering the world.

Ms Karin Deckenbach

Advisor, The International Climate Initiative, German Government

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Provisions like catastrophe insurance, credit guarantees, interest rate subvention or concessional interest rates and so on require the North and South to work together.

Mr Arun Krishnan
Manager, Climate Policy Initiative

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I see a lot of fear of climate reparations when things are coming now to liability and the question of legality and how you will be held accountable.

Ms Jayshree Nandi
Environment Correspondent, Hindustan Times

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We should let democracy play a bigger role in climate negotiation at COP28. When democracy works, there is an essence of compromise and letting go of liabilities.

Mr Shubhashis Dey
Director, Climate Policy and Climate Finance, Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation

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We have come to the conclusion that nothing is going to move till money moves, and this is where it all comes down and gets blocked in this funnel.

Ms Archana Choudhary
Journalist

Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute

Dr Dhawan began the session by emphasizing the need to take strong steps to counter the declining air quality in Delhi. She also took the opportunity to welcome the guests to the Act4Earth National. She further invited the attendees to the next edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) to be held in New Delhi from 7 to 9 February 2024. She emphasized the success of the recent G20 Summit under India's Presidency and highlighted how the New Delhi Leaders' declaration mentioned the need for green development, climate action, just transitions, and accelerating the progress on sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Dr Dhawan opined that India emerged as an influential voice of the Global South during its G20 Presidency, and in its remaining term, the focus should be on making Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) a global goal. She added that as the world moved towards COP28 in Dubai, most of the discussions have been around the principles of 'mitigation' and 'loss and damage'. However, the countries need to emphasize adaptation and work towards reaching a concrete outcome on the Global Goal on Adaptation as mandated by the Paris Agreement.

Dr Shailly Kedia, Senior Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute

Dr Kedia delivered the framing presentation for the dialogue and laid out the objectives of the Act4Earth initiative. Addressing the importance of COP28 and accelerating SDGs, she stressed the need to scale up the investment for climate finance from billions to trillions of USD globally. The G20 Summit was significant and led to outcomes on issues such as the Green Development Pact and internationalizing LiFE. Talking about energy transitions, Dr Kedia stressed the need to look at the holistic picture by considering the demand and the supply side of energy transitions and focusing on adaption and SDG-climate interface.

Dr Kedia pitched for vertical and horizontal integration at national and sub-national levels through policy innovations such as green budgeting and green public procurement for accelerating SDGs. As COP28 approaches, she said there is a need to build on a risk-based framework, focusing on means of implementation and reporting format linkages with New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG). She concluded by highlighting the need for paradigm shifts and redefining the problem statement, where adaptation should be more disaggregated within the larger discourse.

Mr Majid Alnekhailawi, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of United Arab Emirates

Mr Alnekhailawi represented the upcoming COP28 Presidency and put forth its expectations with respect to the upcoming COP28 in Dubai. He stated that following India's successful leadership in the G20, UAE anticipated COP28 not merely as a convention, but as a defining moment for cooperative action. In pursuit of a just and orderly energy transition, he acknowledged the inexorable shift away from fossil fuels but emphasized the need for this transition to be responsible. He said it is crucial to rapidly build the energy systems of tomorrow, free of unabated fossil fuels, while comprehensively decarbonizing energies present today, tackling both energy supply and demand. To build the energy system of the future, Mr Alnekhailawi said the COP 28 Presidency is calling for global stakeholders to triple renewable energy capacity to 11,000 gigawatts, dramatically scale low carbon hydrogen, and double energy efficiency by 2030. He added that to decarbonize the energy prevalent today, the UAE is seeking to retire coal plants early and is calling on oil and gas companies to eliminate methane emissions and routine flaring by 2030.

Mr Alnekhailawi stated that the UAE is convening both producers and consumers of energy to collaborate and drive an integrated response. He opined that addressing climate finance is imperative as finance is a critical enabler of climate action; however, it is not currently available, accessible, or affordable enough where it is needed. He believed it is important to rebuild trust by delivering on historic pledges. There is a need to reform the architecture of the Global Financial System. He said the COP 28 Presidency urges all contributing

countries to deliver on the annual 100 billion commitment to climate finance made at COP 15 and to ensure a strong replenishment of the green climate fund. Thereafter, the contributing countries must build on the progress made at COP 27 and operationalize the loss and damage fund and funding arrangements as well as provide early pledges. Mr Alnekhailawi said that they need to reform the architecture of the Global Financial System to expand concessional funds, lower risk, and attract private capital. The contributing countries, he said, must ensure high integrity standards to harness voluntary carbon markets and green capital markets. Further, they need to focus on people, nature, lives, and livelihoods. The aim of the contributing countries should be to ensure that nobody is left behind and elevate previously neglected topics such as health and fragility. He emphasized adopting a comprehensive and robust framework for the global goal of adaptation and clear targets while addressing the disparity between mitigation and adaptation in finance. He spoke about protecting and restoring ecosystems, food systems, and freshwater to build resilient societies.

Mr Alnekhailawi stated that the final pillar was the involvement of everyone because everyone is needed as solutions, and success depends on contributions from every country, community, and citizen. He felt COP 28 must bridge the trust gap between the North and South and build a platform for progress through partnership. Mr Alnekhailawi acknowledged that climate change will greatly affect future generations, and thus COP 28 has appointed the first youth climate champion and established the largest-ever youth climate delegate programme. Further, the private sector will have a crucial role in delivering their climate ambitions and, thus, COP 28 will host a business and philanthropy climate forum to support over 200 climate tech startups. The COP28 Presidency is working with parties and non-state actors to ensure that climate finance advances gender equality and is inclusive of indigenous peoples. Advancing towards COP 28, Mr Alnekhailawi added that the UAE stands united in its call for bold ambitions, inclusive participation, and unwavering commitment to forging a sustainable, equitable, and thriving world for all generations.

Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, Research and Information System for Developing Countries - RIS

Prof. Chaturvedi began his remarks by stating that through G20, India had generated consensus for the 83 Paragraph Declaration, and as the principles were now established, they needed to be turned into actions. He argued in favour of formulating a collective positive convergence on issues between the Global North and the Global South, as seen in major agreements of 2015, such as Agenda 2030 for SDGs. However, the challenges to such consensus included sliding back of the SDGs and issues around climate finance and consumption. Prof. Chaturvedi opined that COP28 should turn endorsement of the Delhi G20 into action, which would create a new vista for the movement of the private sector. He also emphasized the importance of MSMEs, which are contributing towards the huge economic growth that India and China are witnessing. As reflected by the IMF report, 42% of the economic growth for 2023–24 would be attributed to China and India collectively. Prof. Chaturvedi also pointed out the need to go beyond the usual GDP measurements and include well-being measurements as well.

Prof. Chaturvedi spoke about bringing ethics back into the framework. He said that the G20 declaration has emphasized the cultural dimensions and localization strategy for the Development Agenda 2030. Giving the example of South Korea, which was keen on having at least one SDG dedicated to culture, Prof. Chaturvedi said that the unthinkingly adopted development strategies have debased local development priorities and local connections, which has led to indiscriminate investment and production in some countries of the Global South. He argued that the vast disconnect between what people consume and what they produce is contributing hugely in terms of how they want their lifestyles to be amended. They are obstructed by economic interest, production structures, and development priorities, and he felt these need to be addressed through the road from Delhi to Dubai.

Dr Laveesh Bhandari, President and Senior Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress

Dr Bhandari began his talk by acknowledging the progress made in the direction of climate finance but argued that while the West has established its intellectual domination by not sharing the funds that it had committed, the East is stuck in the hopes of getting its share of funds. He added that in the current scenario, it seems difficult for Western countries to be able to provide such sums for funding. Moreover, the high cost of technology and its scattered availability made the absorption of such funds another grave issue. High levels of debt have been historically a problem in many developing countries, and the paradox is that there are limited ways to access these investments other than debt.

Dr Bhandari applauded India's successful G20 Presidency and argued that the consensus for the declaration was partly due to the efforts of PM Modi and partly given the keenness of the Global North to come onto the same table. He suggested that going further, multilateral development bank (MDB) reform process needs to be accelerated, enhanced, and increased by many factors. Along with IMF and ADB, he said there were many multilaterals that have the expertise, tools, debt products, and investment products. Dr Bhandari also spoke about sustainable consumption, as reflected in the Government of India's Mission LiFE statement. Rather than thinking of many objectives and dividing up the resources when the country is constrained on the funds and technology side, Dr Bhandari believed it would be beneficial to have fewer objectives and focus on the ones that are truly important.

Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute

Ambassador Puri began by reiterating the points made by the UAE Deputy Chief of Mission and highlighted that despite being an oil-rich country, the UAE has recognized the need to end the fossil era. Ambassador Puri highlighted a few key issues for the upcoming COP, such as loss and damage, operationalization of the fund, the shift in international negotiations, the burden-sharing paradigm, and principles of common but differentiated responsibilities in tackling climate change. He said that although the Paris Agreement had advocated for voluntary actions, currently, even in terms of money, the order had shifted considerably, barely asking the developed countries to take the lead and large developing countries to become contributors to the fund. He further contested the absence of focus on adaptation in the agenda of the COP Presidency. Considering the changes in climate and the pandemic, he said the world requires policies on adaptation and adjustment.

Dr Nitya Nanda, Director, Council for Social Development

Dr Nanda acknowledged that the current technology in the developing world is not enough to tackle all the problems, and, thus, there is dependence on developed countries for the required technology, which is yet to be delivered or which may even never come. He believes what India has been pushing, especially through G20, is that LiFE is very important. He said it reflects that even if there is not adequate technology in developing countries, lifestyle is something that can be worked upon. It is a no-regret policy and is good for global health and society. Dr Nanda also spoke about human development and gave the example of per capita electricity consumption. He explained how a country can attain human development by increasing its per capita electricity consumption from 2000 kilowatts to 4000+ kilowatts. He, however, stated it is not necessary to consume 20,000 kilowatts to develop.

Ms Karin Deckenbach, Advisor, The International Climate Initiative, German Government

Ms Deckenbach said that the movement from billions to trillions is happening but in the wrong direction, and it is the cost of inaction that is plundering the world, including rich and poor countries. She drew a parallel between Delhi and Berlin; both equally lacking solar panels. She said that Germany's individual footprint is multiple times what the average per capita Indian footprint is. But India has a 350 million middle-class population whose consumption patterns are just as bad as Germany's. This needs special attention. Ms

Deckenbach added that it is still a question of whether the developed countries deliver on their promise, but another aspect to this is that finance follows firm laws and enforced rules, be it on consumption, carbon markets, or product requirements.

Mr Arun Krishnan, Manager, Climate Policy Initiative

Mr Krishnan said finance is tangible and specific. He informed that the World Bank has taken up the responsibility as a trustee for the loss and damage fund. But the question remains who will be funding, what will they be funding, and how does one distribute the funds? The developed economies have been called upon as they have been responsible for most of the historical emissions, and the least developed countries have been the recipients of the damage. However, Mr Krishnan questioned the role of transitioning economies like India and China. He added that the other key area to focus is on the instruments or the modalities in which the funds will be distributed. For instance, interest rate, or suspending payments during a catastrophic event. Mr Krishnan opined that the focus should also be on financial assistance, like catastrophe insurance, credit guarantees, interest rate subvention, or concessional interest rates. These require the North and South to work together constructively so that a whole host of financial innovations can be achieved.

Ms Jayshree Nandi, Environment Correspondent, Hindustan Times

Ms Nandi spoke about the temporary breach of the 1.5° goal and 2023 being the warmest year. Ms Nandi said in the Loss and Damage Transitional Committee Meetings, it was observed that the developing countries made a concession by accepting to locate the funds in the World Bank. However, some developed countries, such as the US, kept asking for clarification and assurance that the contributions are voluntary. This reflects fear of climate reparations, especially when things are coming to liabilities and legalities. She said there is a power struggle and polarization at play. She mentioned that the promised hundred billion dollars have not been delivered and now, with the developed countries refusing to contribute towards the loss and damage fund, the main question is whether they will come on board to NCQG.

Mr Shubhashis Dey, Director, Climate Policy and Climate Finance, Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation

Mr Dey emphasized the significance of democracy in discussions and events such as COP 28. He said that democracy can play a bigger role at the COP and believed when democracy works, there is an essence of compromise and letting go of certain liabilities over which one would want their ownership. Mr Dey stated that it is important to realize what is critical to achieving the larger goal of tackling climate change. He opined that democracy at work would be the way forward for climate negotiation. In the end, he added that they need to take ownership and understand that not everything can be solved in 14 days. It is crucial to let go of things which are of less significance and focus on things which are critical and important for all.

Ms Archana Choudhary, Journalist

Giving the perspective of finance, Ms Chaudhary said that the last few COPs have put in motion the discussion of finance. She said that nothing is going to move till money moves. Moreover, she believed there is a need to have clear and agreed definitions in place for concepts like adaptations, loss and damage funds, and climate finance. She added that COP 28 would show what the countries are willing to take and give. India should keep pursuing what it has been doing through the LiFE approach. Ms Archana lauded the efforts of the Indian G20 Presidency, which put down the message of billions to trillions in its communique and brought other countries on board. According to Ms Archana, the other thing in the discussion should be the MDB reforms. She said the World Bank has the capacity to manage the funds, but instead of the rich managing the finances, the developing countries should be involved in the same.
