Knowledge Driven Policy and Action

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) launched a major initiative titled, “Act4Earth” in the valedictory session of the 21st Edition of World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS). Building on the discussions from the Summit, this initiative will seek to continuously engage with stakeholders across the board on issues related to sustainable development and climate action. Being a major platform in the Global South, Act4Earth together with WSDS will seek to pioneer conversations that will drive ambition and action on climate change and sustainable development needs. The Act4Earth platform will have two main components: COP Compass; and SDG Charter.

Objectives

The overarching objective for Act4Earth would be to drive ambitious and urgent action on climate change and sustainable development through knowledge, dialogue and capacity building.

The objectives of Act4Earth initiative include:

[Objective 1] Fast-track meeting of global goals on climate change and sustainable development through a continuous process of ‘talking to walking’ by strengthened stakeholder engagement.

[Objective 2] Drive actions by governments, at all levels by strengthening research-based understanding of sustainable development policies and initiatives from countries across the world.

[Objective 3] Enhance international, national and sub-national perspectives for paradigm shifts needed for achieving sustainable development and climate goals through creation and dissemination of knowledge.


Theory of Change

Based on the deliberations at WSDS 2022, TERI envisages the two components of Act4Earth platform, namely the COP Compass and SDG Charter, will seek to drive change:

- Through engagement for knowledge creation, dissemination and dialogue, the COP Compass will seek to inspire and mobilize leadership at all levels for inclusive transitions through ambitious and informed policies and measures which will enable paradigm shifts towards meeting the Paris goals through mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation.

- Through developing inclusive and ambitious policy frameworks, SDG Charter will seek to ensure that sustainable development is further mainstreamed in government agendas which will lead to enhanced environmental, social and economic outcomes.
COP Compass

With the efforts of the international scientific organizations and bodies, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change has gone from being a fringe issue to global priority. The latest IPCC report shows that the world will probably reach or exceed 1.5 °C of warming within just the next two decades. Under a high-emissions scenario, the IPCC finds the world may warm by 4.4°C by 2100 with catastrophic results.

For nearly three decades, member states have met under the umbrella of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change for the Conference of Parties (COPs). World leaders need to raise ambition and take urgent climate action. While countries shift to a net-zero economy, it is imperative to have inclusive transition plans at heart of policies and programmes. Both adaptation and mitigation measures need to be at an equal footing so that there are sufficient safety nets and no one is left behind.

There are presently a lot of discussions around net-zero without a critical examination of holistic measures and leadership needed in the short, medium and long term. There is an urgent need to inform leadership on coherence required for inclusive transitions from the lens of both mitigation and adaptation. The present narrative is also too focused on narrow conceptions around a few technologies and there is a need to enrich the conversations by critically examining solutions at hand to arrive at paradigm shifts and means of implementation needed. Keeping in view the importance of injecting these aspects into the COP and related discussions, this knowledge component will have the following themes, activities and outputs.

COP Compass: Themes, Activities and Outputs

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SDG Charter

In 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 general public to work together to build a better future for all. The Decade of Action calls for accelerating sustainable solutions to address all the world’s biggest challenges ranging from poverty, gender gap and inequality to climate change and inclusive transitions. There is a need to mobilize actors from all levels and spheres of action-global, regional, national, sub-national, community, organizations and individuals.

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 all the more urgent and necessary. It becomes extremely necessary to act towards the achievement of these goals while engaging agents of change. Against this background, the SDG Charter will seek to engage policymakers through research and outreach.

SDG Charter: Themes, Activities and Outputs

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Partnerships

Partnership for Act4Earth comes with a pledge for promoting knowledge driven environmental stewardship and stakeholder engagement for collective action. Act4Earth activities would involve research and advocacy by engaging with governments, international organizations, business & industry, research & academia and civil society.
ACT4EARTH MANIFESTO

Presented at WSDS 2022

Through the 21st Edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit, The Energy and Resources Institute brought together stakeholders including representatives from international organizations, government, business & industry, research & academia, civil society and youth to deliberate on the modus operandi required for ensuring equitable responses to protect our planet through sustainable consumption and production, energy & resource security, climate justice, and the protection of global commons.

We pledge to Act for Earth by:

- Reinvigorating current multilateral systems by ensuring that climate negotiations and other norm-setting bodies are informed by principles of equity and climate justice, as well as with perspectives from developing countries to drive national and international action.

- Developing multi-level and poly-centric approaches to govern and protect our global commons, which is inclusive of all those who use and depend on these commons, including non-human species.

- Inviting stakeholders to generating financial capital and building capacities for developing green technologies, which helps in inclusive clean energy transitions.

- Avoiding wasteful consumption, and promoting efficiency in production patterns, by raising awareness and promoting responsible practices among governments, businesses and consumers.

- Advocating for paradigm shifts in the global narrative which decouples the economic growth from environmental degradation.

- Critically examining the dominant narratives on traditional and non-traditional security to advance inclusive, concerted, coherent and effective efforts on sustainable development and climate action.

- Calling upon the global community to bridge the gap between mitigation and adaptation through effective means of implementation including climate finance, innovation and capacity building.

- Ensuring policy coherence through mainstreaming sustainable development into economic policy, including through SDGs-linked budgeting processes.

- Communicating issues related to climate change and sustainable development to all stakeholders effectively, through a balanced approach which instils hope, without losing our sight on the gravity of the climate change and limits to growth.