



# WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2022

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

February 16-18, 2022 (Virtual)



**TATA STEEL FOUNDATION**

## Futurists for the Future: A Younger, Greener Collective

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### THEMATIC TRACK SUMMARY

Venue: Kaziranga

Date: February 17, 2022

Time: 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM (IST)

#### **Suggested Citation**

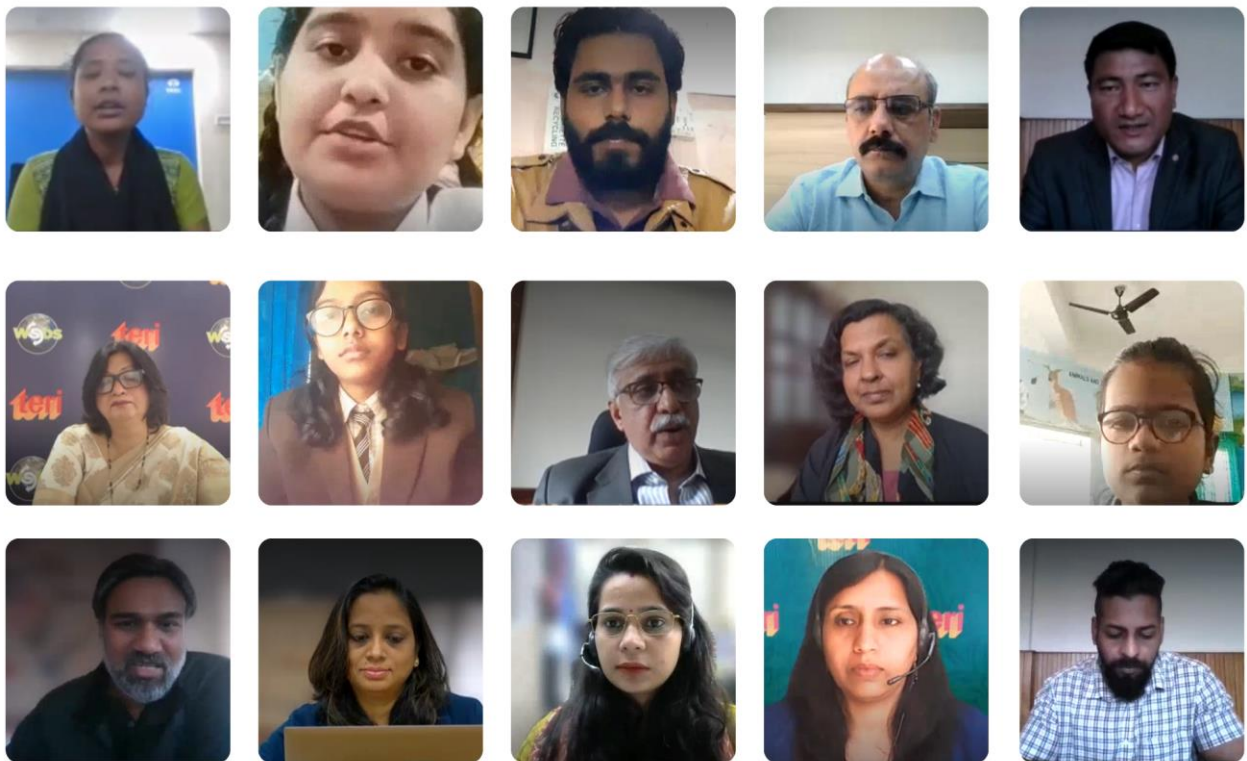
World Sustainable Development Summit (2022), Futurists for the Future: A Younger, Greener Collective, Thematic Track Summary (Rapporteur: Ravi Sankar Das), New Delhi: The Energy and Resources Institute.

## Actionable Messages

**Message 1:** It is important for young people to learn the value of ecosystems and biodiversity. The impact of incorporating this in teaching will be visible twenty years from now, when these students become leaders and transform this training into practice.

**Message 2:** Education needs to incorporate issues such as single-use of plastic in daily lives.

**Message 3:** The survival of future generations will be largely dependent on the health of forests and environment. Hence, it becomes important to save forests and wildlife by working with local stakeholders, including indigenous communities.



## Narrative

The session began with opening remarks by **Mr Sourav Roy, Chief Corporate Social Responsibility, Tata Steel Limited**. TERI and the Tata Steel Foundation are working together on the Green School project based on two beliefs. One, the future has to be more natural and closer to ecology, it has to be more conscious of the kinds of changes that are happening to the climate. Second, children are the most natural futurists. The Green School program works with more than a million children directly. It talks of creating change agents and creating a culture of climate consciousness and environmentalism. It is based on the belief that education systems are structurally conscious of the ecological imperatives of the world. The program currently runs in Jharkhand and Odisha which presents an intersection of three very interesting trends. One is that the eastern part of the country is possibly emerging as a new spot of vulnerability as far as climate trends are concerned. Second these parts of the world are very intensive in demographic terms with indigenous communities. Third, the states like Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha are projected to have the youngest population within India, making them more vulnerable regions in the world, and a place where natural wisdom and ecology, and environment exist.

This was followed by a panel discussion on 'Futurists for the Future: A Younger, Greener Collective'. **Mr Naman Gupta, Founder, Code Effort Private Limited**, talked about whether waste is a boon or a resource. Consumption of cigarettes and throwing butts openly is a problem found everywhere. Cigarette buds are the most littered single-use plastic all over the globe. In India, 100+ billion cigarettes are consumed annually out of which 26,454 tonnes of cigarette butts waste is disposed of openly in the environment. One cigarette butt takes 10-12 years of time to decompose naturally. In 2018, Code Effort Private Limited was launched which works towards the management and recycling of cigarette waste. This organization recycles cigarette buds which are sourced from collection agents, factories, and pickup services into recycled paper and plastic products. The closed-loop carbon-neutral recycling process ensures 100% utilization of material, reduces pollution, and decreases GHG emissions. Till now, 100+ rural women and artisans are employed and streaming 2000+ unorganized rag pickers across India. Code Effort Private Limited has boosted segregation at source through the VBin network in 200+ districts. Their goal is to recycle 10,000-ton cigarette waste by 2026 which means eradicating 3,500+ crores from the ecosystem. **Ms Sejal Kumari, Student, St Mary's School, Noamundi, Jharkhand**, asserted that waste like plastic is very harmful to the environment due to higher carbon dioxide emissions. She has undertaken activities to stop the use of plastic and raising awareness on the impact of plastic in our environment.

After this, the discussion moved towards saving and increasing access to water. **Ms Madhuri Bahadur, Community Resource Person (CRP), Kalinganagar**, comes from a remote tribal village called Dubikhal village, which is a part of Sukinda Block, Jajpur District, Odisha. Dubikhal village is low in all development indices with poor access to water. During her visits, she found that there is a live spring from where the water goes out and recharges a pond downstream but for a few years it was blocked. Knowing this, she and the other few women of the village were successfully cleaning the channel spring to rejuvenate the flow of water. However, there are more than 100 springs in her nearby village and she says she wants to rejuvenate all of them for easy access to water and to increase the irrigation of land. Apart from this, she also wants to promote vermicomposting and organic farming in her and the nearby villages.

**Ms Saina Mohanty, Student, St Mary's School, Jajpur, Odisha**, spoke on the winter school challenge that is the DIY bucket app, since this project is made based on the theme of water conservation. She mentioned that some amount of water was coming out from our filter through a pipe which is totally a waste. She clearly gave a thought on why we can't use that water for any other purposes except for drinking purposes. Based upon this idea, she prepared a bucket tap system that could use the wasted water and that can be used for wash purposes. She found a plastic bucket, made a hole on the wall of the bucket and the tap was fixed. She mentioned that she has been reusing water for washing dishwashers, washing hands, and to water plants. All the living organisms, the human civilization, animals, birds will die without water. So we all depend on water directly or indirectly. This was my main motto through this project: conserve water, she added.

After this, the discussion steered towards the importance of wildlife by **Mr Kalicharan Basumatary, Advisor, Manas Maozigendri Ecotourism Society, Assam**. There was the practice of poaching and smuggling at Manas National Park, Bhutan due to which it become an endangered area. Lack of forest area supervision resulted in the

promotion of hunting and timber smuggling in that area. Manas Maozigendri Ecotourism Society (MMES) works on saving that area from poachers. Due to constant efforts, many poachers surrendered themselves and handed over their guns. We also provide training to ex-poachers so that they can work as patrolling officers, tourist guides for the forest department. Apart from this, the first protection camp of MMES was constructed by surrendered ex-poachers near the Hawaii River. There were more than 100 ambush camps inside Manas national park before the creation of MMES which MMES volunteers destroyed after its formation. MMES volunteers have done a commendable job in constructing bridges and improving roads. There are several awareness camps which have been organized at the village level by the volunteers regarding saving wildlife and on the theme 'anti-poaching'. The future generation's livelihood is dependent on the wildlife environment. Hence there is a need to save forests and wildlife from human activities which is only possible by inspiring local stakeholders.

**Ms Dimple, Student, Tata DAV Public School, WBC, Ghatotand, Jharkhand** outlined the various activities undertaken by her school to promote environmental protection. In her school, there is a great culture of gifting saplings to the guests, who are invited to school functions. Her school also celebrates all the important days related to the environment such as Van Mahotsav. She highlighted that all these activities promote awareness about environment.

**Ms Smita Agarwal, Head, Education, Corporate Social Responsibility, Tata Steel Limited**, then talked about Lockdown Learning in Rural Areas of India, which started during the pandemic to address the learning gaps. It involved the curated physical presence of teachers and freshly designed material to bridge this gap. It focuses on redesigning of learning tasks to spark the interest of a child sitting at home, and drawing upon resources in and around their homes as well as the internet. When the schools shut, LEP teachers, armed with smartphones, visited the children in their villages. They were given diverse learning tasks. Some incorporated elements of the children's day-to-day life, such as getting them to observe and write about plants, insects, and birds in their surroundings, research, Agricultural processes and equipment used by their parents on their farms, making weather maps, and so on. Access to the internet coupled with the absence of formal teaching, classes, tests, and marks resulted in children exploring new, self-directed ways of learning. Due to improved digital skills, children also participated in the vaccination process by helping their village people to book more than 12,000+ vaccination registrations through COWIN App.

Following this, special addresses were given by **Mr Chanakya Chaudhary, Director, TATA Steel Foundation** and **Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute**. Mr. Chaudhary talked about how the Green School project started in 2018 with 10 schools and now are on phase four of the project, working with 30-35 schools of Jharkhand, Orissa. Green school project has taken roots in the community because children are the leader also the citizens of the society even today, and if they can make a difference along with the families they live in, or along with the communities, it will make a lot of difference to the future. Dr Dhawan highlighted how only 5% of the students have access to smartphones, and therefore teaching them by innovative methods is really important. It also brought parents into the teaching, that they also have some responsibility towards teaching children. It is important that they start appreciating nature because otherwise, classroom teaching does not even give them time and there is no focus on what do they see around them. It is important for children to learn about the value of ecosystems and biodiversity. Green school project will not be limited to Jharkhand and Odisha it should perhaps reach out to other developing countries as well.

**Mr Pankaj Kumar Satija, Managing Director, Tata Steel Mines** talked about how the modern education system, whether it is a parent or it is teacher, has become very competitive. Green School Program has served its purpose and continues to do so in making the future generation a collaborator. The competition should be within oneself. Age is not a requirement to be a leader or to be a change agent. **Ms Neha, Senior Fellow, and Area Convener, Environment Education, and Awareness, TERI** ended the session by thanking all the speakers and environmental heroes who attended the session.

## Making Words Count @WSDS 2022

“ The Green School Project of Jharkhand, Orissa aims to create change agents and a culture of climate consciousness and environmentalism. The project is working in parts of the country that are very intensive in demographic terms with indigenous communities.

**Mr Sourav Roy,**  
**Chief Corporate Social Responsibility, Tata Steel Limited**

“ Code Effort Private Limited recycles cigarette butts that are sourced from collection agents, factories, and pickup services into recycled paper and plastic products. The closed-loop carbon-neutral recycling process ensures 100% utilization of material, reduces pollution, and decreases GHG emissions.

**Mr Naman Gupta**  
**Founder, Code Effort Private Limited**

“ If you will take one step towards cleanliness, then see the world will follow you.

**Ms Sejal Kumari**  
**Student, St Mary's School, Noamundi, Jharkhand**

“ Dubikhal village is low in all development indices with poor access to water. Knowing this, I and other few women were successfully cleaning the channel spring to rejuvenate the flow of water. However, there are more than 100 springs in my nearby village and I want to rejuvenate all of them for easy access of water and to increase the irrigation of land.

**Ms Madhuri Bahadur**  
**Community Resource Person (CRP), Kalinganagar, Jajpur, Odisha**

“ Water will finish one day on earth and that day the human civilization will come to an end, so we should conserve it' The small steps towards saving water can someday turn into a big achievement.

**Ms Saina Mohanty**  
**Student, St Mary's School, Jajpur, Odisha**

“ Future Generation's livelihood is dependent on the wildlife environment. Hence, we have to save our forests, wildlife from human activities which is only possible by inspiring local stakeholders.

**Mr Kalicharan Basumatary**  
**Advisor, Manas Maozigendri Ecotourism Society, Assam**

“ What you have today, you have to hand it to the next generation to whom you are answerable. Nature has everything for your need, not for your greed.

**Ms Dimple**  
**Student, Tata DAV Public School, WBC, Ghatotand, Jharkhand**

“ Lockdown Learning in Rural Areas of India reached 1, 35,000 children in 4510 villages through 3250 teachers and trained volunteers. The participation reached 95% and rich learning outcomes were quite visible.

**Ms Smita Agarwal**  
**Head, Education, Corporate Social Responsibility, Tata Steel Limited**

“ Spreading the awareness around the climate change and adopting the concept of 'Living with the nature, we have been able to reach out to 200,000+ people comprising 20,000+ students, 400+ teachers, 13000+ parents through the Green School Project.

**Mr Chanakya Chaudhary**  
**Director, TATA Steel Foundation**

“ I am glad that this journey has enabled the youth to voice their views collectively, exchange ideas, and form a common network, reaching out to like-minded people and engaging them in environmental stewardship.

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

“ Modern education system has become very competitive; however, the world needs a society of collaborators and contributors who can work on the impending issues of biodiversity. We can compete but the competition should be with ourselves, to become better for tomorrow.

**Mr Pankaj Kumar Satija**  
**Managing Director, Tata Steel Mines**