



WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2022

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

February 16-18, 2022 (Virtual)



CAP India
Clean Air Project in India

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

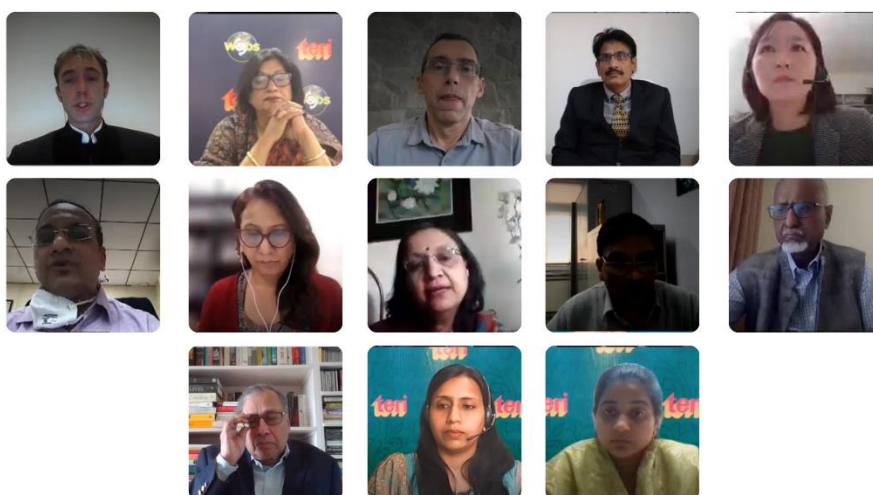
Improving Air Quality in Cities: *Global Issues, Local Solutions, and Best Practices*

THEMATIC TRACK SUMMARY

Venue: Kaziranga

Date: February 18, 2022

Time: 02:45 PM - 04:15 PM (IST)



Suggested Citation

World Sustainable Development Summit (2022), Improving Air Quality in Cities: Global issues, Local Solutions, and Best Practices, Thematic Track Summary (Rapporteur: Ashwini Kamble), New Delhi: The Energy and Resources Institute.

Actionable Messages

Message 1: One-size-fits-all solutions do not work. Solutions must be customized to city-specific needs.

Message 2: Now is the time where we need a nested theory of change where we need to look at different stakeholders to work together.

Message 3: Campaign Blue Sky is devised to train various stakeholder and student-level engagement, RWA members, and for further capacity building.

Message 4: An air-shed approach is needed to address air pollution involving multiple stakeholders across jurisdiction. Regulatory measures are key to addressing air pollution.

Message 5: It is important to look at the policy from the perspective of not just renewable energy but also how do we improve energy efficiency and how do we enhance our emission standards.

Narrative

The thematic track *'Improving Air Quality in Cities Global Problems, Local Solutions, and Best Practices'* addressed air quality issues in cities around the world and shared national and international experiences and best practices for faster and more effective pollution control under the CAP India initiative. The event began with opening remarks by **Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, TERI** for all panelists and attendees at the event. She then briefly touched on the global problem of air pollution. She was concerned about future generations' access to clean air. She then explained the National Clean Air Project and its goal to address the growing problem of air pollution. Referring to the growing pollution problem and AQI (Air Quality Index) levels with increasing economic and industrial activities, she said long-term solutions needed to be found.

Dr Jonathan Demenge delivered the inaugural remarks for the event and quoted the Honorable Prime Minister Modi from his speech on the first day of World Sustainable Development Summit - WSDS 2022. He also pointed to Amina J. Mohammed's note for a solution, claiming that no country is sustainable and that pollution affects millions of people. He called air pollution a global emergency as it harms people's health and lives. He then gave a brief overview of the SDC - CAP India initiative, which aims to support India's efforts to improve air quality while contributing to public health, environmental protection, and climate change mitigation.

Mr Ajay Shankar, Distinguished Fellow, TERI, moderated the first session. He spoke about the health problem caused by air pollution and the challenges we face to achieve our clean air goals. **Mr P.K. Gupta, CPCB** (on behalf of Shri Satyendra Kumar, Director, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change) presented a detailed overview of air quality management efforts in Indian cities to achieve clean air at the beginning of the first session. He said that to achieve the desired air quality, it is crucial to focus on a holistic air quality management policy based on good scientific data. He explained that efforts were being stepped up in response to significant concerns about increasing levels of pollution and a better understanding of its adverse health effects.

The discussion was then continued by, **Dr Anju Goel, Fellow, TERI** who delivered a brief review of the CAP India project findings in four cities: Lucknow, Kanpur, Nashik, and Pune. She concluded by stating that a single solution would not be enough to work in all cities and that solutions must be customized to each city's specific needs.

This was followed by a discussion on sharing best practices on air quality management. **Ms Ying Zhang, Swiss embassy, Beijing**, a representative from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) gave information on the Clean Air China (CAC) initiative and provided information on the clean air policies implemented to reduce air pollution in China. According to her, China's air quality has improved dramatically as a result of the regulations and technology implemented there.

Dr Valentin Foltescu, Senior Programme and Science Officer, Climate & Clean Air Coalition, spoke about short and long-term climate pollutants and the many activities and approaches of the coalitions to manage urban change. He spoke about technical methods for monitoring pollutants that could endanger human life and about working together with other organizations.

Ms Neha, Senior Fellow, TERI, concluded the first session with a presentation on the collaboration of CAP India programs which includes a variety of events, seminars, training, and competitions with schools and colleges to raise awareness of project activities. She spoke about the different awareness programs run by CAP India and introduced one of them, Blue Sky. In the end, she announced the winners of previous events in several categories.

The second session was moderated by **Dr Prodipto Ghosh (Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute)**. In the second session of the event **Prof Archana Kumar**, Behavior Change Expert, Associate Professor at Lady Irwin College, expanded the discussion to address clean air initiatives created to improve air quality. She spoke about people's socio-ecological behavior towards their environment and how it can be controlled by people themselves and focused on the need for nested theory by different think tanks to bring about the big change. She drew attention to what causes behavioral changes in individuals.

She noted that information does not always lead to action and people do not act on the information that is available to them. Factors such as context, motivation, capacity, and even emotions play an important role in deciding an individual's behavior. She further suggested using the behavioral outcomes matrix for different levels of intervention and using the socio-environmental model as a tool to determine what needs to be done at each level and create a synergy that should be communicated effectively with all stakeholders.

Afterward **Dr Anant Mohan, Professor and Head, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)**, a medical expert, briefly addressed the health effects of air pollution. He emphasized that air pollution affects every part of the body, but the lungs are the most vulnerable. The respiratory organs are immediately affected. People can only take minimal measures to protect themselves from pollution; nevertheless, essential administrative and regulatory measures, such as the development and implementation of standards for a healthy environment, should be undertaken.

Another panelist **Shri Ashish Tiwari, Secretary, Department of Environment, Forest & Climate Change at Government of Uttar Pradesh** introduced problems that are faced in Uttar Pradesh and talked about proactive actions that are necessary to address the current and future issues. He also provided interesting observations on the emergence of the crop residue problem through policy failure. In his remarks, he stated that UP is a pioneer in the air shed approach that is being applied here.

The second session ended with a speech by **Ms Prathana Borah, Director of India, CDP** who urged the need for a national policy for the automotive industry as well as manufacturing units. She brought into focus the Prime Minister's recent statement at COP26, as well as the budget, which is heavily focused on the transition to renewable energy. She gave a very wide-ranging presentation covering the entire energy sector including renewable energy, energy efficiency, and transport sector. She gave an overview of SDG 3, 11, and 13 and mentioned that SDG 11 is about reducing air pollution and the negative impacts of air pollution on health. It has integrated all national policies related to air pollution mitigation.

Making Words Count @WSDS 2022

- “ Air pollution has become a concerning risk in India affecting public health & the atmospheric environment. The objective of the thematic track is alignment NCAP as it's stress cheering best practices and increase cooperation with international agencies.
- Dr Vibha Dhawan
Director General, TERI*
- “ Sustainable development is about the health subject of people which are trickling linked the food we eat, the water we drink and the air we breathe. Where you are born, where you live, where you work, and how much you can protect yourself, those make a difference.
- Dr Jonathan Demenge,
Head of Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation*
- “ Tracking of physical as well as the financial status of city action plan disseminates information on air quality management efforts under NCAP to the public. City action plans have been drawn up for implementation in 132 non-attainment cities.
- Mr P.K Gupta (OIB) Shri Satyendra Kumar,
Director, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change*
- “ We are proud to say that collectively we have sensitized around 32 million citizens in the 4 focus cities. A single solution cannot work across the cities so we need to customize solutions as per the local conditions.
- Dr Anju Goel
Fellow, TERI*
- “ In recent years the Chinese government implemented so many policies to reduce air pollution as in 2012 revised air pollution standard, in 2015 air pollution prevention and control law and many more. China is in a phase of precise air pollution management as a nation.
- Ms Ying Zhang
International cooperation division Swiss embassy Beijing*
- “ We have to identify the perception of socio-economic community. The project we have run in Accra for several years now bearing fruit in developing of action plan.
- Dr Valentin Foltescu
Senior Programme and Science Officer, Climate & Clean Air Coalition*
- “ Student participation in competition based on air pollution where students can present their out of box thinking. Various awareness programs are required to reach out to the unreached.
- Ms Neha,
Senior Fellow, TERI*
- “ We need to understand people behavior towards what they do, can we create enabling environment that can facilitated people doing what needed to do, Policy advocacy on the side of policymakers also needs to support. Developing a strategy of change is not going to be a very simple thing, and that is why we need a nested theory of change.
- Prof Archna Kumar
Behavioural Change Expert, Associate Professor, Lady Irwin College*
- “ We must understand air pollution cannot be controlled by a drop of hat, We need to have a long-term policy. Taking into account the resources are not up to the mark to implement of city action plan then we must prioritize our activities.
- Mr Ashish Tiwari,
Secretary, Department of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Uttar Pradesh*
- “ Industry has been responsible for India's air pollution which needs to be lowered. Energy is central to the air pollution & climate crisis and energy-related fuel consumption accounts for NOx, SOx, and PMs.
- Ms Prarthana Borah,
Director of India, Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)*
- “ We have enough evidence that air pollution impacts our health, where respiratory organs paramount where it also impacts other parts of our health. The time to take minor steps to control air pollution is gone. It's time to take major steps towards it.
- Dr Anant Mohan,
Professor and Head, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)*