EU-REI
Creating a Resource Efficient India

Title: **Accelerating Circularity Through Integrated Recycling Infrastructure in India**

Date: 23rd February, 2023

Time: 2:00 PM – 03:30 PM

Venue: MAPLE, India Habitat Centre

Background

In the last few decades, the globalised lifestyle has created the linear notion of consumption and production moving around 'take-make-use-dispose'. This approach supported by mass production assist in faster adoption and higher economic growth. However, rising concerns around climate change have highlighted the problems associated with resources' over-utilization and inefficient application. The counter approach of circular economy to ensure resource efficiency in each stage of value-chains, aligning with SDG12 framework, could support in economic development and environment conversation. The important pillar to break the linear approach is availability of dismantling and recycling units, to enable the smoother and formalised re-entry of extracted materials from discarded products.

With the launch of 'Mission Circular Economy', several ministries and state governments have recognized the essence of integrated recycling parks. In 2022, Rajasthan government has proposed to set up a Resource Recovery Park – an integrated facility to handle all kind of electronic and electrical wastes; Delhi government announced establishment of an Eco Park – one point destination of e-waste collection, storage, dismantling, recycling, and recovery. Under the circular economy action plan prepared by NITI Aayog, 5 waste categories have been finalised including, lithium-ion batteries, e-waste, toxic and hazardous industrial waste, scrap metal (ferrous and non-ferrous), and tyre and rubber. Recycling and Resource Recovery Parks (RRRPs) are comprised of facilities for waste products dismantling, segregation, recycling, material storage, material extraction, refurbishing, and testing. Such integrated facility promotes the scientific and environmentally safe waste disposal, along with being a training ground for informal recyclers and dismantlers, overall leading to reduction in negative health impacts and harmful pollutants release.

To achieve the target of 100% sustainable waste management practices, recycling infrastructure has crucial role to play. The Recycling and Resource Recovery Parks will work as an authorised refurbishing market, collection point for end-of-life products and other waste products, and sale point for precious extracted metals and minerals that could be used for remanufacturing. It will eliminate the manufacturing constrain faced due to resource crunch; improve consumption patterns; will generate more employment and increased national income. Additionally, the environmental impacts associated with scaled production will be efficiently managed and mitigated.

European Union- Resource Efficiency Initiative for India promotes global and regional collaboration and partnerships around circular economy and resource efficiency. The transition towards circular economy and strong recycling infrastructure require support to address issues related to logistics support, technology and economic feasibility, and incorporation of informal sector. India and EU engagement along the different sectors, across businesses and civil societies could facilitate in building stable materials recycling and recovery facilities, in time driving consumer behaviour towards responsible consumption and disposal.

For the appropriate policy implementation in line of establishment of RRRPs, it is imperative to identify technical, economic, social and environmental barriers. The objective of the track is to devise a framework by engaging the industry, and government stakeholders that could supplement the faster development of recycling infrastructure. The aim is to bring together stakeholders to discuss their requirements, identify enablers, financials, and extents of activities.

Key questions for deliberations include:

1. What are key challenges associated with the existing recycling ecosystem in the country?
2. How should various agencies and stakeholders engage in ensuring improved collection and cost efficient logistics for transportation of wastes to integrated recycling facilities?
3. How can informal players, currently engaged in waste collection and processing, be integrated in large scale recycling ecosystem?
4. What good practices in India and abroad can be leveraged to enhance learning on success and failures in building and operating integrated recycling facilities?

About the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS)

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. The 22nd edition of the annual flagship event is being 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.