

RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



IMAGE SOURCE : PHOTO BY VASANTH KUMAR ON UNSPLASH

**PRIORITISING NATURE
AND PEOPLE IN BUSINESS
TO CREATE MEASURABLE
IMPACTS**
RIJIT SENGUPTA

**FIVE FUTURE TRENDS
FOR RESPONSIBLE
BUSINESS IN INDIA**
RICHARD HOWITT

**NATIONAL SMALL INDUSTRY
DAY : "EVERY BIG SCALE
ENDEAVOR ALWAYS STARTS
FROM SMALL"**
VINAY PANDEY

From the CEO'S Desk

Global Value Chains are getting reorganised. A number of factors are at play. COVID19 underlined the need for shorter and more resilient value chains, especially to mitigate adverse impacts of potential future shocks like COVID19 – especially for the most vulnerable. Addressing challenges and risks in global supply/value chains has emerged as a priority discussion point for international trade and economic partners. Advanced countries, buyers and MNCs have considerable influence on the design of value chains, and can therefore address these risks, especially through collaboration.

As the G20 Presidency nears, India should design and advance a *global action agenda on sustainable global value chains*. We can coordinate the process of identifying issues and strengthen international dialogues and collaboration on sustainable global value chains. This is a great opportunity wherein India and Indian stakeholders could share key perspectives and inputs, thereby informing the global narrative on sustainable business. It is important that India and the developing south/emerging economies highlight that we remain equally committed to address our priority sustainability challenges, as are the advanced countries.

Based on our work and experience, CRB aims to engage with the G20 Secretariat and share our inputs. Here are some points (below) that we believe will help design an action agenda that prioritises nature and people in business, thereby creating positive impacts for all:

- **Firstly**, underline that collaboration between producers/suppliers/manufacturers and buyers/investors/brands should be based on a balanced and inclusive dialogue process, that strengthens trust and mutual respect between all parties. This is especially critical given the rush of legislation on Sustainable Global Value Chains being developed by many advanced countries (that dominate international trade). Buyers/brands/investors will have to work together with suppliers/producers to achieve mutually agreed sustainability targets.

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- **Secondly**, challenge the norm that *Sustainability is a binary* – that oscillates between a *Yes* (Yes Compliant) and a *No* (Not Compliant). Underline that in the interest of inclusiveness – we need to move from the notion that entities are either Yes/Compliant and therefore Sustainable OR No/Non-compliant and therefore Unsustainable. Sustainability is an organic, graduated, evolving process and it is important to start the journey. Maturity is gained over the course of the journey – and not in one go.
- **Thirdly**, celebrate the contribution that the Indian Government has made in promoting Sustainable Business in India (through the *National Guidelines on Responsible Business Conduct*), over the last decade and a half, or so. This has really helped create a culture (and practice) of sustainable business in India including at the top (Board and Leadership levels in Businesses). One could argue that this has mostly happened among the large companies, and that there is a long way to go. But more and more actors are joining this movement – so, there's enough reason to be optimistic.
- **Fourthly**, India and the G20 could initiate discussions on the economic/governance component of sustainable business. This is an area that seems to be rather muted in sustainable business discourse and application. Given the nature of certain markets, time has come for inclusion of issues related to among others - concentration of market power; abuse of dominant position; misleading advertisement/misrepresentation; etc. in discussions on business behaviour in India. India and other G20 Members can learn from some experiences among EU Members States on this subject.

Rijit Sengupta

CEO, CENTRE FOR
RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS



PRIORITISING NATURE AND PEOPLE IN BUSINESS TO CREATE MEASURABLE IMPACTS

RIJIT SENGUPTA

Chief Executive Officer

Centre for Responsible Business



IMAGE SOURCE: CANVA

It's a no-brainer that businesses in the present and increasingly in the future need to innovate, improvise and evolve constantly, not just to remain ahead of their competitors but even to survive in the market. Whether large or small, local or international, business leaders are therefore keeping their eyes out on political and geopolitical events; inflation levels; market forces; and risks and uncertainties in their supply/value chains. There is growing realisation among businesses, especially the large ones about their dependencies and impacts on the external environment/society – and therefore the need to reduce carbon emissions; mitigate forest and biodiversity loss; invest in addressing inequality and so on.

Over 3,000 companies and financial institutions globally have been working with Science-based Targets to reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. A number of leading MNCs are engaged in Business for Inclusive Growth (B4IG) – an initiative that aims to address inequality and promote diversity and inclusion. Through the Forest Positive Coalition, companies have resolved to address the problem of deforestation and forest degradation in their supply chains. Young business leaders are convinced that future business blueprints need to accommodate sustainable and inclusive strategies to create stakeholder impacts and value for customers, with lesser environmental footprint.

Some would argue that businesses as a whole have had limited success at best, in addressing challenges in the external environment/society. Much more is needed, given the position of influence that businesses hold in societies. Time for cosmetic changes is over – we need businesses to transform, and need that now.

Modern businesses and their value chains consist of enterprises linked to each other through a complex chain of business/commercial relations and having varying degrees of impacts on nature and people. As mentioned earlier, while a number of businesses have internalised sustainable and inclusive strategies and practices, a much larger number of businesses and industry actors still remain uninitiated (fence-sitters). To address these complex and most daunting challenges of climate, biodiversity, inequality - it's critical for the fence-sitters to be part of the movement on business transformation.

Can leading businesses inspire laggards, across industries? How can impacts be consistently felt across long and complex supply/value chains? What will it take for SMEs to demonstrate their leadership? Where and how should the 'newcomers' start? What role can financial institutions, technology and policy play? How can we learn from and scale-out collaborative initiatives involving businesses that seem to be working?

Centre for Responsible Business (CRB, www.c4rb.org) has since its inception in 2011 been engaged with businesses (producers, manufacturers, suppliers, buyer, brands) and other stakeholders to explore answers to some of these pressing questions in India and beyond, together with our partners. CRB's flagship annual conference – India and Sustainability Standards (<https://www.sustainabilitystandards.in/>) was conceived and is organised annually with this purpose as a multi-stakeholder sustainability platform.

In the eighth version of our annual sustainability conference in 2021 (organised on the theme: Accelerating and Reinforcing Transformative Change for Societal Resilience), a diverse set of stakeholders touched a number of complex contemporary issues pertaining to business responsibility:

- addressing climate risks through business commitment with special attention towards SMEs
- reducing human-led environmental damages by adopting and promoting sustainable and circular business models
- shaping business strategies and decisions-making by considering the true value of ecosystem services
- addressing inequality and vulnerabilities through effective business and human rights frameworks
- examining the evolving role of technology, data and finance as enablers, thereby reducing the divide they seem to have created.
- creating an ecosystem to nurture sustainable enterprises by attracting sustainable finance and investments
- fostering collaboration and cooperation across stakeholders, geographies, power and institutional structures and systems; and

Our focus this year, at the ninth edition of the conference will be to dialogue and reflect on experiences of businesses in India and beyond to identify replicable models/approaches/experiences of pursuing climate goals, environmental impacts, biodiversity loss, inequality and diversity. The sessions will also examine various factors and resources that have and can support business transformation. Hence, the theme of this year's conference is Prioritising Nature and People in Business to Create Measurable Impacts.

The Stockholm + 50 Conference organised early June 2022 to mark 50 years of the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment (1972), emphasized the need to collectively address the triple crisis of our common environment i.e., climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution – for the present and for future generations. One of the key recommendations of Stockholm + 50 was accelerating systems-level transformation in high-impact sectors like food, energy, building and construction, water, manufacturing and mobility.



ILO's World Employment and Social Outlook 2022 underlines that a human-centred post COVID-19 recovery will require focus on four priority areas: inclusive economic growth and development; protection of all workers; universal social protection; and social dialogue. The pandemic has spurred unemployment (unemployment in 2022 is projected to be 207 million) pushed millions below poverty (over 30 million adults in 2020) and deepened inequality within and across countries and regions.

Some of the key questions to be examined in the conference by national and international experts and practitioners are:

- What lessons can Indian industry derive from businesses' engagement on climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution abatement especially in other emerging economies?
- What can Indian business leaders learn from how businesses in other countries including emerging economies have pursued inclusive growth, decent work and social dialogue?
- How can SMEs play an active role in tackling these challenges in India? Are there specific sectors where SMEs' leadership on sustainability should be explored? What can we learn from other emerging economies?
- How has India's experiences been in mainstreaming consideration for nature and people into Board level discussions? What can we learn from some other countries?
- How have businesses monitored, evaluated and reported their impacts on people and nature – especially along complex and arduous value chains? What challenges persist in this process?
- What role has government policy, regulation, competition, technology played in business transformation? What lessons for India and other emerging economies?
- What role can international policy, institutions and businesses play in supporting Indian industry to drive sustainable development within and beyond its boundaries?

Legislations governing national and international businesses are being rewritten to enable better visibility for regulators, investors, civil society and public at large about businesses impacts on social, economic and environmental parameters – down the supply/value chain. Many of India's leading trade and investment partners have adopted such legislation (see Table1 below) and would expect Indian suppliers, manufacturers, producers, exporters to provide full transparency on social and environmental impacts in their value chain. Collaboration and a process of balanced dialogue and actions would be crucial for achieving the anticipated impacts from these reforms. Are we ready and willing to engage in such dialogues? What has been our experience so far?



Table1: International Legislations on Sustainable Supply Chain

Country	Law
France	In 2017 the French Parliament adopted the Corporate Duty of Vigilance Law. It makes the French Companies assess and address the adverse impacts of their activities (including in their supply/value chain) on people and the planet, by having them publish annual, public vigilance plans.
USA	California Transparency in Supply Chains Act, 2010, requires large retailers and manufacturers to disclose activities focused on eradicating human trafficking from the supply chain and educating consumers on how to purchase goods from responsibly managed supply chains. The upcoming New York Fashion Sustainability and Social Accountability Act (Fashion Act), when passed will require New York fashion retailers and manufacturers over \$100 million in annual revenue to make required social and sustainability information available.
Switzerland	Effective from January 2022, Supply Chain Reporting requirements relating to conflict minerals and child labor were added to the Swiss Code of Obligations.
Belgium	In April 2021, the Federal Parliament voted in favour of a Belgian Due-Diligence law proposal to strengthen the obligations of companies throughout their supply chain.
United Kingdom	In 2015, the Modern Slavery Act was passed to combat modern slavery. A clause was later added so that big businesses would be forced to make public their efforts to stop the use of slave labour by their suppliers. UK Environmental Act 2021 came into being last year with one of its aims being to achieve deforestation-free supply chains.
Germany	The German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (GSCA) will come into effect from 01 January 2023. The law mandates companies with offices in Germany to conduct due diligence in their supply chains to protect human rights and the environment.
EU	European Commission (EU) Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive was adopted by the European Commission in February 2022 and will be presented to the EU Parliament, for adoption by all EU Member States. This legislation will require large EU companies to detect, prevent and mitigate breaches of human rights, such as child labor, as well as environmental hazards in their supply chains.

In India, the adoption of the refined National Guidelines on Responsible Business Conduct (NGRBC) is a milestone. The NGRBC is an advanced version of the erstwhile National Voluntary Guidelines on Social, Environmental and Economic Responsibilities of Business (referred to as NVGs). Over the last decade, Government of India has attempted to create an environment for responsible business through various such initiatives. The response from Indian industry has been mixed. While a number of businesses across the board have demonstrated exemplary determination and efficiency – a much larger number have remained indifferent. COVID-19 has certainly brought the focus on businesses' interconnectedness with other components of the system in which they operate, and the imperative to prevent and mitigate risks in their supply/value chain.

India assumes Presidency of G20 from 1st December 2022 to 30th November 2023 – with the G20 Leaders Summit expected to be held in November 2023. As the G20 Presidency, India will aim to identify issues and strengthen international support for priorities of vital importance to developing countries. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India is anchoring the process, which is divided into two tracks (Sherpa track and Finance track) – and expected to dialogue on key areas including - employment, trade, investment, environment & climate, energy, agriculture, women empowerment, financial inclusion, sustainable finance, climate finance, etc .

CRB will come up with a position paper based on the deliberations in its 2022 annual sustainability conference and share specific recommendations with relevant officials and institutions connected with the G20 Secretariat and processes in New Delhi.



FIVE FUTURE TRENDS FOR RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS IN INDIA

RICHARD HOWITT

Strategic Advisor on Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility, Business and Human Rights



IMAGE SOURCE: CANVA

It is always with humility that international assessments can or should be made from outside of a country.

However, my association with the Centre for Responsible Business in Delhi and in my years leading global moves towards integrated reporting (now merged in to the new global body setting corporate sustainability reporting standards), I had the privilege of working with a number of major Indian conglomerates including the Tata Group, Reliance Industries, Mahindra & Mahindra, ITC, Wipro and YES Bank, as well as with Indian accountancy institutes, the Confederation of Indian Industry and the Asian Centre for Corporate Governance & Sustainability.

This prompts me to take current and likely future international developments in Responsible Business Conduct and – with humility – to suggest five potential future trends for business responsibility in the great country which is India:

1. Net zero pledges

The Net Zero commitment from the Government of India has already led to around fifty top Indian companies adopting their own carbon reduction pledges, according to the United Nations Environment Programme. However, I have witnessed the clarity of 'net zero', despite all the challenges of achieving it, to have been a huge factor towards adoption by companies, not previously leading in sustainability efforts. It may well be this is a 'breakthrough' moment, which will also see a big acceleration in Indian business joining the 'race to zero'. The commitment to Net Zero requires a strategy for achieving it and reporting on progress. If it is a race, it is only the starter's pistol. However, expect to hear that noise.

2. A switch in focus from CSR spending to developing sustainable business models.

The requirement to commit expenditure to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) took place in India, before any other country in the world. It was a bold move which continues to bring much good in education and health across the country, and to foster productive relationships between Indian companies and local communities. However, its one risk is in diverting attention in the company away from managing the social, environmental and human rights impact of its business activities, seeing business responsibility as an 'after-thought', when the profits have already been made. Yet it is how the profits are made which is crucial to the concept of 'sustainability transition', which understands that no company can be immune from the way markets will rapidly adapt to sustainability challenges and whether the company itself will be able to survive and prosper. The World Economic Forum suggests that decarbonisation alone represents a USD 15 trillion economic opportunity in India and could create as many as 50 million net new jobs. Philanthropy will always play a good and noble role in corporate citizenship, but expect the emphasis to switch from what companies spend to how they operate. It is a sustainable business model which is likely to become the objective.

3. Addressing global sustainability standards.

One of the core activities of the CRB has been to engage in international dialogue on sustainability standards, one in which I have been honoured to contribute. The accelerated progress towards the establishment of global sustainability reporting standards under the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Foundation, means that key moments for decision are approaching for Indian business and government. India has always followed its own path in financial accounting, nevertheless choosing to converge with IFRS. The India National Platform on Private Sustainability Standards was developed from a United Nations initiative, whilst the country's leading Trustea certification for social and environmental standards in tea production, was developed in collaboration with international brands and with Dutch government support. In truth, social, environmental principles are worldwide in character, human rights universal by definition. Our collective ability to uphold them will, again, always need to be collaborative if we are to succeed. India will want to engage with what is now called the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) and to shape the manner and timetable in implementing its recommendations. However, this is likely to increasingly to dominate thinking – including at this year's CRB 'India and Sustainability Standards' conference.

4. Exponential growth in India's domestic market for Sustainable Finance.

As global capital markets develop an ever-increasing number and share of environmental, social and governance (ESG) funds, expect the rapidly expanding Indian investment market to follow suit. Already the Indian sustainable debt market (known in the country as green, social, and sustainability (GSS)) has seen a six-fold rate of increase in the last year. Representatives of large companies in India including Tata Power and JSW Steel are calling for a massive expansion of green finance, whilst consumer surveys show young Indians – driving the next generation of investment – sharing attitudes of younger people worldwide, with 50 per cent committed to using their money to support business sustainability. The establishment of a Sustainable Finance Task Force by the Indian Ministry of Finance and similar moves by the Reserve Bank of India, are likely to see the country producing its own taxonomy defining what is and is not sustainable business activity, leading to new disclosure rules for Indian investors and business. This mirrors what is happening in Europe, China and elsewhere. The ESG investment market estimated at US\$22.8 trillion globally in 2016 is predicted to more than double to US\$53 trillion by 2025, representing one-third of all Assets Under Management. This year just 0.7% of bonds issued in India are ESG-linked. I have no doubt that this will rise exponentially in the years ahead.



5. Can Aatmanirbhar Bharat lead to a new development model shared by other countries?

The emphasis on self-reliance (Aatmanirbhar Bharat) and 'Make in India' in public policy in recent years, has sometimes led to anxiety in international circles about India's commitment to multilateral agreements. However, India's announcements on climate goals and its global response to the Covid pandemic signal the opportunity for the country to develop a model of sustainable development with international application. India is seeking to meet the needs of its burgeoning 400million middle class, improve livelihoods in its rural areas and further develop the international competitiveness of its manufacturing and technology base, whilst seeking to maintain what are still some of the lowest per capita carbon emissions in the world. The scale of expansion of renewable energy is an important element, although eco-design across all infrastructure and providing alternatives to the traditional urbanization seen in western countries will also be key. These challenges of sustainable development are shared across many middle income countries and emerging markets. India's political importance may provide it with the opportunity not simply to develop a new sustainable economic model, but to champion it amongst other countries, whose collective impact will be decisive in meeting Sustainable Development Goals. Whether this happens can be a matter not just for India's politicians, but also for its business leaders. However, the world needs it.

Conclusion

For Indian businesses who will be many of the readers of this article, you will be involved in some or all of these trends and be part of making them happen. They build on all the achievements of Corporate Social and Business Responsibility over many years, not replace them. They also build on the ten years of excellent work by the Centre for Responsible Business itself, for which many congratulations are due. However, I hope this attempt to match extraordinary international developments in sustainability with the insights from my many friends and colleagues in India, provide a helpful guide to what will be significant in sustainability in the next ten years – actually much sooner than that.

Think about your company's business model through a sustainability perspective, with a Net Zero pledge and a strategy to achieve it, upholding globally accepted sustainability standards and delivered through access to cheaper and longer-term sustainable finance. Think about your company and of India as a country being a role model to others and mobilising international action to meet global goals.

Then consider your own personal role in achieving this by heeding the advice of the old Indian proverb: "We can't change the direction of the wind, but we can adjust the sails."

Richard Howitt is Strategic Advisor on Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility, Business and Human Rights, Non-Executive Director on Boards, former European Parliament Rapporteur on Corporate Social Responsibility and Chief Executive of the International Integrated Reporting Council.



NATIONAL SMALL INDUSTRY DAY: “EVERY BIG SCALE ENDEAVOR ALWAYS STARTS FROM SMALL”

VINAY PANDEY

*Programme Manager
Centre for Responsible Business*



AUCTION



IMAGE SOURCE: CANVA

In India, the National Small Industry Day is an annual celebration observed on 30th August, to support and promote small scale Industries (SSIs or MSMEs) for their overall growth potential and contribution to economic growth. National Small Industry Day is a medium to provide balanced growth to existing SSIs and large-scale enterprises and render assistance for setting up new industries to boost the state's financial health.

The Government of India had reportedly introduced an extensive policy package for the small-scale industry on August 30, 2000, to support small businesses in the country and since then National Small Industry Day is observed every year dedicated to small enterprises. Small Scale Industries (SSIs) registration is used interchangeably with Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs) registration while the MSME Development Act 2006 provides for facilitating the promotion, development, and enhancing the competitiveness of MSMEs or SSIs.

MSMEs/ SSIs are the backbone of any economy. In India, there are 63.39 million MSMEs across various industries, employing approximately 111 million people, of which 14% are women led – enterprises, and close to 51.25% are based in rural areas. The MSME sector is also extremely important as it accounts for 30% of India's GDP and 49.5% of exports. The Ministry of MSME has been tirelessly working towards development of MSMEs and has undertaken interventions to enhance the MSME ecosystem in India. Some of the key reforms introduced by Ministry of MSME are: Revision of MSME definition, Udyam Registration, Champions Portal, National SC-ST Hub (NSSH), Self-Reliant India (SRI) Fund, Procurement Policy (GeM), Establishment of Enterprise Development Centers (EDCs).

MSMEs today face risks of declining resources, increasing instances of climate change, stricter domestic and international regulations to ensure green and inclusive development and consumers' demand to demonstrate transparency in operations and products. Clearly, MSMEs need to integrate sustainability which means adopting a balanced attitude towards environmental purity, social health and good business entity management. It signifies that small-scale industries need to use renewable natural resources instead of limited, rare and non-renewable resources. They will need to reduce the pollution caused by their operations and have to ensure safe disposal or better utilization of their waste.

SSIs also have to face a competitive environment because of continuous changes in technology, privatization, globalization and liberalization. SSIs/ MSMEs have to explore new concepts, new models, new ideas and new forms of cooperation. In recent times, day by day manufacturing system existence has reshaped because of an eminent level of digitalization and tough competition, which one lead the way to a connected, brilliant and separated manufacturing.

The Centre for Responsible Business (CRB) recognizes that integration of responsible business practices cannot happen in the Indian industry without involving the Indian MSME sector. This discourse becomes even more relevant as we look to enhance our manufacturing capabilities and many more MSMEs aim for integration into Global Value Chains. MSMEs should be supported adequately through technical assistance, affordable financing and building capacities to adopt more innovative and sustainable practices. Taking its work on this forward, CRB aims to convey the business case for sustainability, inclusivity and circular economy to the Indian SSIs and help create an ecosystem that supports MSMEs to be more sustainable. CRB is committed to support the small industry through capacity building and training, creating awareness on emerging sustainability discussions and opportunities, sustainability related advisory, and policy advocacy for MSMEs.

This **SmallIndustryDay**, let's celebrate Small Scale Industries (**#SSIs** or **#MSMEs**) that are playing a big role in the country's industrial and economic development, creating broader employment opportunities, assisting entrepreneurship and skill development.



CRB ACTIVITIES

CONVENING

REGIONAL BAMBOO VALUE CHAIN CONSULTATION IN BHOPAL

7th July

WRI India and CRB gave introductory remarks at the regional consultation to explore the feasibility of a value chain alliance for bamboo in central India in Bhopal on 7th July 2022. Discussed on dimensions of a sustainable bamboo value chain.



'EXPERTS' DIALOGUE FOR ADVANCING SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS IN THE NORTH EASTERN REGION

9th July

Centre for Responsible Business along with Media Management Group for Literacy and Development organized a roundtable discussion on 'Experts' Dialogue for Advancing Sustainability and Responsible Business in the North Eastern Region'. Experts from various sectors attended the event and shared their perspectives on sustainability challenges and opportunities in the region.

Dr Lorho S. Pfoze, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), shared his valuable insights and reflections and highlighted the way forward to ensure benefits to both people and nature in the region.



VIRTUAL LAUNCH OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

29th July

The Self-assessment framework reflects the cultural, statutory, socioeconomic, and business management context for disclosure of adverse human rights impacts in the supply chain

Netherlands' Ministry for Foreign Trade & Development Cooperation, through the Netherlands Embassy in India, supported the development of the framework. This framework aims to develop the capacity of Indian apparel and textile companies to address Business & Human Rights issues in their supply chains.

CRB & IFHD - WORKSHOP WITH FPOs

4th August

CRB co-jointly with India Foundation for Humanistic Development (IFHD) held a Consultation on Framework for FPO-Industry Partnership guided by Sustainable Development Goals held in Bangalore. In attendance were leaders and members of FPOs as mobilized by IFHD that deliberated on the framework to further provide inputs. These inputs will be integrated and taken into account to be reflected in the Framework. Further, two Keynote speakers graced the occasion to share their remarks that validated and commended the co-joint work on the Framework. One speaker shared that the Framework will complement the on-going work of the government of Karnataka and the second speaker was optimistic about widely sharing the Framework.



INSPIRE AND MOBILISE ACTION TO REDUCE FOOD LOSSES IN RETAIL SUPPLY CHAINS,

6th September

WRI India, CRB and FOLU India Coalition organized this consultation to focus on understanding scope, challenges, and opportunities for reducing food loss in the context of the retail value chain in India.

COLLECTIVELY BUILDING SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS

7th September

This consultation was organized by Centre for Responsible Business in collaboration with CSR Europe. The aim of the discussion was to understand how should countries that are part of global value chains collaborate to achieve common goals on sustainability and resilience? What has been the experience in such collaboration, what are key lessons for the future, and what are changing expectations in the stakeholder roles?



EMERGING TRENDS IN SUSTAINABILITY, RESPONSIBILITY & DUE DILIGENCE - UNLOCKING POTENTIAL FOR BUSINESSES IN SOUTH ASIA

15th September

Centre for Responsible Business in association with Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry hosted a Panel Discussion on "Emerging Trends in Sustainability, Responsibility & Due Diligence - Unlocking Potential for Businesses in South Asia". The purpose of this panel discussion was to deliberate on the emerging global trends and expectations and to assess the preparedness of South Asian businesses.



COLLABORATION FOR DELIVERING ON SDGS THROUGH RESPONSIBLE GLOBAL VALUE CHAIN

PROGRESS CLOSING EVENT

20th September

Centre for Responsible Business in association with Aston Business School and International Development Research Centre (IDRC) hosted the event "Collaboration For Delivering On SDGs Through Responsible Global Value Chain" in New Delhi. The event hosted discussions on the policy and international developments driving sustainability in GVC and reflections from practitioners and researchers on the design and future of sustainable value chains. Over 70 participants and 14 speakers attended the event.



A ROUNDTABLE CONSULTATION

29th September

In Collaboration with Tiruppur Exporters & Manufacturer Association (TEAMA), CRB held a roundtable consultation on Sep 29, 2022, with 38 Tiruppur garment companies owners on government schemes, incentives and creating a sustainable cluster to boost India's garment & textile exports. The purpose of the consultation was to understand the strengths and weaknesses of existing government schemes, incentives, and buyer-suppliers relations and explore possible ingenious solutions and schemes to address their weakness in the context of sustainability interventions and consolidate their strength. Besides this, the discussion also identified the most pertinent aspect of sustainability that can be considered for the cluster and successfully generated policy input and scheme-level inputs.



REPRESENTATION

MEMBERS MEETING OF ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL (RSPO) 21st September

Bhavya Sharma, Centre for Responsible Business (I-SPOC secretariat) spoke about the current trend of palm oil, the coalition - its relevance to promote uptake of sustainable palm oil and how and why an organization become a member of The Sustainable Palm Oil Coalition for India (I-SPOC). The meeting was attended by representatives from RSPO, RSPO's members along with representatives from Indian Vegetable Oil Producers' Association (IVPA), AAK , IDH and WWF-India.



CLIMATE CHANGE & BUSINESS 30th September

Rijit Sengupta , CEO, Centre for Responsible Business, spoke at the 9th Episode of the Climate Dialogue Series 2022- India on Climate Change and Business on 30th September 2022, 3:00 pm - 5:00pm IST

The session touched on what risks businesses and industries should be most concerned about and how businesses can best prepare for a greener future and climate transition approach

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JOIN US FOR THE NINTH EPISODE OF Climate Dialogue Series 2022 - India
Climate Change and Business
on 30th September 2022, 03:00 PM - 05:30 IST

Speakers

- Atul Sobti**
DIG SCOPE (Standing Conference of Public Enterprises)
- Rijit Sengupta**
CEO, Centre for Responsible Business (CRB)
- Dr. Naresh Tyagi**
Chief Sustainability Officer, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail
- Dr. Amrita Ganguly**
Executive Director, Deloitte
- Kamlesh Kholiya**
Sustainability Manager, Tetra Pak
- Ramkailash Bhadouria**
General Manager (Engineering & Projects) - South Asia - KGF (Chittagong), Unilever

Moderator

- Kundan Burnwal**
Senior Advisor - Climate Change, GIZ

Register at <https://bit.ly/registerCDSIX>

ENGAGEMENT

MEETING WITH SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL, MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMERCE & INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA 21st September

The Centre for Responsible Business team met with Smt. Anupriya Patel, Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Government of India and invited her to Inaugurate Centre for Responsible Business Annual Conference India and Sustainability Standards 2022



SELF ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

MEETING WITH NEW DEPUTY AMBASSADOR - NETHERLANDS 2nd September

As part of our partnership with the Netherlands Embassy in India , Centre for Responsible Business has developed a Self-Assessment Framework on Business & Human Rights for Apparel & Textile Industry. We are delighted to present the framework to the new Deputy Ambassador and colleagues from the Embassy, Ms. Shweta Kaushik and Mr. Joost Oostenbruggen . We look forward to working closely with the Embassy on the further dissemination and uptake of this tool.



FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK



A supply side Commentary on the Agriculture sector in the current climate



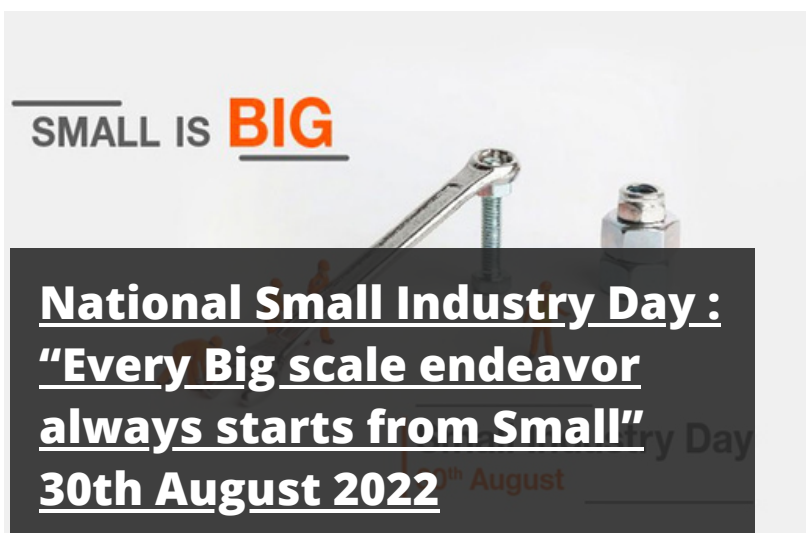
INTERNATIONAL

YOUTH DAY

International Youth Day: History and Relevance



Building Back Better - A More Resilient and Equitable System for People and Nature.



SMALL IS **BIG**

National Small Industry Day: "Every Big scale endeavor always starts from Small" 30th August 2022

CRB IN THE MEDIA



Industrial Sustainability with renewable energy.



Fashion Must Graduate Above The Status Of A Tool For Augmenting Shareholder Wealth: Ramanuj Mitra

RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

NEWS ROUND UP

BY RAMANUJ MITRA



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

DRAFT E-WASTE MANAGEMENT RULES PUBLISHED

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has notified draft E-waste Management Rules on 19 May 2022. The draft rules have vested the responsibility of ethical recycling with registered recyclers only and have not recognized the role of Producers Responsibility Organizations (PROs). Recyclers will source and process a quantity of e-waste and generate certificates. Companies can buy these certificates to meet their Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) targets—they would not have to deal with dismantlers, collectors, PROs, etc.

However, well known PROs such as Saahas Zero Waste and Karo Sambhav have highlighted that PROs provided checks and balances in the system and also provided formal employment to thousands of workers. The number of categories of e-waste has been increased from 21 to 95, which made the role of PROs and dismantlers even more important.

The draft is currently published for comments from the public. A final version of the rules will be published after a review of the comments and other stakeholder input.

[Read more.](#)

MSME AND SUSTAINABILITY

TECHNOLOGY AS ENABLER OF SUSTAINABLE GROWTH FOR MSMEs

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) employ about 40% of the labour force in India. Especially, the micro enterprises employ the maximum number of people in the sector, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. They are backbone of the industrial supply chain in India. Although, MSMEs manufacture and supply goods to both the domestic and international markets, they often face challenges due to lack of scale, technology, access to finance, etc.

Better adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT) can enable sustainable growth of MSME units in India. MSMEs that use digital solutions for sourcing of raw materials, process monitoring, and customer engagement gain massively in terms of revenue growth. They also face reduced cost of transactions and can procure materials cheaply, as compared to their traditional counterparts who rely on old techniques.

Further, MSMEs with increased digital footprint are identifiable by banks and other financiers easily, thus increasing their access to loans (formal credit). The pandemic has proven that digitalization is must for survival and sustainable growth. There are several schemes from the government that allow MSMEs to invest in digital transition, such as the Digital MSME Scheme.

[Read more.](#)



IMAGE SOURCE: CANVA



IMAGE SOURCE: CANVA

SUPPLY CHAIN UNCERTAINTY DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change poses the greatest threat to the survivability of global value chains. As witnessed in 2022 and late 2021, alternating floods and droughts in China have disrupted the production of chips, textiles and other industrial components. Disruption in the supply chains of chips had further disadvantaged the automobile value chain, as cars are heavily dependent on digital control systems and therefore, chips.

These examples represent just the tip of the iceberg, when it comes to problems that global supply chains are going to face in the coming decades.

Extreme weather events such as floods, droughts and hurricanes affect supply chains as they are more interconnected than ever. Crisis at one end of the planet creates ripple effects for the rest of the world. When the war in Ukraine disrupted wheat supply globally, India had the opportunity to fill the gap. But several issues along with erratic monsoons dampened India's wheat and rice production, forcing the government to put a cap or outright bans on the export of these commodities, pushing the world's food security into further turmoil.

The greatest impact will be felt by the equatorial countries, where rising temperatures and lack of rainfall will dwindle food security and make the populations vulnerable.



LACK OF SKILLS IN ESG JOB MARKET

The Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) space is seeing an exponential growth owing to the reality of climate change. ESG job advertisements are increasingly common on leading job portals. But experts have highlighted that most candidates applying to these positions lack the necessary skills set. This is a big setback as the fight against climate change needs skilled professionals who can guide the businesses towards a sustainable path and highlight risks in the value chain.

In the environmental space, several job roles like chemists, biologists, geologists, etc. are popular as they serve specific needs in the consultancy and advocacy space. But ESG and (more broadly) sustainability jobs require multi-disciplinary understanding of systems.

It is believed that with growing awareness on climate change and the urgency of the matter, the supply side of the ESG job market will pick up. Nearly all leading management institutions around the world now offer courses focused on environment and management. At the same time, there is pressure on national governments to include sustainability-related content in the school syllabi.





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Chelsia is an alumni of Miranda house and Ambedkar University Delhi with Undergraduate in Geography and Postgraduate in Environment and development respectively. She has been working in the nonprofit industry for the past two years with – WWF India , Angel Xpress Foundation and Perroayuda welfare foundation. Chelsia is passionate to spread knowledge about the entire new world to people of all ages by educating and taking bold measures for conserving biodiversity, protecting indigenous people, safeguarding tradition and culture, and preserving forests. She is always eager to learn new things and has a positive attitude. She also enjoys being outside watching birds and dancing as a form of therapy.

ABOUT CRB

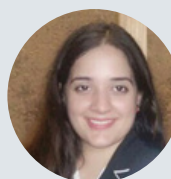
Centre for Responsible Business (CRB) was established in 2011 as think-tank to pursue its vision, 'businesses integrate sustainability into their core business practices'. Given that sustainability is a multi-dimensional problem especially in the context of India and other emerging economies, CRB has adopted a model of engaging multiple stakeholders to develop action plans for promoting sustainable/responsible business, across various sectors in India.

CRB has consolidated its programmatic activities into the following thematic areas:

- Circular Economy
- Business & Human Rights
- Private Sector & SDGs
- Voluntary Sustainability Standards
- SMEs & Sustainability

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