

RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



**THAT EXTRA
MILE TO
CONSCIOUS
CONSUMERS**

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**GREEN HYDROGEN:
THE HOPE OF A
CLEAN ENERGY
FUTURE**

ANAMIKA GHOSH

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JUNGLE: TRANSFORMING
URBAN LANDSCAPES FOR A
SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

PRASEETHA P KUMAR

**FROM AMBITION TO
ACTION: HOW MSMEs
CAN FAST TRACK
CLIMATE EFFORTS**

PAMELA JOUVEN

From the CEO's Desk

This quarter marks the culmination of the financial year; a period of reflection and celebration of growth for any organization. We're delighted to witness the fruits of our team's hard work and dedication, which has translated into a modest growth for CRB. Our team has grown over the past year, now comprising 25 committed sustainability enthusiasts from different backgrounds. We expect further additions to our growing team over the course of this year. It's truly gratifying to see our efforts being recognised and valued.

As we embark on this new financial year, we're filled with optimism and excitement for the possibilities ahead. We're eager to see our work continuing to flourish and making meaningful impacts on people and nature - that we aspire to achieve, especially where it most matters. In the coming months we will be finalizing our 2030 strategy, which will be shared widely - and we expect your feedback and insights. While I'm unable to divulge all the details at this moment, allow me to provide a quick peep into some of its key areas.

Our strategy will build and pivot around CRB's unique value proposition or 'niche', around the following key areas:

- Firstly, our ability to co-conceive, design and develop multi stakeholder platform (sectoral, thematic, geographic)
- Secondly, our capacity to envisage and craft sustainable and inclusive value chains across various sectors, thematic, clusters and regions
- Thirdly, our evolving understanding and work programme on sustainable consumption (CRB has advocated greater attention towards the 'demand side' for the success of sustainable enterprises/practices) and
- Finally, our aspiration to contribute towards a balanced and inclusive dialogue and governance of global sustainable value chains

As we enter 2024, we're brimming with positive energy and determination. We remain steadfastly focused on the long-term impacts we strive to accomplish and are committed to nurturing our unique strengths.

Rjit Sengupta
CEO, CENTRE FOR
RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS



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11th Edition
INDIA AND SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS
International Dialogue & Conference

Organised and Hosted by
CRB CENTRE for RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS
Enabling Change for Impact

SAVE THE DATE

Sustainability 2.0 Leveraging Opportunities, Balancing Trade-offs and Navigating Pitfalls

13 - 15 November 2024 | India Habitat Centre



CRB CENTRE for RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS
Enabling Change for Impact

CAPITALS COALITION

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Training Course on Natural Capital Valuation for Business Decision Making

On the Path to Nature-Positive and Net Zero

27 MAY 2024 - 16 JULY 2024

INSTRUCTORS

RISHI SENGUPTA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
CENTRE FOR RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

TIM POLASZEK
DIRECTOR,
CAPITALS COALITION

LOUISE AMAND
SENIOR MANAGER,
CAPITALS COALITION

What: Gain actionable insights and practical skills in natural capital accounting and assessment, exploring vital topics such as biodiversity, air quality, water and more.

Why: Discover how natural capital can be your secret weapon for informed decision-making, effective risk management, and catalyzing business evolution towards a sustainable future.

For: Mid-level executives from diverse sectors, academics, and consultants interested in furthering their understanding of natural capital considerations and the integration into business strategies.

ENROLL NOW

Single Person
INR 20,000/ EUR 220*

Group Registration (3)
INR 50,000/ EUR 550*

*Taxes will be Extra

<https://bit.ly/3shacht>

For additional details, contact: siyag@crb.in | Louise.Amand@capitalscoalition.org
Visit our Website: www.crb.org/continuing-professional-development

COVER STORY

That Extra Mile to Conscious Consumers

Rijit Sengupta

Chief Executive Officer
Centre for Responsible Business



Most of us in urban Indian upper middle-class families like to believe that our shopping preferences are in the best interest of nature and people.

Several recent studies by IBM Institute for Business Value (2021), Deloitte (2023), McKinsey & Company (2023) and Bain (2023), corroborates this growing consumer 'intent', including in emerging economies like - India, Brazil, China, South Africa, Malaysia, etc. As the world observes, Consumer Rights Day on 15th March, business strategists and leaders worldwide will have to satiate the growing consumer demand for purposeful products and brands. It is our right as conscious consumers to receive reasonable assurance about the social and environmental footprint of such products and brands in the market.

The Indian middle class covers a wide range of income categories from income bracket of INR 5Lakh to INR 30Lakh per annum. This income category has grown from 14% (of total population) in 2004-05 to 31% per cent (2020-21) and likely to reach 46% in 2030 and 63% in 2047. Experts indicate that increasing income driven by the middle class, will lead to significant increase in the demand for healthcare, education, consumer goods, FMCG, etc. The question remains, if this dominance of an increasing middle-class with greater disposable income and an intent to behave responsibly while making procurement choices, be accompanied with a spurt of sustainable and climate friendly choices in the market? Will consumer facing businesses, especially FMCG and retail respond to these evolving market realities and consumer preference?

While the LED bulb case study on energy efficiency has often been cited, given the exponential growth this market evidenced in the last 5-7 years, there are a few other markets that are showing green-shoots of this development. Here are some interesting facts about these markets:

- The refurbished smartphone market grew at a very strong rate of 19% year-on-year (y-o-y) in calendar year 2022
- Electric Vehicles sales grew by 82 percent in March 2023, in comparison to March 2022
- In the last ten years, India increased its organic agriculture land under cultivation by 145%. India has 4.43 million organic farmers (Economic Survey 2022-23) - highest in the world
- Energy efficient air-conditioners and refrigerators now account for over 85% of category sales for air-conditioners and 40% for refrigerators as compared to 60% and 20% three years back

One of the common features of all these examples is the 'mission mode' in which consumer communication was carried out in all these markets. Communication wasn't just being done in isolation by businesses supplying these products with positive social/environmental footprint. But it was part of a coordinated symphony of actions wherein the Government (including public agencies like the Bureau of Energy Efficiency) played a crucial role in creating the enabling environment and engaging the media and other existing consumer interfaces to build these campaigns and a narrative around each of these products/markets. This enabled the businesses supplying these products to go all out in communicating the positive social/environmental footprint of these products - and embedding the experience(s) into their market transformation/growth strategy.

Communicating to consumers has become a dynamic discipline in modern businesses and using sustainability performance to attract consumers, is becoming a contemporary strategy for market leaders to remain competitive. According to an Edelman report (2021), corporate communications functions are increasingly playing a leading role in organizational transformation. This role is no longer limited to employee communications and reputation management, but entails achieving a shift in mindset and behaviour across internal and external stakeholder groups from workplace to the marketplace.

However, a quick scan of some of the leading Indian institutions offering corporate communication courses didn't reveal any reference to sustainability communication. Professional institutions and courses need to be synchronised with contemporary industry 'needs'. This presents, therefore, a great opportunity for leading communication training institutions in our country to incorporate ways in which businesses can utilise their sustainability policy, strategy, actions or impact to draw attention of an increasing battery of conscious consumers. An expanding body of experiences, evidence and tools (e.g. the UN Environment One Planet Network 'Guidelines on Product Sustainability Information for Consumers'), could be leveraged.

Here's a note of caution, however, while communicating to consumers. There are various ways to establish, maintain and communicate credibly a sustainable businesses or product to consumers. In competitive markets, business heads need to exhibit sufficient caution in ensuring that their marketing and communication actions don't end up into being - 'greenwashing'. Greenwashing is an instance when an enterprise makes an unsubstantiated claim about its social or environmental performance. There is increasing vigilance, including in India on greenwashing. While a public legislation on greenwashing is awaited in India, the Advertisement Standards Council of India (ASCI) has released a set of guidelines effective mid-February 2024, for firms to self-regulate and refrain from potential 'greenwashing' scenarios. The aim of these guidelines is to: (i) demonstrate how advertisers can make true, clear, evidence-based claims that consumers can understand and trust; (ii) assist consumers make more informed choices if they want to make purchasing decisions based on environmental claims and iii) explain the approach ASCI would take in investigating whether environmental claims are likely to contravene the ASCI Code.

It is evident that making credible and substantiated claims about their sustainability performance can help businesses attract the expanding pool of conscious consumers in India. Businesses need to walk that extra mile to make this happen, and avoid the greenwash trap, while reaching out to the conscious consumer.





GUEST CONTRIBUTION

From Ambition to Action: How MSMEs Can Fast Track Climate Efforts



Pamela Jouven

Director, SME climate Hub
We Mean Business Collation



Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) are the backbone of today's global economy. In India, they account for about 30% of GDP, produce 49% of exports and employ 110 million workers. Small and medium-sized businesses champion local resource use and innovation, generate employment, and strengthen value chains. It is critical to integrate them into the net zero transition, in order for India to achieve its net zero targets and maintain a resilient economy.

In a changing economic scenario with imminent corporate, regulatory and consumer demand for sustainability, these businesses are facing increasing pressure to take climate action. However, they're up against barriers including limited time, capacity, and funding, and need additional knowledge to take action.

The SME Climate Hub was created to bridge the gaps faced by MSMEs on their climate action journey. Through its free, practical resources and support, which are tailored specifically for MSMEs, the SME Climate Hub acts as a one-stop-shop for small enterprises to take climate action. By joining the Hub and making the [SME Climate Commitment](#), MSMEs are counted in the global Race to Zero campaign.

Last year, the SME Climate Hub [launched in India](#) in partnership with CRB. Through conversations with MSMEs and grassroots associations, the initiative found that small businesses are on the right track and steadfast in their commitment to the planet. The Hub's engagements have strengthened the resolve shown by small businesses to take climate action, and have helped drive a sense of collective action and community amongst them.

The SME Climate Hub allows MSMEs from around the world to make a credible climate commitment, and provides businesses with free tools and resources to help them meet this target.

- The [Business Carbon Calculator](#) enables SMEs to measure their carbon footprint and identify emission hotspots by inputting easily accessible data into a quick, simple-to-use online interface.
- [Climate Fit](#) is a free online training course which provides SMEs with step-by-step guidance to help them reduce emissions across their business. This is complemented with concisely written [Action Guides](#) that break down complex topics to facilitate action now and planning for the future.
- The SME Climate Hub's [Reporting Tool](#) enables small and medium businesses to freely report annual greenhouse gas emissions, climate actions, and the impact of their emissions reduction plans to maintain year over year accountability and public transparency.
- The [Action Courses](#) provide sector-specific emissions reduction guidance through video courses. The first course targets the film and TV production industry, and the library will continue to grow across topics and sectors. All Action Course content is hosted on the [SME Climate Hub Academy](#).

The Hub works with a diverse set of stakeholders, including large corporations, financiers, MSME associations, and governments to reach small businesses with the right tools and information. There is a pressing need to unify important MSME ecosystem actors to catalyse climate ambition to action.

Many small enterprises are already doing great work on climate, and strive to do more everyday. Over 7,600 SMEs across 130 different countries have made the SME Climate Commitment. We encourage every small business from around the world to stand up and take action – and call on corporations, institutions and governments to support MSMEs in their journey.

TRENDING TOPIC

Green Hydrogen: The Hope of a Clean Energy Future

Anamika Ghosh

Senior Programme Manager
Centre for Responsible Business



Hydrogen is the most abundant element in the universe. However, answers to two critical questions, are fundamental in the understanding of hydrogen as an energy carrier as well as the semantics behind the various names given to it, are as follows:

what is it and how is it produced?

What is it? a quick recapitulation of high school chemistry tells us it is the first element in the periodic table, is the lightest element, and at standard conditions, is a gas of diatomic molecules with the formula H_2 . It has been estimated that approximately 90 percent of all atoms are hydrogen. One could discuss, at length, everything from its atomic weight to its end use, but to grasp the very basics one needs to make the distinction of hydrogen being a carrier of energy and not the source of that energy.

How is it produced? Very simply, hydrogen can be produced from a variety of sources, such as natural gas, nuclear power, bio-gas and renewable power like solar, wind etc. However, the two most common methods for producing hydrogen are: steam-methane reforming and electrolysis (splitting water with electricity).

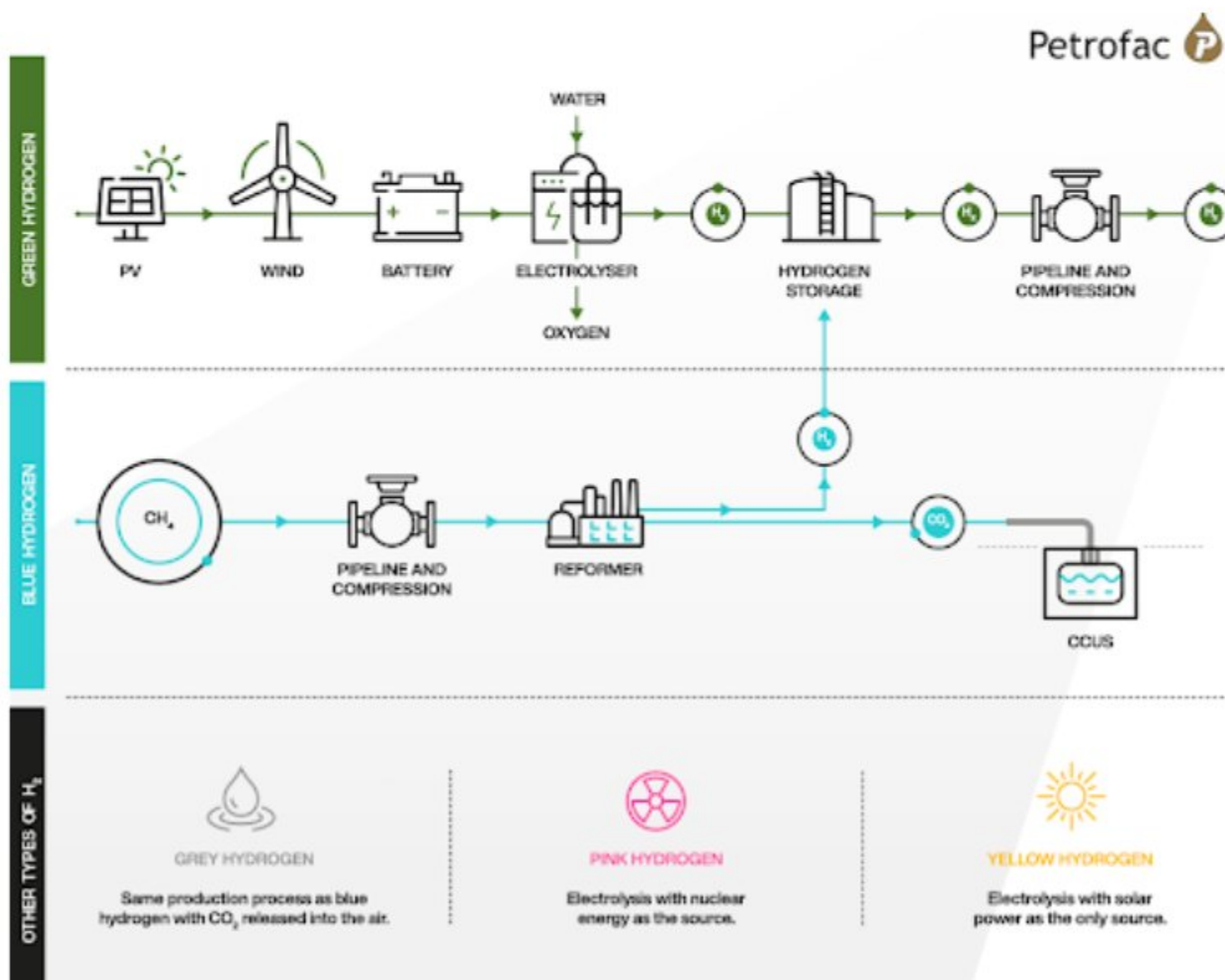
Briefly, these two common methods can be understood as follows:

Steam Methane Reforming:

Steam reforming or steam methane reforming (SMR) process is the reaction of methane with steam in the presence of a catalyst to form carbon oxides and hydrogen. It is an energy intensive process and requires large amounts of heat. The hydrogen produced is highly pure and can be used in fuel cells and industrial processes, such as electricity production, refining oil, and several other chemical processes. It has been studied and used since the 1930s.

While the steam reforming catalyst process for the production of hydrogen from methane was evidently known globally, in India, the catalyst for the Indian fertiliser industry to be used for the steam reforming process was developed and patented by the renowned scientist, Padma Shri Dr. Kshitish Ranjan Chakravorty of the Planning & Development [P&D] division at Fertiliser Corporation of India [FCI] for which he was also awarded the S.S. Bhatnagar Prize for Science and Technology for his contribution to Engineering Sciences in 1968.

This patented process developed by Dr. Chakravorty went on to be implemented in several other countries and put India on the map of scientific research and development, specifically of the SMR process in the global fertiliser industry. The main purpose of the SMR process is hydrogen production and most of the hydrogen currently in use is produced through this process and termed, 'grey' hydrogen. Therefore, it is the specifics of the production process such as steam reforming, including the energy source it utilises, that determine whether hydrogen will be dubbed green or blue or grey, or pink, or even yellow. (The image below from Petrofac illustrates this distinction of hydrogen's 'colours':)



This is defined as the process of using electricity to split water into hydrogen and oxygen, where hydrogen is used and oxygen vented into the atmosphere with no negative impact.

Electrolysis:

This is defined as the process of using electricity to split water into hydrogen and oxygen, where hydrogen is used and oxygen vented into the atmosphere with no negative impact.

The production of hydrogen using electricity in electrolysis is a promising route. However, the origin of the electricity used, and the subsequent production of hydrogen will be associated with different carbon emissions and costs.

Alternatively, if this electricity is produced by renewable power, such as solar or wind, the resulting hydrogen is called green hydrogen. While the strict use of renewable energies for the process of electrolysis ensures the hydrogen produced is green, it leads to higher production costs.

Conversely, procuring electricity freely at power markets increases the flexibility of electrolysers as they benefit from price incentives, which would reduce production costs.

However, the carbon intensity in both the power system and the resulting hydrogen will rise, resulting in a tradeoff between environmental integrity and economic viability which affects social welfare and the decarbonisation process.

In India, the central government incentivised green hydrogen production and electrolyser manufacturing, that was followed by various Indian states reportedly putting their own hydrogen policies in place. Last year the Indian government published a list of bidders for its first auction of green hydrogen and electrolysers subsidies.

A Global Hope

Globally, (According to a McKinsey study,) there will be substantial use of green hydrogen over the next five to ten years, especially in Europe and Japan. According to Julio Friedmann, senior research scholar at Columbia University's Centre on Global Energy Policy, the real challenge of green hydrogen is its price. Producing green hydrogen is more expensive than producing grey or blue hydrogen as electrolysis is expensive, even as prices of electrolysers are expected to fall as manufacturing scales up.

India has set its sight on becoming energy independent by 2047 and achieving Net Zero by 2070. To be on course, the key to the energy transition will be to increase renewable energy use across all economic spheres. Green Hydrogen is expected to be a promising alternative for this transition.

The National Green Hydrogen Mission was instituted with the objective of making India a leading export hub of Green Hydrogen as well as its derivatives, reducing dependence on imported fossil fuels and feedstock and the development of indigenous manufacturing capabilities.

By 2030, India is expected to produce 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen, along with an associated renewable energy capacity addition of approximately 125GW. This has led experts to opine that the rapidly declining cost of renewable energy is one reason for the growing interest in green hydrogen.

The Future

There are challenges to overcome before hydrogen can be widely adopted, including the need for clean hydrogen production, which requires an abundant and consistent supply of pure water, in addition to cheap renewable energy.

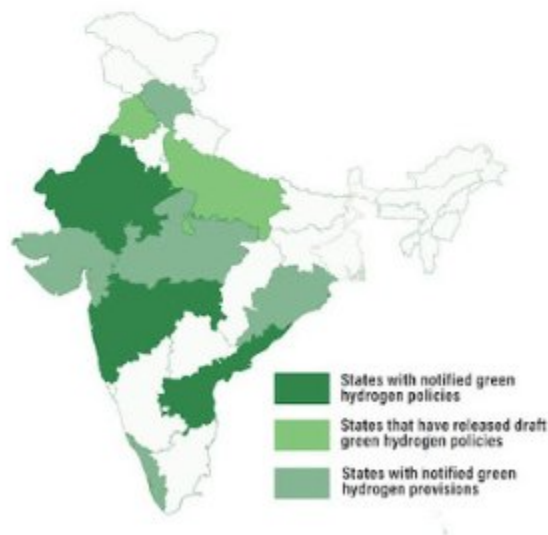
It is understood that green hydrogen units are likely to be near renewable energy sources to reduce transmission losses. However, many renewable energy-rich states, also suffer from different levels of water stress. Annually, several states across the country face near-drought like conditions which are likely to intensify, as it becomes harder than ever to predict changes in climate from one year to the next. In light of these conditions the scientific and business communities have been favouring the idea of units set up along the coast line, as desalination of sea water is a critical first step before electrolysis.

Globally as well, low-income countries with a proximity to oceans with abundant sunlight have been considered ideal for hydrogen production. It would allow these economies to grow substantially. For instance, European countries were planning to import green hydrogen from North African countries where the cost of production would be significantly lower than in the European Union.

Although the future is gearing up for a green hydrogen market, it is still at an early stage and things could change quickly, with the emergence of new ways to produce hydrogen sustainably, such as white hydrogen. Essentially this means, the search for affordable means of producing clean energy is akin to discovering new sources of Lithium as well as other rare earths that can be mined sustainably.

These cohesive efforts will help the global community as well as India not only meet its energy and environmental objectives but also establish a strong presence in the international green hydrogen market.

GREEN HYDROGEN INITIATIVES ACROSS INDIA



<https://news.climate.columbia.edu/2021/01/07/need-green-hydrogen/>
https://www.forbes.com/sites/mikeacott/2020/12/14/green-hydrogen-the-fuel-of-the-future-set-for-50-fold-expansion/?sh=e9f2fe6df3b6_image.pngimage.png
<https://www.petrofac.com/en-gb/media/our-stories/the-difference-between-green-hydrogen-and-blue-hydrogen/> https://www.business-standard.com/opinion/columns/green-hydrogen-at-a-crossroads-124030401142_1.html

TRENDING TOPIC

Greening the Concrete Jungle: Transforming Urban Landscapes for a Sustainable Future

Praseetha P Kumar
Programme Officer
Centre for Responsible Business



In the heart of our bustling cities, where steel and glass dominate the skyline, there's an emerging trend weaving its way through the concrete jungle—urban greening. It's a movement that's not just about adding patches of greenery here and there; it's about fundamentally reshaping our urban landscapes to be more sustainable, livable, and in harmony with nature.

Picture this: amidst the towering skyscrapers, there's a lush oasis—a vertical forest reaching towards the sky, its greenery cascading down the sides of buildings. It's not just a dream but a reality, exemplified by architectural wonders like Milan's Bosco Verticale. These vertical forests not only redefine the aesthetics of urban design but also serve as vital ecosystems, purifying the air and providing habitat for wildlife—the magical urban greens.

When we think of iconic urban green spaces internationally, Central Park in New York City, Millennium Park in Chicago, Parc de la Villette in Paris, Yoyogi Park in Tokyo are some examples that immediately come to mind. These sprawling green sanctuaries serve as lungs for their respective cities, providing refuge from the urban hustle and bustle while promoting biodiversity and environmental awareness on a global scale.

Closer to home, India boasts its own array of breathtaking urban green spaces. Brindavan Gardens in Mysore, Victoria Memorial Gardens in Kolkata, Cubbon Park in Bangalore and the Lodhi Gardens in Delhi which undoubtedly stands as a testament to the country's rich historical and botanical heritage, offering a serene retreat amidst Mughal-era monuments and sprawling lawns.

Moreover, innovative and scientific approaches to urban greening are gaining momentum both internationally and in India. In Singapore, the Supertree Grove at Gardens by the Bay showcases state-of-the-art vertical gardens that serve as both tourist attractions and essential components of the city-state's environmental sustainability efforts. Similarly, in India, cities like Bengaluru are implementing vertical gardens on metro pillars and building facades, not only enhancing the city's aesthetics but also combating air pollution and promoting urban biodiversity.

But urban greening isn't confined to skyscrapers or large gardens; it can permeate every corner of our cities. From rooftop gardens to pocket parks tucked between buildings and roadside plantations, these green spaces are sanctuaries of serenity amidst the chaos of city life.

Research shows that access to green spaces within urban areas is linked to reduced stress levels, improved mental health, and increased physical activity—a testament to the profound impact of nature on our well-being.

Beyond the individual benefits, urban greening plays a crucial role in fostering environmental resilience. Green spaces mitigate the urban heat island effect, combat air pollution, and promote biodiversity conservation. In the face of climate change and rapid urbanization, these green lungs are essential for ensuring the sustainability and livability of our cities for generations to come.

Statistics paint a compelling picture of the importance of urban greening. Did you know that urban trees in the United States alone remove an estimated 711,000 tons of air pollution annually, providing billions of dollars in health benefits? Or that access to green spaces within 1km of home is associated with a significant reduction in mental health disorders? Now that's the magical spell of urban greening.

As we navigate the complexities of urbanization, the integration of green spaces emerges as a beacon of hope for a sustainable future. It's a vision where nature and humanity coexist in harmony, where every street corner offers a glimpse of greenery, and where our cities are not just concrete jungles but vibrant ecosystems.

1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bosco_Verticale

2 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/370986515_Greenery-Covered_Towers_Examining_Innovative_Design_Approaches

3 <https://bangaloremirror.indiatimes.com/bangalore/cover-story/metro-pillars-a-vertical-garden/articleshow/57563627.cms>

4 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5663018/>

5 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1618866722001789>

6 <https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/67/9/799/4056044?login=false>

7 <https://smartnet.niua.org/sites/default/files/resources/Urban-green-spaces-and-health-review-evidence.pdf>

CRB ACTIVITIES

CONVENING

Fostering Future-Ready Workplaces: Charting the Course for Sustainable Organisational Growth and Innovation

18 January 2024, Gurgaon

On 18 January 2024, CRB in partnership with UNICEF India and FISME hosted a workshop 'Fostering Future-Ready Workplaces: Charting the Course for Sustainable Organisational Growth and Innovation'.



Capacity-building workshop - NEREMAC Ltd and Centre for Responsible Business

9 February 2024, Guwahati

NERAMAC Ltd, Centre for Responsible Business and MMGLD hosted a capacity-building workshop on 9 February 2024 in Guwahati, Assam bringing together 10 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and 6 Cluster-Based Business Organisations (CBBOs). The rationale behind holding this workshop was to inculcate a foundational understanding and appreciation of the SDGs using an approach that encouraged self-assessment. The workshop highlighted the importance of placing SDGs at the core of agricultural value chains in the North Eastern region, paving the way for a potential Win-Win for FPOs and market actors alike.



Advancing Sustainability Amongst Small and Medium Enterprises

20 March 2024, New Delhi

In collaboration with the Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture (ICFA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), hosted a workshop, "Advancing Sustainability Amongst Small and Medium Enterprises" on 20 March, 2024 in New Delhi. This collaborative effort aimed to ignite meaningful conversations and devise actionable strategies for enhancing sustainability within SMEs. The workshop gathered industry experts, thought leaders, and enthusiastic changemakers who delved into innovative approaches, shared best practices, and tackled pressing challenges confronting SMEs on their sustainability journey.



REPRESENTATION

Home and Personal Care Ingredients Exhibition (HPCI) Exhibition and Conference

19 January 2024, Mumbai

The Sustainable Palm Oil Coalition for India (I-SPOC) participated as an exhibitor at the Home and Personal Care Ingredients Exhibition (HPCI) Exhibition and Conference India on January 18-19, 2024, at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai.



'In the loop: Adapting due diligence to circular processes'

22 February 2024, Paris



At the Panel on, 'In the loop: Adapting due diligence to circular processes' at the OECD annual responsible business forum, Rijit Sengupta highlighted the importance of considering all aspects of Circular Economy innovations in the Garments value chain, not only for effective design of due diligence systems but also for interpreting results of due diligence and, more importantly, designing long-term win-win solutions for all actors.



Panel on Regulatory Challenges and Compliance Issues specific to mass timber

24 February 2024, New Delhi

Aditya Petwal represented CRB at a panel discussion on Regulatory Challenges and Compliance Issues specific to mass timber at the 3rd edition of Wood+ in Architecture & Design.



Accelerating Transition towards Circularity in the Indian Textiles sector

28 February 2024, New Delhi



Devyani Hari, she stressed on the importance of shared responsibility and collaboration between buyers/brands and suppliers to develop sustainable value chains in the textiles sector. She was spoke at a session - Accelerating Transition towards Circularity in the Indian Textiles sector, at Bharat Tex 2024.



ENGAGEMENT

Meeting with Allan Lerberg Jørgensen

25 February 2024, New Delhi

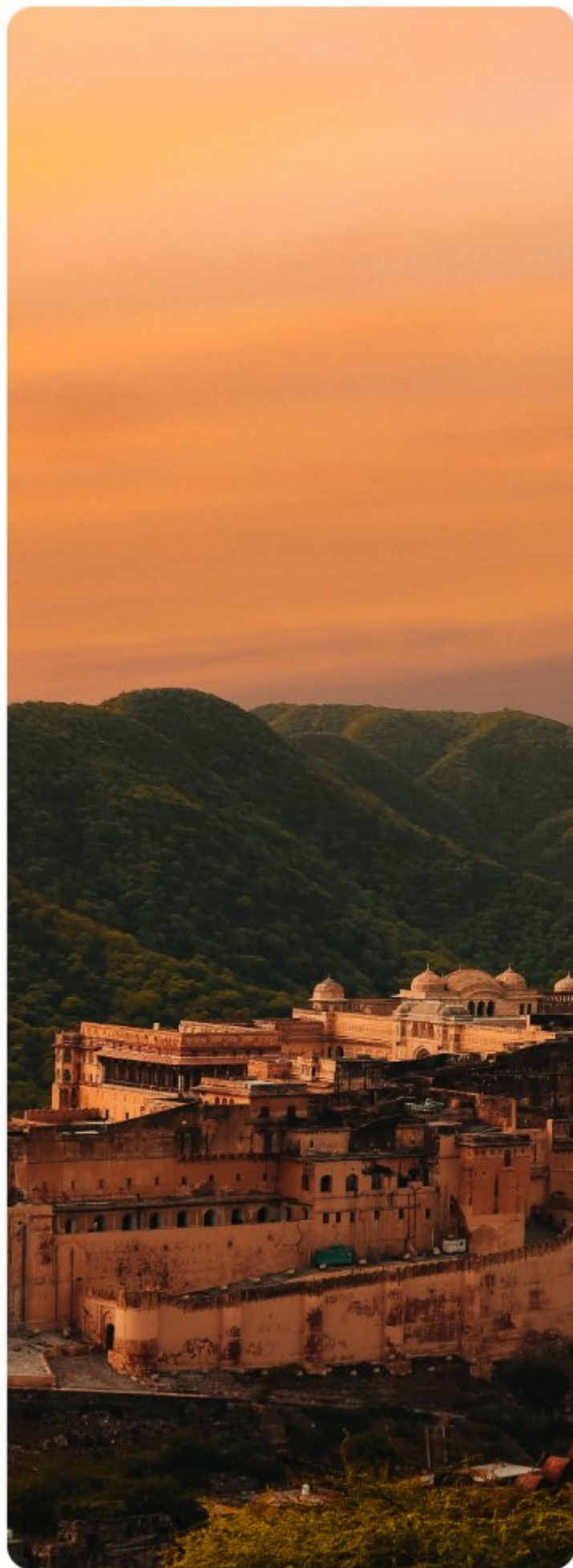
Rijit Sengupta met Allan Lerberg Jørgensen head of OECD - OCDE Responsible Business Centre and discussed potential synergies.



Meeting with German Delegation

8 March 2024, New Delhi

Rijit Sengupta and Devyani Hari met with the delegation from Germany and some engaging discussions took place between CRB and Anne Vanselow, Deputy Head of Division, International Climate Initiative (IKI); Sophia Engel, Deputy Head of Division, BMUV; Taina Dyckhoff, Head of Environment, Embassy of Germany; and Shriya Sharma.




FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

WELTERNÄHRUNG
Der Fachverband der Weltkulturlandschaften

04/2024 | Naxosli Sharma **Focus Area**

On the Sidelines: High Time to Coordinate EU Law with the Global South

During the formulation of the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, the voice of developing countries was missing even though they constitute a central link in global value chains. Proposals for an action plan to better coordinate implementation.



On the Sidelines: High Time to Coordinate EU Law with the Global South

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

With the final approval of the European Parliament in April 2024, the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) will be enacted as a law. The final approval comes on the back of several months of negotiations and intensive discussions, including the EU Council and the EU Parliament Committee on Legal Affairs (Legi).



Innovation for Forests: Driving Sustainable Solutions for a Greener Future

REPORTS LAUNCHED

Funded by the European Union

EU POLICY AND OUTREACH PARTNERSHIP IN INDIA

LEVERAGING CONNECTIVITY AND COLLABORATION TO ACCELERATE SDGs IN INDIA

DECEMBER 2023



[View the Report](#)

Funded by the European Union

Accelerating SDGs through Collaboration and Convergence: Lessons for EU and Indian Policy Stakeholders

December 2023

The Policy Brief was written in the framework of the EU Policy and Outreach Partnership as India project funded by the EU. The content of this publication and the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.



[View the Report](#)

RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS NEWS ROUND UP

NITYA CHIBBER

Senior Programme officer
Centre for Responsible Business



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Govt announces names of 18 cities to receive funds under CITIIS 2.0 scheme.

To promote the reuse and recycling of waste generated in urban areas, Union minister of housing and urban affairs Hardeep Singh Puri on Monday announced the names of 18 cities that will get ₹1,496 crore as part of the CITIIS (city investments to innovate, integrate and sustain) 2.0 challenge. Under CITIIS 2.0, cities will implement projects promoting a circular solid waste management economy for the next four years. These cities are Agartala, Agra, Bareilly, Belagavi, Bilaspur, Guwahati, Jabalpur, Jaipur, Madurai, Muzzafarpur, New Town Kolkata, Panaji, Rajkot, Srinagar, Thiruvananthapuram, Thanjavur, Udaipur, and Ujjain. [Read More](#)

PRIVATE SECTOR & SDGS

Energy transition will require actions from both public & private sector: Hardeep Singh Puri

Energy transition will require actions from both the public and private sector, said Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas and Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri.

Acknowledging the contribution of impactful Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives in pushing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda forward, Puri said, "CSR is not enough by itself. It is just the beginning. If companies and businesses are to create meaningful change, they must look at incorporating sustainability in their operations as well, he said. [Read More](#)

BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

TEPA: Norway to eliminate customs duties for almost 98 pc of imports from India

At a media briefing, Norway's Minister of Trade and Industry Jan Christian Vestre described the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) as a major result-oriented milestone that would not only boost two-way trade but also promote a rules-based trading system. A Norwegian readout said the TEPA also includes a reference to human rights.

Human rights are a central part of Norwegian foreign policy. Therefore, it has been important for Norway to include human rights and international environmental conventions as a part of the agreement, said PM Gahr Stoere. [Read More](#)

ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE

India adds five more wetlands to its list of Ramsar sites

The Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change unveiled the new Ramsar sites on January 31, in the presence of the Ramsar Convention's secretary general, Musonda Mumba, who is in the country to commemorate World Wetlands Day. "With the addition of these five wetlands to List of Wetlands of International Importance, the total area covered under Ramsar sites is now 1.33 million hectares," said the Ministry in a statement.

The newly declared sites include Karaivetti Bird Sanctuary and Longwood Shola Reserve Forest in Tamil Nadu, and Magadi Kere Conservation Reserve, Ankasamudra Bird Conservation Reserve and Aghanashini Estuary in Karnataka. [Read More](#)

VOLUNTARY SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

The race to meet the EUDR deadline is intensifying, so what help is available?

December 30, 2024 marks the day by which supply chain stakeholders, including producers, importers, manufacturers, brands, and retailers within the European Union must ensure they are selling, importing and exporting EUDR compliant cocoa, coffee, palm oil and beef. [Read More](#)



SMEs AND SUSTAINABILITY

SIDBI ET MSME Conclave in Rajkot sees stellar turnout, focuses on building financially resilient MSMEs

After successful sessions in four cities, Indore, Bhubaneswar, Ludhiana and Belagavi the fifth session of the SIDBI ET MSME Conclave held in Rajkot saw a stellar turnout. From conversations around building financially resilient and competitive MSMEs to the challenges that need immediate solutions, the Rajkot edition aimed to understand the role of Gujarat in shaping a viable ecosystem for the MSME sector. [Read More](#)



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

CII's National Circular Economy Framework: Roadmap for a Sustainable & Resilient India

CII's commitment aligns seamlessly with the broader goals of advancing sustainability and resource efficiency in India. The recent G20 declaration highlights its critical role, leading to the formation of Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy Industry Coalition (RECEIC). To propel this momentum, a National Circular Economy Framework (NCEF) is proposed as an industry initiative by CII.

The CII National Task Force on Waste to Worth gives a special focus to waste management and handling, and the release of the NCEF represents one of its transformational initiatives under the "CII Waste to Worth Movement". [Read More](#)



PRIVATE SECTOR & SDGS

Animal spirit back in economy, private investment picking up: CEA

Chief Economic Adviser (CEA) V Anantha Nageswaran has said the animal spirit is back in the Indian economy and has reflected in the visible pick up in private sector investment.

Even Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her interim Budget said that private investment is happening. "Now, that the private investments are happening at scale, the lower borrowings by the central government will facilitate larger availability of credit for the private sector," she said while presenting the interim Budget for 2024-25. With the growth in the economy, there has been a pick-up in private investment in recent times in some of the sectors like steel, cement and petroleum. [Read More](#)

VOLUNTARY SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

Stakeholder Metrics Initiative: over 150 companies implement sustainability reporting metric

Global challenges amplified in recent years by various crises, economic and geopolitical uncertainty, have made Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues even more pressing for policymakers, boards and executives. To promote alignment among existing metrics and disclosure frameworks, the World Economic Forum, with partners including Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC, has identified a set of universal metrics and disclosures – the Stakeholder Metrics. [Read More](#)

ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE

Green Credit Rules 2023 - Underpinning India's climate pledge

The 2023-24 Union Budget introduced a green credit programme, later reinforced by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change through green credit rules in October 2023.

These rules define 'green credit' as an incentive unit for environmentally beneficial activities, encouraging industries and entities to fulfill environmental obligations and promote voluntary participation in eco-friendly actions through trading green credits on the domestic market. Participants will receive green credits from the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) upon registration and verification of their activities by a designated agency. [Read More](#)



BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

MEPs adopt new law banning greenwashing and misleading product information

The directive adopted today with 593 votes in favour, 21 against and 14 abstentions seeks to protect consumers from misleading marketing practices and help them make better purchasing choices. To achieve this, a number of problematic marketing habits related to greenwashing and the early obsolescence of goods will be added to the EU list of banned commercial practices.

Another important objective of the new law is making producers and consumers focus more on the durability of goods. In the future, guarantee information has to be more visible and a new, harmonised label will be created to give more prominence to goods with an extended guarantee period.

The directive now also needs to receive final approval from the Council, after which it will be published in the Official Journal and member states will have 24 months to transpose it into national law. [Read More](#)

SMEs AND SUSTAINABILITY

Leveraging apprenticeship in infra-construction: 'Need to equip MSMEs with skills, workforce to meet sector's growing demands'

In India, over 90% of registered apprentices successfully complete their programs, achieving an impressive 81% placement rate within 12 months. This is identified as one of the most effective skill-building methods in India. Therefore, to address the demand for skilled engineers in construction, there is a need to encourage apprenticeship models. Formalizing apprenticeships in the MSME sector, which provides the largest share of informal skill-based employment, can be accomplished through cluster grouping and academia-industry collaborations. In India there are 5.5 lakh MSMEs and if each could employ one apprentice, that could be a major thrust. [Read More](#)

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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With over 25 years in engineering/technology, Anamika specializes in strategic marketing and communications across industries. Her interest in clean energy emerged at IBRIVER Energy, where she managed regulatory, compliance, policy and CSR matters.

Anamika holds post-graduate degrees in marketing, finance, and sustainable investing. Based in Bangalore for over two decades, she briefly explored writing about India's coffee history, published in an American magazine. At CRB, she will be working on the European Union Delegation to India project.

Besides a love for literature, singing, and playing the piano, she likes to go on a daily run and sometimes visit her hometown Mangalore.