

REPORT ON STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

*At the Regenerative
Agriculture Booth during
World Food India event*

19 to 21 September 2024



1. CATEGORIES OF STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED

During the course of the event, the regenerative agriculture booth engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, each contributing valuable perspectives to the conversation on sustainable agriculture. These included:

- **Farmers & Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs):** Farmers, primarily from small and marginal holdings, were keen on understanding how regenerative agriculture could increase their yield while preserving soil health. The primary concerns of the farmers were water conservation, improving soil fertility, and access to technology for regenerative practices.
- **Agribusiness Representatives:** Agribusiness companies, particularly those in the organic food and agricultural commodity sectors, showed significant interest in incorporating regenerative agriculture into their supply chains. They were eager to explore long-term contracts with farmers adopting these methods to ensure sustainable sourcing and certification.
- **Government Officials:** Representatives from both local and regional agricultural departments visited the booth. They discussed how government policies could further support regenerative agriculture and expressed interest in collaborating on pilot projects to demonstrate the scalability of these methods.
- **Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs):** Environmental and community-based NGOs focused on sustainability sought collaboration in implementing regenerative agriculture at the grassroots level. Their goals aligned with increasing the livelihoods of farmers while conserving and restoring the natural resources.
- **Academics and Researchers:** Researchers from agricultural universities and research institutes showed interest in studying the long-term impacts of regenerative practices on soil health, crop yields, and biodiversity. They offered to provide technical validation and contribute research-based insights.
- **Corporate Representatives (CSR and Sustainability teams):** The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) mandates visited the booth to discuss how regenerative agriculture can be integrated into their sustainability initiatives. Some enquired and showed interest to know about the programme were PDCOR Ltd., farmtoplate.net.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS IN VISIBILITY

The booth significantly increased awareness of regenerative agriculture among the participants:

- **Educational Impact:** A majority of visitors, especially farmers and corporates, were unfamiliar with the depth and breadth of regenerative agriculture. The booth served as a valuable educational platform, highlighting its potential to revitalise soil, reduce carbon emissions, and promote biodiversity.
- **Industry Influence:** The event helped place regenerative agriculture on the agenda of several farmer groups, who were previously focused on more conventional farming methods. This shift in interest marks an important step towards mainstreaming regenerative practices in India's agricultural sector.
- **Media Attention:** A few media persons also enquired about the booth and relevant information was passed on to them.

3. NETWORKING AND NEW INSIGHTS

The engagement at the booth yielded significant networking opportunities, bringing forth new insights into the challenges and opportunities in the regenerative agriculture sector:

- **Challenges in Transitioning to Regenerative Agriculture:** Farmers and FPOs highlighted the difficulties in transitioning to regenerative methods due to a lack of access to training, financial resources, and inputs like organic fertilizers. This feedback will be instrumental in shaping support programmes for farmers.
- **Technological Advancements:** Representatives from agritech companies (eg Agristo, RM Agrico Pvt. Ltd.) discussed innovative solutions such as precision farming tools, soil monitoring sensors, and water-efficient irrigation techniques, which can greatly aid in the adoption of regenerative agriculture.
- **Certification and Traceability:** Agribusinesses (eg IFKA, BNB Naturals) emphasised the importance of certification for regenerative products, particularly in export markets. Traceability and product quality assurance were seen as essential for building consumer trust and attracting premium prices for regenerative produce.
- **Government Policy Alignment:** Dialogue with government officials revealed that while there are schemes supporting sustainable agriculture, more focus is required on integrating regenerative agriculture into existing frameworks such as the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA).

4. INTEREST TOWARDS POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

The booth facilitated dialogues with various stakeholders interested in forming partnerships for the promotion of regenerative agriculture:

- **Government-NGO Collaborations:** Discussions with NGOs and government officials indicated that there is an interest to adopt regenerative strategy in other areas as well (Akash Agri Solutions, and AV Biotech, and Maharashtra Agri Business Network (Magnet), Project) especially in areas where water scarcity and soil degradation are major challenges.
- **Corporate Partnerships:** A few corporations expressed interest in forming long-term partnerships with regenerative farmers to meet their sustainable sourcing goals (Kanpur Edibles, AV Biotech).
- **Academic and Research Collaborations:** Institutions expressed interest in conducting longitudinal studies on the impact of regenerative agriculture, focusing on soil health, carbon sequestration, and economic viability. These collaborations will be crucial in building a robust scientific basis for advocating wider adoption of regenerative methods.
- **Investor Interest:** Investors (PDCORE Pvt Ltd, FarmToPlate) were keen on exploring opportunities in regenerative agritech and supply chain integration. They saw potential in startups focused on organic inputs, precision farming technologies, and platforms that connect regenerative farmers with consumers directly.

5. CONCLUSION

The booth on regenerative agriculture achieved its goal of increasing visibility, promoting meaningful dialogues, and expanding networks within the agricultural ecosystem. The diverse engagement with farmers, industry representatives, government bodies, and NGOs laid the foundation for potential collaborations and partnerships that will drive the regenerative agriculture agenda forward.

New insights on the sector's challenges, particularly the need for better access to technology, financial resources, and policy alignment, will inform future strategies. The interest shown by corporates, investors, and research institutions indicates that regenerative agriculture is well-positioned to become a key component of India's sustainable agricultural landscape.

Moving forward, the focus will be on converting these dialogues into actionable projects and partnerships that can be scaled across different geographies, with a special emphasis on regions like Madhya Pradesh, where the potential for regenerative agriculture is vast.

Aditya Petwal
Assistant Director
E : aditya@c4rb.in

Contact Us:
Centre for Responsible Business
P: 011 4108 8853
USO House, USO Road, 6
Shaheed Jeet Singh Marg
New Delhi, Delhi 110067

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