



Build-up to the
WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY 2022

**Curtain-raiser for the Twenty Second Edition of
World Sustainable Development Summit
&
Discussion on Mainstreaming Sustainable Development**

Virtual: WebEx Platform

Date: 3 June 2022 (Friday)

Time: 11:00 AM to 12:45 PM (IST)

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

Background

The year 2022 marks an important milestone. It has been 50 years since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, popularly known as the 1972 Stockholm Conference. Since then, the World Environment Day has been widely recognized as a day for promoting worldwide awareness and action for the environment. This year, the World Environment Day will be held under the theme **Only One Earth**.

Fifty years on, the world has made many strides in bringing to the forefront the issues related to the environment, biodiversity loss, climate change, and has achieved many milestones in integrating sustainable development into the public, private and societal discourses. But we still have a long way to go. It is increasingly being recognized that our political, environmental, and commercial activities are still carried out in silos. The mechanisms and tools within policymaking are often carried out in departmental and departmental silos, thus missing the opportunity to collectively act towards sustainable development.

Mainstreaming climate action and sustainable development into policies, plans and budgets is an important process because many decisions and activities have implications for the environment and that only the environment department or agency or minister does not have the *locus standi* to ensure that policies and plans across sectors take environmental considerations into adequate account. Instead, each line agency/ body must be actively part of the process, having internalized the principles or objectives of sustainable development into their policy decisions.

By mainstreaming environment into decision-making, there is a higher possibility for policymakers from various departments to provide more holistic responses and design joint interventions in sustainable development, which was hitherto met with resistance in other

policy sectors. By breaking down silos, mainstreaming processes can help the realization of mutual benefits, reduce duplication and disintegration in policy, and promote innovation and long-term resilience. Governance gains of mainstreaming sustainable development including more transparent decision making and better cross-sectoral working within governments. The impact of mainstreaming has a potential to increase awareness, change perceptions/ attitudes, and improve the way inter-sectoral decisions are made. This was also seen in the Indian state of Bihar, where the green budgeting process is being undertaken for the past two years.

Mainstreaming environmental issues into decision making calls for two types of organizational integration– vertical integration and a horizontal integration. A vertical integration requires a political commitment with mandates and frameworks coming from the international/ national level, and implementation and monitoring being carried out at all levels including sub-national. Vertical integration becomes crucial since the sub-national units can offer the comparable advantage of being more closely attuned to, and having better knowledge of the environmental needs of local communities and local stakeholders. On the other hand, horizontal integration is the environmental sustainability mandate being considered across different departments or sectors at a particular governance level.

Integrating environment into decision-making will contribute to improving the way governments allocates resources and to strengthening inter-departmental planning processes which will enable them to effectively respond to environmental issues in the short-, medium- and long-term. This will involve vertical policy, planning and resource allocation processes between national and sub-national institutions, and horizontal cross-sectoral initiatives that aim to contribute to pro-poor environmental sustainability.

With this background, the theme of Twenty Second edition of World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) will be based on mainstreaming sustainable development, driving discussions on why and how to break out of these silos. WSDS is the annual flagship science-policy interface event of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). Instituted in 2001, the Summit series has marked more than 20 years in its journey of making ‘sustainable development’ a globally shared goal. Over the years, the Summit platform has brought together thought leaders, heads of state and government, scholars, corporates, youth groups, and civil society representatives from across the world.

The only independently convened international Summit on sustainable development and environment, based in the Global South, WSDS strives to provide long-term solutions for the benefit of global communities by assembling the world’s most enlightened leaders and thinkers on a single platform. The initiative is enshrined in the theory of constructivism, according to which, participants construct knowledge rather than just passively taking in information. When stakeholders across the board reflect upon their experiences, they further build their own representations and incorporate new information into their pre-existing knowledge. By playing a constructivist role, the Summit will seek to reinforce commitment at all levels to enhance ambition and action through the World Sustainable Development Summit to create a more sustainable and equitable world for present and future generations.

TERI is organizing the curtain-raiser event for the WSDS 2023, on 3 June 2022 to mark the significance of World Environment Day, for raising global awareness on environmental issues and sustainable development. The event will focus on innovations to integrate sustainable development in development and economic policies and praxis.

Objectives

The objectives of the curtain-raiser event include the following:

- Formally announce the dates and theme of World Sustainable Development Summit 2023 and release the Summit Overview Document of WSDS 2022.
- Showcase perspectives and innovations for integrating and mainstreaming sustainable development and climate considerations across sectors.
- Build a momentum towards World Environment Day through a short film titled, 'Green Shoots'. The video will feature TERI researchers who will share what they believe are incisive changes that can positively impact the environment and our only planet.
- Build partnerships to create environmental awareness through signing of a memorandum of understanding between TERI and Diamond Toons on a series of popular books on water conservation.

Guiding Questions

[1] What vision is needed for mainstreaming sustainable development and climate action across sectors?

[2] What specific examples/ good practices exist on integrating sustainable development and climate action in economic and development policy and praxis?

Format

The initial part of event will see Welcome and Opening Addresses by the Director General and the Chairman of TERI, respectively. This will be followed by the launch of the Summit Overview Document of WSDS 2022 and the official curtain-raiser for WSDS 2023. This will be followed by Keynote Address, Presidential Address and Leadership Addresses that will focus on mainstreaming sustainable development and climate resilience for collective action. The event will then see the screening of a short video titled, 'Green Shoots'. The event will finally witness signing of a memorandum of understanding between TERI and Diamond Toons on a series of popular books on water conservation.
