

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

What Progress has the world made in the Circular Economy & Plastics: Stocktaking

WEBINAR REPORT

SEPTEMBER 24, 2021



BACKGROUND

In the Post Pandemic world, societies and economies need to rethink and innovate more sustainable ways of doing business that is less extractive. The world has seen that interference with biodiversity has a significant impact on human health. Circular Economy offers an exciting possible avenue for increased sustainability and equity- this path has been envisioned by Chintan and supported by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung for a long time.

Chintan proposes to create public demand for these avenues by an innovative intervention in the conversations in India that will underscore both elements of equity and the circular economy.

Considering the conditions of work caused by the pandemic, this conversation will happen online through a series of webinars.

incorporating the circular economy can help prevent the misuse and depletion of resources, maintain materials and products and recycle potential waste. Aside from the environmental advantages, adopting circular practices can also provide financial benefits.

Plastics have made a big comeback during the pandemic, and few believe that it is possible to reduce it with either bans or just previous regulations. While existing aspects of regulation, such as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), are expected to continue, the challenge will be to find ways that take into account public fear of disease to find ways ahead to reduce plastic consumption and explore ways by which circular economy can provide a pathway ahead.

The building blocks of circularity are present in India's markets. Incorporating the circular economy can help prevent the misuse and depletion of resources, maintain materials and products and recycle potential waste. Reusing, repurposing and recycling have been almost second nature in Indian society. It is important to understand that Circular Economy is more than an economic system; it is a new mentality built on the understanding that the life of a thing is not supposed to last from a shop shelf to a trash bin.

SPEAKERS

DR. SHILPI KAPUR



Dr. Shilpi Kapur

Senior Fellow

Dr. Shilpi Kapur is a trained economist and has over 12 years of research experience in the field of environment and natural resource management. Currently she is a Senior Fellow in TERI. Shilpi is member of the core team at TERI that is providing technical inputs and knowledge support to the Government of India for drafting India's National Resource Efficiency Policy. She also led the work on preparing the first State level Strategy on Resource efficiency and Circular economy for the State of Goa in India.

DIVYA TIWARI



Divya Tiwari

Divya is a Fellow of IIM Bangalore with a PhD in Supply Chain Management and a bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering. At Saahas, an organization focused on developing and propagating sustainable waste management practices to drive a circular economy, she has led various programs across the country for urban and rural areas focusing on community mobilization and stakeholder engagement; setting up and environmentally sustainable waste management systems; smart, tech-based program monitoring systems and development of policy framework for wider adoption and institutionalization of these initiatives at all levels.

SPEAKERS

SAUMITRA JAISWAL



Saumitra Jaiswal, is the Senior Associate in ELDF and obtained his law Degree from Amity Law School, Noida in the year 2016. Since then, he has been a part of ELDF and has been working in the field of Environmental Law. He has assisted in handling various cases such as the landmark case titled Vardaman Kaushik Vs Union of India & Ors. wherein the issue of air pollution was comprehensively adjudicated before the National Green Tribunal. Further, he has also assisted in cases related to the issue related to Noise Pollution, Stubble burning, ongoing before Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and matter related to management of waste tyres and restriction of illegal Tyre Pyrolysis Units. He has assisted the team in the case of Amazon related to plastic waste management before the NGT. Further, he is also a part of the team which has raised the issue of banning plastic materials used for advertising and campaigning before the NGT which is now being dealt with before the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

KEY THEMES OF DISCUSSION

1. Why Plastics and Circular Economy

Speakers discussed the need for Plastics to be included in the Circular Economy and trends seen. Dr. Kapur shared that plastics are indispensable for numerous applications, particularly till alternatives with functional equivalence and properties are developed. Plastic has played an important role in tackling and regulating the Covid-19 pandemic.

2. Principles of Circular Economy

Speakers discussed the design principles that should be included in the plastic sector in line with the circular economy. The three principles include : design out waste and pollution, keep product materials in use, regenerate natural systems. Downcycling plastic and the potential for utilization of plastic waste will foster circularity.

3. Gaps in the Plastics & Circular Economy Ecosystem

Divya Tiwari from Sahaas shared one of the biggest gaps is that waste to energy (WTE) is being prioritized over recycling and reusing. She also highlighted how Extended Producer Responsibility focuses on transferring the cost of collection and processing to the industry and there is no specific rule that enforces the differentiation for reducing and recycling.

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS



FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung is a non-profit German foundation committed to the values of democracy and social justice



www.india.fes.de/



CHINTAN ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND ACTION GROUP

Chintan is a non-profit that works on sustainability through the lens of solid and hazardous waste, and air pollution.

www.chintan-india.org/

