



CONCEPT NOTE

EU-India Webinar Series

Webinar on the occasion of

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY (June 5, 2020)

Resource Efficiency for Greening of Recovery and fostering Sustainable Economic Growth in a resource constrained world

The global coronavirus pandemic has brought devastation and hardships bringing our way of life to a near halt. Closed geographical boundaries and confinement, disruptions to our mostly linear global supply chain systems, is forcing us to rethink our production and consumption patterns. The ideas that emerge from the re-thinking process should be converted into innovative resource efficiency and circular economy based solutions and will require enabling support and responsibilities to extend beyond governments to the private sector, civil society and even individuals if we have to achieve sustainable development. These solutions could be made a part of the government's recovery agendas and strategies.

Some entry points could be addressing the manufacturing and supply-chain shortages within the health sector related to medical equipment and devices, developing responsible packaging solutions and continuation of efforts on efficient waste management. There is also opportunity for implementing demand-side solutions linked to our behaviour and lifestyles and make our consumption patterns sustainable.

Resource efficiency as a strategy will also help in reducing import dependence and growing domestic manufacturing and providing a cushion from international resource price volatility and uncertain availability. With adoption of resource efficiency associated technological innovations- new jobs requiring reskilling will emerge.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, countries around the globe are working toward recovery plans for the time after the lockdown. EU is leading by example on how greening of recovery is possible and has the potential to provide new economic opportunities, jobs and skill development.

EU's draft plan for economic recovery will be interlaid and interspersed with the EU Green deal. The initiatives to be proposed under the recovery package reportedly address renewable energy,





electric vehicles and hydrogen fuel as a part of the plan. The European Green Deal provides a roadmap with actions to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy and restore biodiversity and cut pollution. It outlines investments needed and financing tools available and explains how to ensure a just and inclusive transition. Recently, the City of Amsterdam has launched its Circular 2020-2025 strategy, which outlines the actions to halve the use of new raw materials by 2030. The local government considers this approach also to be the basis for its recovery from COVID-19. India too has announced a significant package and the inclusion of resource efficiency strategies across various sectors will increase the efficacy of the stimulus packages as it has significant impact on the material and operation costs through sustainable practices- a need for the current fragile economic structure.

Under the ongoing European Union-Resource Efficiency Initiative (EU-REI) project key hotspot sectors using critical raw materials were assessed in terms of opportunities and policy focus that is required to enhance the efficiency of material use in these sectors. The sector covered under the assessment were automotive (ICE and electric mobility), construction (with focus on C&D waste), electronics and plastics (with focus on EPR), steel, aluminium and Renewables (PV).

Further TERI in its capacity as a knowledge partner since June 2018, to the Resource Efficiency Cell at the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India prepared an integrated report compiling the findings of all these sectoral assessments, under EU-REI project that were undertaken and suggested components of a resource efficiency policy framework for India. This report also includes the findings from the Status Papers on achieving resource efficiency across four sectors -Steel, Aluminium, E-waste and Construction and Demolition sectors that were released by the NITI Aayog and EU Delegation, in association with Ministry of Mines (and in particular Jawaharlal Nehru Aluminium Research Development and Design Centre), Ministry of Steel, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and Ministry of Information Technology (MeitY). This integrated report formed the basis for developing the Draft National Resource Efficiency Policy, released by MoEFCC in August 2019.

The EU-REI project has also supported the preparation of the first state level resource efficiency strategy in India, which was prepared by TERI for Goa under and was launched by the Chief Minister of Goa in February 2020.

There is already information and best practices on resource efficiency and circular economy in selected sectors identified which needs implementation. The time is ripe to adopt integrated thinking in exploring inter-linkages across sectors and resources that can make India utilise the latter more efficiently and unlock the associated benefits and eventually make the recovery green and efficient. Bringing in the knowledge, expertise and business opportunities from EU can partner with public and private sector, civil society and other relevant actors for the implementation efforts.

The proposed webinar to be organized under the EU Public Diplomacy project in association with the EU-Resource Efficiency Initiative (EU-REI) and support of EU Delegation in India aims to





have an informed discussion on the potential linkages of RE with proposed policies by the Government of India and how the former can catalyze the economic recovery while helping India move on the path of sustainable development.

Specific issues for discussion include:

- In what aspects of the Government of India's recent economic recovery and stimulus package could resource efficiency strategy play a critical role?
- How should the recovery plans for the key sectors of the economy be structured and identification of RE opportunities for enhancing the efficacy of these plans and creating jobs and re-skilling opportunities.
- What are the challenges that the current COVID-19 pandemic has posed to Circular Economy efforts and how can these challenges be addressed??
- How can we build resilience and support for the most vulnerable and affected by the COVID-19 pandemic- the informal employed workforce who are at higher risk of infection and might not also be able to return to work for some time?
- Exchange information and introduce the 'Lead the Green Change Champions' initiative and also identify business opportunities for EU and India partnerships

The webinar would encapsulate the progress of the EU-REI initiative in India followed by a Panel discussion and a Question and Answer session with the panelists. The webinar would invite thought leaders, policymakers, researchers, practitioners and relevant stakeholders to participate in the discussions. This Webinar will also constitute the first in a four webinar series that TERI will be organizing under the umbrella of the EU-REI project during June-July 2020.

