

State Consultation

SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION IN INDIA: A CONSUMER PERSPECTIVE

18 August 2021
Shimla, India

EVENT REPORT



Introduction

Sustainable Development Goal 12 is about "Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)". It is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015. SCP concerns material use, hazardous chemicals and waste, sustainable business practices, and consumer behaviour. With increasing use of natural resources, air, water, soil pollution, and ever-growing amount of waste, it is clear that our current way of consumption and production has to change fundamentally. To reach the goal, world leaders have agreed on targets, such as improved resource efficiency, reduced waste and better awareness of sustainable lifestyles.

In 1985, the United Nations adopted a set of Guidelines for Consumer Protection which was revised in 1999 and 2015. One of the objectives of guidelines for consumer protection is to promote sustainable consumption which includes meeting the needs of present and future generations for goods and services in ways that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

Sustainable Consumption and Production

In the global market of goods and services, consumers drive the economy according to their demand and consumption patterns. They hold the power to influence production decisions, based on what goods and services they consume. If consumers prefer to buy sustainable products and services, it would result in a higher demand for such products and services. Rise in demand consequently puts pressure on firms to see that they produce sustainable products and services in order to stay in business. Consumers may also opt for sustainable way of living by reducing their consumption. Therefore, the role of choices and decisions made by each and every individual forms the crucial point of influence which cannot be ignored in the process of achieving the targets of 17 SDGs.

Of all the Goals, the SDG12 aims at ensuring responsible consumption and production patterns everywhere in the world, notably by:

- halving global food waste per capita and ensuring the efficient and sustainable use of natural resources by 2030;
- fighting pollution, reducing the overall waste generation, and improving the management of chemicals and toxic wastes;
- supporting companies' transition to green infrastructures and practices; and
- making sure everyone everywhere is fully informed of ways to live in harmony with nature and eventually adopts thoughtful habits.

The very objective of this goal is also highlighted in the text of the UNGCP which states that unsustainable patterns of production and consumption are the main cause of the continuing deterioration of the environment and all Member States should focus on promoting sustainable consumption patterns.

Therefore, participation of consumers becomes paramount to ensuring a more sustainable and inclusive development. Governments across the globe should consider improving the laws and policies to better fulfill their commitments of Agenda 2030 and, at the same time, consider the consumer protection dimension while devising and implementing their development strategies.

CUTS Study on SCP

CUTS, in partnership with Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), conducted a study mainly looking at SDG 12 from consumer perspective based on The United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP). This study is to frame the understanding of the concept of SCP beyond the SDG 12 and expand it beyond its current environment dimension. The concept shall be studied taking into consideration its presence in UN guidelines for Consumer Protection from the perspective of sustainable consumption and production.

Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh are covered under the study. CUTS visited targeted states and gathered the information from different stakeholders across the states regarding SDG-12-related policies and programmes from consumer perspective.

State Consultation

To share the finding of study and gather crucial inputs from relevant stakeholder, CUTS is organising a State Level Consultation on SDG 12 in partnership with Planning Department, Government of Himachal Pradesh and Plan Foundation at Hotel Woodville Palace, Raj Bhawan Road, Shimla, on Wednesday, August 18, 2021. The main objective of the State Consultation is to disseminate the key finding of the study with specific focus on the state scenario as well as practices and learning from five targeted states.

The discussion will also include best practices and case studies from different parts of the Himachal Pradesh in relation to SDG 12. Representatives from the various government departments and organisations working on sustainable consumption from Himachal Pradesh are invited to take part in the consultation.

Proceedings

The meeting started on time and arrangements were made to ensure that participants are given an opportunity to self-introduce themselves with one another over a cup of tea and cookies. The consultation was a first of its kind for all the stakeholders present, i.e., a physical discussion between the stakeholders since the onset of pandemic. The half-day-long meeting was split into two different sessions – inaugural session and technical session.

To give a brief introduction to the project, the inaugural session began with the welcome address, opening address, a presentation on CUTS Study, followed by keynote address and special address by the guests. The next session was entirely focused on presenting the findings of the CUTS study at state level. The technical session was followed by fruitful discussions to gain new insights. CUTS had the opportunity to share its knowledge and as well learn few new developments in the field of SCP from the wider set of participants.

Inaugural Session

Mangat Chauhan, Executive Director, Plan Foundation, welcomed the meeting attendees and key speakers. He highlighted the work of Plan Foundation.



OPENING ADDRESS

George Cherian, Director, CUTS International, delivered introductory and opening remarks of the programme. He stated the objectives of the meeting and recounted memories of how CUTS has been a pioneer in sustainable consumption and production practices. After talking about the purpose of this state consultation on “Sustainable Consumption and Production in India: A Consumer Perspective”, he touched upon a little bit of the background to underline the importance of the SDGs, in general, and SDG 12, in particular. He also referred to the report of Asia and Pacific SDG Progress Report 2020 and the 2021 and cautioned that the progress on SDG 12 is stagnant and it is anticipated that the region could miss every single measurable target under Goal 12, if no serious interventions are made. Quoting from the findings of the report, he underlined that the Asia-Pacific region is not on track to achieve any of the 17 SDGs by 2030. On its current trajectory, the region may achieve less than 10 percent of the SDG targets.



He also spoke about SDG 12 by referring to the third edition of the SDG India Index and Dashboard 2020-21. Though the Department of Environment, Science and Technology is the nodal department for SDG 12, George expressed concern about how neglected SDG 12 is when compared to all other goals. He claimed that SDG 12 is an orphan goal, as the goal itself is a mixed bag with many of its targets outside the control of the Department of Environment. For instance, sustainable tourism is responsibility of the Department of Tourism and Sustainable Public Procurement, if implemented, would become the responsibility of the Department of Finance. Various departments are responsible for various targets and this is not the case with other goals.

It is in this context that CUTS, in partnership with the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), planned to conduct a study mainly looking at SDG 12 from a consumer perspective based on the UNGCP. While a lot of studies and discussions are available online that look at SDG 12 from producers and government perspectives, nothing much could be seen that attempts to understand this goal from a consumer's perspective. Hence, the study presents an analysis of the progress towards SDG 12 up till 2020 from a consumer perspective using the framework of UNGCP. The study was carried out during 2019-20 by CUTS team. The importance of studying and analysing the achievement of a country's progress under SDG 12 than any other Goal was also felt because of its interlinking nature with other goals. Almost all the other Goals are connected with SDG 12, thereby underlining that any progress to meet Agenda 2030 by a country cannot be achieved without carefully approaching and addressing the concerns under SDG 12.

He also appraised about the negative impact of pandemic on sustainable consumption and how the world is witnessing a never-before-seen increase in usage of plastic. While plastic is playing an important role in protecting people from the deadly virus, especially frontline workers, increased usage of plastic face masks, gloves and hand sanitizer bottles have increased the burden of plastic waste. Apart from these, it is estimated that plastic packaging waste is projected to increase by as much as 300 percent because of lockdown measures and the increase of our consumption of single-use plastics.

While summing up, George pointed out that good practices of Himachal Pradesh need to be documented for improving its SDGs Ranking. He expects that key findings of the report are discussed and deliberated in this day-long consultation to further improvise the SDG 12 work and thanked all stakeholders and delegates for the most valuable inputs.

OVERVIEW OF CUTS STUDY ON SCP IN INDIA

Amar Deep Singh, Senior Programme Officer, CUTS International, presented a brief overview of the study along with key recommendations for better understanding of the audience. His presentation began with an introduction of CUTS and later touched upon the objectives of the project/study, its framework and outline. He also explained to the gathering the methodology of the study for better understanding of how the study was carried out by CUTS and explained the reason for targeting the five project states, the stakeholders approached for getting inputs for the study, etc. He assured that detailed discussion of the study and its findings would be shared with the audience by CUTS during the course of this consultation. However, for the immediate knowledge of the dignitaries sitting on the dais, Amar shared the crux of the major findings of the study and the same was well received by the audience.



ADDRESS BY THE CHIEF GUEST

Akshay Sood, Secretary, Department of Finance, Government of Himachal Pradesh, began his talk by thanking CUTS for organising this event on SDG 12. He spoke about the vision document 'Drishti Himachal Pradesh-2030: Sustainable Development Goals' published by the planning department. Speaking during the inaugural session, he said the vision document's purpose was to create a roadmap for the state's transformative growth in order to achieve the SDGs. He stated that the State administration was dedicated to achieving a synergy in Himachal Pradesh between quicker and inclusive economic growth, social cohesion, and environmental sustainability in order to promote overall prosperity and a higher quality of life for the people. He emphasised that achieving the SDGs will necessitate forming partnerships with the corporate sector, civil society organisations, knowledge communities, panchayats, local governments, domain experts, and people of the state.



He also referred to the finding of CUTS study that there is need of effective monitoring and data collection framework for SDG 12 and shared the efforts being currently taken under Government of HP to address this concern. He highlighted HP government's milestone and strategy to achieving the SDG 12. According to SDG Vision 2030, Himachal Pradesh has adopted the strategies for Success of SDG 12 to better manage renewable energy sources, minimise waste creation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and re-use, and manage natural resource usage sustainably.

Engaging Citizens for Sustainable Development could play a pivotal role in implementation of SDGs, if given the appropriate tools and knowledge, he added.

SPECIAL ADDRESS

Dr. Basu Sood, Adviser, Department of Planning, Government of Himachal Pradesh, agreed with George that there is no well-defined ownership concerned with SDG 12. He pointed out that with just ten years left to fulfil all of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there is an increasing need to enhance the efficacy and efficiency of action by focusing on several SDGs. Although the SDGs were designed to be an "indivisible totality," relationships between them must be better understood. The SDGs are interconnected; failure to make progress on one goal impedes progress on others.



According to the Himachal Pradesh Industrial Investment Policy, 2019, recognize and encourage the role of large investment to enhance the scale of economic development, employment opportunities, ancillarisation, revenue generation and remunerative prices to local resources and promote the Agro-Horticulture-based local sustainable practices, he

added. The SDGs will be monitored and evaluated using a system of all state indicators, many of which may be localised using data gathered at the state and territorial level. He highlighted Consumers and Corporates are important drivers of sustainable consumption and production and play a critical role in long-term growth. The pandemic has caused a setback in efforts to meet the initial 2015 SDG goals. The need for change in order to make them more achievable is greater than ever.

Technical Session – SCP: Learning from the State

Presentation on State-level Findings of SCP

Amit Babu, Programme Associate, CUTS International, presented the State-level findings of SCP from Himachal Pradesh. He highlighted the institutional setup in Himachal Pradesh with regard to SDG12. Various government schemes and initiatives related to SCP in Himachal Pradesh were discussed. He emphasized the key case studies related to SCP in Himachal Pradesh. Sustainable plastic waste management plan in Shimla is one of the case studies, he said. The study highlighted the following challenges: Lack of coordination among departments for SDG 12, localisation of indicator, no dedicated fund for SDGs, and shortage of technical staff.



Amar Deep Singh, Senior Programme Officer, CUTS, moderated the session and mentioned that Himachal Pradesh can improve its performance under SDG12 by documenting best practices of various interventions of different departments. There are several practices and programmes run by the concerned departments, but these are underreported. This session is mainly to discuss those practices and programmes to link it with the progress of SDG12. He introduced the speakers of session and invited them to share their thoughts.

D. R. Thakur, Joint Director, Department of Agriculture, Himachal Pradesh, explained about promoting Soil Health Card Scheme. Soil Health Card is a printed report that details the soil's nutritional status for 12 nutrients. Till date more than 1.50 lakh farmers were approached and sensitised about the scheme. In Indian agriculture, improving fertilizer/nutrient usage efficiency is more essential than applying additional fertiliser. He also highlighted natural farming and organic farming. The Department of Agriculture has encouraged and educated farmers about various organic agricultural systems as well as the dangers of indiscriminate pesticide usage.



Kachan Bedi, ATDO, Department of Tourism, highlighted the department's initiatives and programme related to SDGs. He explained in detail the standard operating procedure for Tourism Industry and checklist for issuing of essentiality certificate by department of tourism. He added Himachal Pradesh has drafted the Sustainable Tourism Development Policy, 2019. This policy is framed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 8 and 12, by pursuing a number of objectives aimed at the socio-economic development of host communities, providing a high-quality travel experience, protecting the natural-cultural environment and the state's destinations, and fostering an investment-friendly environment for private investors. The state is also promoting homestay scheme under sustainable tourism. During Covid, the scheme was very successful.



Pradeep Bhardwaj, DFO, Department of Forest, highlighted that, when it comes to allocating resources to achieve SDG, the forests are critical: they house the planet's biggest store of biodiversity and ecosystem services, providing habitat for terrestrial plants, animals, and insect species. The advantages will be felt in a variety of ways. He also discussed the forest policy and its impact on Himachal Pradesh. According to India State of Forest Report, 2019, Himachal Pradesh comes under the top five States in terms of increase in forest cover. The reserved, protected and unclassified forests have increased in the state. This is possible because of people's awareness about the importance of forest.



Rajinder Chauhan, Project Officer, Department of Urban Development, highlighted the strategy of sustainable waste management in Himachal Pradesh. Waste management must be prioritised if the Sustainable Development Goals are to be achieved. He also highlighted government initiatives and programmes. He emphasised the data related to waste to energy and segregation at source. Waste-to-Energy systems remove waste from landfills and use the energy generated by municipal solid waste combustion. According to the Solid Waste Management (SWM) 2016 Rules, integration could be efficiently done by 'organising people into Self Help Groups (SHGs) or cooperatives to capacitate them to operate as entrepreneurs in a commercial organisation,' he added.



Rajeev Bansal, Joint Director, Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration, (HIPA), highlighted the work of HIPA. HIPA has organised capacity building and training programmes on Sustainable Development Goals for various governments departments. The Institute has produced a trainer's handbook and training module in this respect. He emphasised on importance of gram panchayat development



plans (GPDPs) for SDGs. Gram panchayats (GPs) all over the country have begun to develop GPDPs, giving gram panchayat the chance to align their plans with the SDGs. At the GP level, resources from different centrally and state-sponsored programmes can be aggregated and consolidated. Setting GP-level objectives with quantifiable indicators with vertical and horizontal connections, convergence potential, resource mobilisation potential, and GP actionability is critical.

Amar Deep Singh summarised the observations made by different speakers and concluded the session by thanking all of them on behalf of CUTS. He also thanked the Department of Planning, Government of Himachal Pradesh, and Plan Foundation for supporting CUTS International to work on SCP.

Open Discussion

The panel discussion was followed by an open session where participants shared their views on the SCP. The consultation participants advised that research should be prioritised in order to have a deeper understanding of consumption and consumers. On the level of individual consumers, they claimed that having a thorough understanding of the various consumer categories, such as gender, age, and lifestyle, is critical for correctly targeted and successful policies.

Participants wanted to know more about the limitations of sustainable consumption measures, such as what commodities, services, and consumption patterns can't be integrated into the circular economy or otherwise made more sustainable. What lifestyle choices are circular economy-friendly? What forms of consumption are ineligible for dematerialization? All the queries related to SCP were discussed.

Vote of Thanks

Jitendra Sharma, Plan Foundation, delivered the vote of thanks. He thanked all the participants and speakers for attending the consultation. He also thanked the Department of Planning, Government of Himachal Pradesh, for supporting CUTS International to work on SCP. He said in future CUTS International will organise the consultations in Himachal Pradesh.



List of Participants

S.No.	Name	Organisation's Name and Address
1	Dr. S.K. Joshi	Pregalha Sevahar
2	Veena Verma	UTRP
3	Ashok Kumar	Joint Director, Higher Education
4	Dharindra Sharma	Assistant Director, Higher Education
5	Shabnau Mstais	Shimla Srehiv
6	Laxmi Devi	Kumari Laxmi Devhalirla
7	Dr. G. Upadhya	Dry. AHS, Health Deptt.
8	Dr. Rajeev Bansal	Joint Director HIPA
9	Ravindra Kumar	Dy. Director (Planning)
10	R.K. Thakur	Addl. Director,
11	Desh Raj	Research Officer
12	Giresh	Joint Director, Medical Edu.
13	Vikrant Joshi	Research Officer
14	Dr. D.R. Thakuar	Deptt. of Agriculture
15	Dev Raj	Dy. Director, Ele. Edu.
16	D.K. Dhiran	Plan Foundation
17	Kanchan Bedi	Tourism Department
18	S.N. Joshi	Consultant, HPVHA
19	Pradeep Bhardwaj	HP Forest Deptt.
20	M.R. Sharma	Ujjawal Bhaart Jan Jagran Sansthan
21	Vinay Bhardwaj	Planning Department
22	Surnam Kanwar	Planning Department
23	Manoj	Industries Deptt.
24	Rajendra	Urban Devp. Afas
25	P.K. Bansal	
26	Sangeeta	Sidhi
27	Ranjana	Gross
28	Shezad	PMKK Shimla
29	Paul	KPMG
30	Nameet Yadav	Doers
31	Sashant Sharma	Doers

S.No.	Name	Organisation's Name and Address
32	Harish Bharti	Scientific Professional
33	Preeti and Hmsnder	Help Social Orgination
34	Satish Sharma	Joint Director, Panchayati Raj
35	R.S. Dhivan	Vice Chairman, Himachal Upbhokta Sanrakshan
36	Shashi Sharma	Dy. Director
37	D.C. Thakur	DEST/Sr. Sci. Officer
38	Namrata Sharma	HHO, Deptt. of Env.
39	R.K. Chaudhary	DDM, Deptt. of Horticulture
40	Shiv Dutt Bhardwaj	Chairman, Himachal Upbhokta Sanrakshan
41	Anokhi Ram Verma	Himachal Upbhokta Sanrakshan, Shimla
42	Harmesh	Ex AGM, HPTDC
43	Gian Raita	Chairman, Plan Foundation
44	Mangat Chandra	ED, Plan Foundation
45	George Cherian	CUTS International
46	Amar Deep Singh	CUTS International
47	Amit Babu	CUTS International

Programme Schedule

10:00	Registration & Welcome Tea
10:30- 11:30	<i>Inaugural Session</i>
	<p>Welcome Address: Mangat Chauhan, Executive Director, Plan foundation</p> <p>Opening Remarks: George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International</p> <p>Presentation on Overview of CUTS Study on SCP in India</p> <p>Amar Deep Singh, Senior Programme Officer, CUTS International</p> <p>Special Address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Basu Sood, Adviser, Department of Planning, Himachal Pradesh <p>Address by the Chief Guest:</p> <p>Sh. Akshay Sood, Secretary, Department of Finance, Himachal Pradesh</p> <p>Release of the CUTS Report: “Sustainable Consumption and Production”</p> <p>Vote of Thanks</p>
11:30- 11:45	Tea/Coffee Break
11:45- 1:15	Technical Session- <i>SCP: Learning from the Himachal Pradesh</i>
	<p>Presentation- State Context of SCP: AmitBabu, Programme Associate, CUTS</p> <p>Moderator: Amar Deep Singh, Senior Programme Officer, CUTS</p> <p>Discussants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. D.R. Thakur, Joint Director, Department of Agriculture, Himachal Pradesh • Kachan Bedi, ATDO, Department of Tourism, HP • Pradeep Bhardwaj, DFO, Department of Forest, HP • Rajinder Chauhan, Project Officer, Department of Urban Development, HP • Rajeev Bansal, Joint Director, Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration, (HIPA) <p>Open Discussion</p>
1:15-1:30	Vote of Thanks
1:30-2:30	Lunch & Departure

Glimpses of Consultation







Media Coverage

"Good practices of Himachal Pradesh need to be documented for improving its SDGs Ranking"

Himachal Pradesh can improve its performance on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SDG12) by documenting best practices of different sectors and departments. A task force on SDGs has been constituted by Government of Himachal Pradesh by including 15 government departments member, which can document its best practices to improve further its SDGs ranking. Himachal Pradesh must develop effective methods for implementing, monitoring, and measuring SDGs' progress. Learning, sharing and networking should be actively promoted among like-minded stakeholders across the State and beyond. These were the important highlights from State Level Stakeholder Consultation organised by CUTS in partnership with Planning Department, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh and PLAN Foundation at Shimla today on August 18, 2021.

Unlike the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which only targets the developing countries, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) apply to all countries whether rich, middle or poor countries. Five and half years into the implementation of SDGs, the assessment of the progress in India shows, it is very unlikely that India will achieve any of the targets of SDG12, which is Responsible Consumption and Production. In addition, the status of many of the indicators may further worsen by 2030, comparing with 2015, due to the negative impact of the Pandemic and various other reasons.

The Study on SDG 12 titled "Sustainable Consumption and Production – A Consumer Perspective" in partnership with Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), mainly looked at SDG 12 from a consumer perspective based on The

United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP). The importance of studying achievement of a country's progress under SDG 12 than any other Goal was felt because of its interlinking nature with other goals. Almost all other Goals are connected with SDG 12, thereby underlining that any progress to meet Agenda 2030 by a country cannot be achieved without carefully approaching and addressing the concerns under SDG 12. George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International expressed concern in the opening address.

Speaking during the inaugural session Akshay Sood, Secretary, Department of Finance, Himachal Pradesh (HP) while referring to the finding of CUTS study that there is need of effective monitoring and data collection framework for SDG 12, shared those efforts are being currently taken under Government of HP to address this concern. He highlighted government's milestone and strategy to achieving the SDG 12.

Dr Basu Sood, Advisor, Department of Planning, HP highlighted Consumers and Corporate are important drivers of sustainable consumption and production and play a critical role in long-term growth. The pandemic has caused a setback in efforts to meet the initial 2015 SDG goals. The need for change in order to make them more achievable is greater than ever. It was highlighted that first stage in localising the SDGs is advocacy or raising awareness. The idea is to make local officials and elected representatives aware of the relevance of the SDG-12 and the crucial role that their decisions play in achieving the SDGs.

15 departments including Environment, Urban Development, Tourism, Forest, Education, Medical



and others shared their department specific progress and programmes related to the SDG12 in the panel discussion moderated by Amar Deep Singh, Sr. Programme Officer CUTS. He mentioned that Himachal Pradesh can improve its performance on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SDG12) by documenting best practices of different sectors and departments. During the panel discussion, Shri S.N. Joshi IAS (Retd.) raised many issues such as less capacity of garbage collection against the daily generation of waste in Shimla City.

Amit Babu from CUTS presented the study in the consultation. The consultation, that followed COVID protocol guidelines, saw participation from various government departments, organisations working on sustainable consumption and consumer protection from Himachal Pradesh.

Chairman PLAN Foundation, Sh. Gian Chand Raita thanked all participants, department representative especially Planning department, NGO representatives and CUTS International for this workshop.

