SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

A Consumer Perspective

CUTS International

#2102

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Contents

Abbreviations

APEDA:	Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority
BEE:	Bureau of Energy Efficiency
BRRs:	Business Responsibility Reports
CAG:	Comptroller and Auditor General
COPRA:	Consumer Protection Act
CPCB:	Central Pollution Control Board
CPMU:	Central Plan Monitoring Unit
CSR:	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSS:	Central Sponsored Schemes
CVC:	Central Vigilance Commission
DEST:	Department of Environment, Science and Technology
FCI:	Food Corporation of India
EPA:	Environment Protection Act
EPR:	Extended Producers Responsibility
ESOI:	Eco-Tourism Society of India
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GFR:	General Financial Rules, 2005
GPDP:	Gram Panchayat Development Plan
GSDP:	Gross State Domestic Product
GSVA:	Gross State Value Added
HIPA:	Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration
IEC:	Information, Education and Communication
JMC:	Jaipur Municipal Corporation

KGS:	Kanpur Gaushala Society
KIL:	Kerala Institute of Local Administration
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
MIS:	Management Information System
MoEFCC:	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
MoSPI:	Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
NCDC:	National Cooperative Development Corporation
NGRBC:	National Guidelines for Responsible Business Conduct
NHB:	National Horticulture Board
NHM:	National Horticulture Mission
NIF:	National Indicator Framework
NMEEE:	National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency
NREP:	National Resource Efficiency Policy
NVGS:	National Voluntary Guidelines on Social, Environmental and Economic Responsibilities
PCCs:	Pollution Control Committees
PP:	Public Procurement
PRIs:	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PSUs:	Public Sector Undertakings
SBM:	Swachh Bharat Mission
SCP:	Sustainable Consumption and Production
SCPB:	State Pollution Control Board
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SEBI:	Securities and Exchange Board of India
SIRD:	State Institute of Rural Development
SPP:	Sustainable Public Procurement
SRI:	Speaker's Research Initiative
SSNC:	Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
STCI:	Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India
ULBs:	Urban Local Bodies
UNGCP:	United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WSSD:	World Summit on Sustainable Development

Preface

George Cheriyan
Director
CUTS International

March, 2021

Being a country with the second-largest population globally, India needs to play a leading role in determining the success of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) globally. India is committed to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', which includes 17 SDGs, 169 associated targets and 232 unique Indicators, which comprehensively cover social, economic and environmental dimensions of development and focus on ending poverty in all its forms and dimensions. India's national development goals underline the importance of inclusive development converging well with the SDGs.

With five years into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, many governments, UN entities, international and regional organisations and other stakeholders have initiated evidence-based stock-taking of progress. As expected, our country's progress does not match up to the determinations and commitments shown by our government on various platforms. While the report of Asia and Pacific SDG Progress Report 2020 claims that without extra efforts, the region is likely to miss all 17 goals by 2030.

In particular, the region needs to reverse trends on Responsible Consumption and Production (Goal 12) and Climate Action (Goal 13) where the region is going backward. The same Report in 2021 states that the progress on SDG-12 is stagnant. It is anticipated that the region could miss every single measurable target under Goal 12 if no serious interventions are made.

The Sustainable Development Report 2020 presents the SDG Index and Dashboards for all 193 UN member states ranks India at 117th position out of 166 countries assessed in the report. As per the report, the country is facing major challenges in 10 of the 17 SDGs, and it is not ranked due to lack of information in progress towards SDG-12. SDG-12 is about decoupling economic growth from

environmental degradation, increasing resource efficiency, and promoting sustainable lifestyles. There can be no sustainable development without sustainable consumption and production (SCP).

Given the situation, it is critical to ensure that the country do not backtrack from its commitment to the outcome of the 2030 Agenda. One of the current significant challenges for all countries, particularly for developing, is the multiple crises affecting the world today. Still, the country needs to emphasise achieving SCP patterns, which various reports have pointed out as one of the most challenging SDGs for the country.

At the Central Government level, NITI Aayog has been assigned to oversee the implementation of SDGs in the country. Though the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) is the nodal Ministry for SDG-12, this goal is an orphan, unlike various other goals. The goal is a mixed bag with many of its targets outside the control of the nodal Ministry; for instance, sustainable tourism is the Ministry of Tourism's responsibility; Sustainable Public Procurement if implemented, would become the Ministry of Finance and so on. So various ministries are responsible for various targets, which is not the case with other goals.

To see any change in this goal's progress requires game-changing steps to be taken by all economic players - producers, policy-makers, and consumers worldwide. While many studies and discussions are available online that look at SDG-12 from producers and government perspective, nothing much could be seen that attempts to understand this goal from a consumer's perspective. Hence, this study by CUTS, in partnership with the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) presents an analysis of SDG-12 up till 2020 from a consumer perspective using the framework of the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP).

The study was carried out during 2019-2020 by the CUTS team. The importance of studying and analysing the 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 in meeting Agenda 2030 by a country cannot be achieved

without carefully approaching and addressing the concerns under SDG-12.

The research study looked at the scenario at the national level, including the role of ecolabels, impact of the pandemic, etc. and in-depth study in five states - Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh, through one-to-one interviews, focus group discussions, qualitative analysis, documentation of successful case studies, etc. and the report was prepared. The study's main conclusion is that it is doubtful that India will achieve any of the targets of SDG-12 by 2030 unless the government takes some concrete measures to reverse the present trend.

Selected stakeholders reviewed the draft report and the key findings of this study were discussed and deliberated in the National Consultation organised by CUTS on March 18, 2021, in New Delhi. We thank all stakeholders and delegates for the most valuable inputs.

There are many people to whom we would like to extend our sincere thanks and gratitude, starting with our donor partner, SSNC, especially to Sara Nilsson and Alexander Sjöberg for the valuable partnership and unrelenting support for the successful completion of this project. The study was done on the basis of visits to Delhi and the target states and interaction with government officials and representatives of civil society and consumer groups. We would not miss the opportunity to make them partners in our satisfaction and thanking them for their time and patience to provide us with all the relevant details of their work and inputs on the subject.

We met many more people during our research and travel who provided valuable suggestions and inputs for the study, thereby guiding us, directly and indirectly, to better understand the status of SCP. We would like to extend our most sincere gratitude and appreciation for their time and positive responses.

In the end, I would like to thank all within the organisation, especially the project team, my colleagues Amar Deep Singh, Simi T.B. and Amit Babu, who conducted the research along with me, visited various states and prepared the report. I also acknowledge the contribution of my colleague Madhu Sudan Sharma and former

colleague Aakansha Choudhary in conceptualising this study, along with me, and preparing the project proposal and the whole CUTS CART team for their valuable support and inputs from time and again. I also thank my colleagues at CUTS Delhi Resource Centre for their support in organising the national consultation, the editorial and publications team for their valuable support in editing and publishing this report.

I hope this study will help in triggering a discussion in India about the status of SDG-12 and convince the government to take serious actions to reverse the trend and make progress in achieving the targets by 2030. I also hope this study will encourage other organisations, working on Sustainable Consumption issues elsewhere to replicate such studies in their own countries.

Executive Summary

Though significant achievements were made worldwide on various MDGs targets, the overall progress had been uneven across regions and countries, leaving significant gaps. Millions of people were still left behind, especially the poorest and those disadvantaged. So to carry forward the global efforts, in September 2015, countries agreed to set the world on a path towards sustainable development through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Agenda embraces 17 SDGs and sets out quantitative objectives across the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development – all to be achieved by 2030.

SDGs and India

India is strongly committed to the 2030 Agenda and much of the country's National Development Agenda is mirrored in the SDGs. In the same year, 2015, India strongly supported the Paris Agreement and proclaimed its bold nationally determined contributions, which are to be achieved by 2030 - reduced emissions intensity of gross domestic product (GDP) by 33-35 percent from the 2005 level.

Towards achieving the SDGs, the government has initiated national welfare and developmental programmes during the last five years. Through consistent, sustainable initiatives, the country has reduced poverty, improved education, expanded basic infrastructure capacities, conserve its rich biodiversity, and built partnerships for sustainable development.

NITI Aayog, the government think tank of the government, is entrusted with coordinating the SDGs and overseeing their implementation across the country. It had already taken the lead by bringing out the SDG India Index – Baseline Reports in both 2018 and 2019. The 2018 report comprehensively documents the progress made by India's States and Union Territories towards implementing the 13 out of 17 SDGs (leaving out Goals 12, 13, 14 and 17). However, the subsequent report in 2019 is more robust than the previous edition. It had a broader coverage of goals, targets, and indicators with greater alignment

with the National Indicator Framework. The Index spans 16 out of 17 SDGs with a qualitative assessment on Goal 17.

Yet, only some progress could be made within the first five years of its implementation and overall, the country needs to do much more to be on track to deliver its commitments by 2030. The Sustainable Development Report 2020 presents the SDG Index and Dashboards for all UN member states ranks India at 117th position with 61.92.

As per the report, the country is facing major challenges in 10 of the 17 SDGs. The country is not ranked due to a lack of information in progress towards SDG-12, which concerns SCP. It should be remembered here that the country's overall progress to meet the 17 Goals is very much significant for the global community as India is home to about one-sixth of the world's population.

SDG-12: The Indian Context

The broader coverage in SDG India Index – Baseline Report 2019 and specifically the inclusion of SDG-12 within the purview of reporting prove vital. To achieve sustainable consumption patterns and production, one needs to have updated data information on any such progress being made. Also, the importance of studying and analysing the achievement of a country's progress under SDG-12 than any other Goal is because of its interlinking nature with other goals. Almost all other Goals are connected with SDG-12, thereby underlining that any progress in meeting Agenda 2030 by a country cannot be achieved without carefully approaching and addressing the concerns under SDG-12.

In India, SCP that was slowly gaining acceptance among the stakeholders has been almost ignored under the coronavirus spread. Recession, loss of job and physical distancing largely affected the way people produce and consume. Nothing remains the same as before the pandemic, people's needs and wants change drastically. There is a tremendous increase in the use of plastics like never before in healthcare.

Apart from the medical wastes, one could also witness an increased dependence of consumers on disposables, such as plastic plates, cups, carry bags, sanitisers and bottled drinking water as a hygiene measure to avoid COVID-19. An increased dependence on online delivery of consumer goods and foods has resulted in a surge in packaging material usage. However, there is no ground estimate to show how much plastic wastes have been generated in India since the corona scare.

SCP from a Consumer Perspective: CUTS Study

This importance of SDG-12 is also highlighted in the text of the UNGCP, which states that unsustainable production and consumption patterns are the leading cause of the continuing deterioration of the environment and all Member States should focus on promoting sustainable consumption patterns.

In partnership with the SSNC, CUTS conducted this study mainly looking at SDG-12 from a consumer perspective based on the UNGCP. The study frames to understand the concept of SCP beyond the SDG-12 and expand it beyond its current environment dimension. The concept was studied, taking into consideration of its presence in UNGCP from the perspective of SCP.

The study has a specific focus on the National scenario and practices and learning from five targeted states. Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh (HP), Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh (UP) are covered under the study. CUTS visited targeted states and gathered information from different stakeholders across the states regarding SDG-12 related policies and programmes from a consumer perspective.

We observed that the country has programmes and policies at the National and State levels to support SCP and achieve SDG-12. But lack of effective implementation and enforcement of such programmes have failed to bring out the desired impact. A need for an inter-departmental coordination committee to strengthen the waste management system at the state level was strongly felt. From a consumer perspective, while schemes like Swatch Bharat Mission did create mass awareness about cleanliness and hygiene, it could not create any rippling effect to raise the public's awareness about issues like waste segregation, recycling and product life-cycle.

While it is true that India's consumption per capita and ecological footprint is far below those of the developed nations, but its rapidly rising population and environmental degradation acts as a challenge. Despite some ambitious policies and targets, it still globally stands out as one of the largest consumers of natural resources and substantial producers of waste of all kinds with limited infrastructure to collect, responsibly treat, and recycle the waste they produce.

In addition, the country performs poorly on the phasing out of fossil fuel subsidies. Subsidies for fossil fuels are still some six to seven times more than subsidies for clean energy. Apart from these, there is a very low eagerness on authorities concerned at both Centre and the State level to promote sustainable public procurement (SPP) and tourism.

The status of ecolabels and eco-standards is not yet very encouraging in India. Ecomark, the Indian ecolabel for products, was introduced in 1991. But the label has not found acceptability from both manufacturers and buyers. Though informal and periodic, the country has witnessed few smart and efficient SPP in departments like the railways. A lead by the government in adopting a green public procurement policy would send a strong message to the business community and create demonstration and ripple effects, not just in public procurement but also indirectly in private consumption by companies. Small and medium-sized enterprises stand to benefit since they are often at the forefront of innovation in developing and marketing environmentally friendly products.

Unfortunately, to date, the government has not been able to effectively address the drivers of unsustainable consumption and production patterns, such as inadequate commitment, ill-informed society, inequitable growth, lack of technology, limited product life spans, lack of support or push for greener business models, limited incentives for waste prevention via reuse and other means, and the absence of sustainable alternatives to high impacting consumption patterns.

The country demonstrates relatively good achievements in terms of policies and strategies, but more genuine efforts need to be taken to address the ever-increasing unsustainable consumption pattern. Besides, whatever the States takes sustainable actions, many of those achievements go unnoticed and are not reported. The absence of effective monitoring and data collection is a major cause of concern that could give a wrong image of the nation's merits and efforts towards SCP.

Most of the activities fail to get reported because of the lack of awareness among the concerned officials, except a couple of them involved in reporting about SDG and its importance. They fail to connect such sustainable activities with the SDGs. This was proved to be correct during the survey of our study, as most of the officials could not recognise what an SDG is.

This lack of awareness among government officials coupled with lack of funding, shortage of technical staff resulting in inadequate monitoring and reporting appears to be the most significant challenges at the State level in SDG implementation.

Mainstreaming SCP is a high-level commitment and requires bold and ambitious policymakers and agile and farsighted businesses and motivated consumers. It involves engaging all stakeholders – the government, public and private sector, international agencies, researchers, educators, civil society organisations and more importantly, the consumers.

1 Study and Methodology

Introduction

In 1985, the United Nations (UN) adopted a set of Guidelines for Consumer Protection which was revised in 1999. The Guidelines address consumers' interests and needs worldwide and provide a framework for governments to adopt, elaborate, and strengthen consumer protection policies and legislation. The Right to Healthy Environment also made the list of eight consumer rights defined in the guidelines, thereby broadening consumer protection globally.

According to Guidelines, the Right to Healthy Environment means the right to live and work in an environment that is non-threatening to the well-being of present and future generations. The right contains the following elements:

- The right to live and work in an environment that is neither threatening nor dangerous and which permits a life of dignity and well-being.
- The responsibility to minimise environmental damage through careful choice and use of consumer goods and services.
- To reduce waste, reuse products and recycle whenever possible.

Keeping in mind the UNGCP, in 1986, the Government of India enacted the Consumer Protection Act (COPRA). Except for the Right to Basic Needs and the Right to Healthy Environment, all other rights are included in this Act as per the UN Guidelines. COPRA is one of India's benevolent social legislation enacted since independence, intended to protect the consumers from exploitation.

The Right to Healthy Environment was not covered in the Act; there are ample numbers of other legislation dealing with the issue. Also, to boost the environment and sustainability and other countries, India signed the declaration on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, comprising 17 SDGs at the UN's Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015.

Of all the Goals, SDG-12 – responsible consumption and production, emerged as an important part of the SDGs. The world, therefore, needs to visualise different perspectives

to achieve SCP that is beyond Goal 12. A critical aspect is to look at SCP and SDG-12 in the background of UNGCP and Right to Healthy Environment.

The current targets of Goal 12 and related policies/schemes/programmes at the national level to achieve SCP needs to be studied, analysed and reframed, if required, to incorporate the consumer perspective. There is a dire need to check if the guidelines that were accepted for more than three decades now have made a difference in the way policies are designed and planned for implementation.

CUTS Study on Sustainable Consumption and Protection

In partnership with the SSNC, CUTS conducted this study mainly looking at SDG-12 from a consumer perspective based on the UNGCP. The study aims to frame the SCP concept's understanding beyond the SDG-12 and expand it beyond its current environment dimension. The concept was studied considering its presence in UNGCP from the perspective of SCP.

Kerala, Chhattisgarh, HP, Rajasthan and UP are the five targeted states covered under this study. The criteria for selecting states to conduct the study were mainly based on the overall performance of the state in the SDG Index Report, 2018 released by NITI Aayog. SDG-12 was not part of Index 2018, so the selection was focused on overall performance rather than the SDG-12 Goal. A degree of importance was also given to ensure regional parity and culture, including the need to highlight best practices. The research team gathered information from various stakeholders across these States regarding implementing SDG-12 related policies and programmes from a consumer perspective.

Methodology

- Framing of research questions from a consumer perspective
- Review of UNGCP, 10 year framework on SCP and the SDG-12 Targets
- Review of literature related to the study
- Secondary Data - Review of existing policies connected with SDG-12 Targets, at both national and state level
- Selection of states to carry out the study
- Mapping of state-level agencies and departments
- Linking SDG-12 with other Goals
- One-on-one interactions with government officials both at Centre and the states
- Visiting best practices and successful cases

2 Context

Global Perspective on SDGs and SCP

When the UN adopted its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September 2000, the term sustainability meant very little to most of them across the globe. Though significant achievements were made worldwide since then, the overall progress had been uneven across regions and countries, leaving significant gaps.

Millions of people are still left behind, especially the poorest and those disadvantaged. So to carry forward the global efforts, in September 2015, countries agreed to set the world on a path towards sustainable development through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The agenda embraces 17 SDGs (SDGs) with 169 targets and set out quantitative objectives across the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development – all to be achieved by 2030.

Consumers and SDGs

Since everyone consumes, consumers certainly do have a huge role to play in achieving sustainable development. They hold the power to influence production decisions based on what goods and services they purchase. If consumers prefer to buy sustainable products and services, it will result in a higher demand for such products and services.

Therefore, consumer policy acts as an essential tool by which countries can support many, if not all, of the 17 SDGs. The UNGCP, adopted by the General Assembly on December 22, 2015, is the most relevant instrument for this purpose. The UNGCP was first adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1985 and gave necessary legitimacy to consumer rights principles. In 1999, a new section was added on sustainable consumption. The guidelines were recently strengthened and updated to make them relevant to consumers' challenges in today's world.

UNGCP also contains a dedicated section and further provisions for governments, businesses, consumer and environmental organisations, and other concerned groups to promote and address sustainable consumption. This would address Goal 12 – SCP. Besides, any action to this end will also, in turn, have a positive impact on the achievement

of Goals 13, 14 and 15 relating to climate change, marine conservation and terrestrial biodiversity.

Thus it proves that the UNGCP will positively impact the SDGs and both these global initiatives are interlinked to each other. Even a small step to ensure consumer protection and empowerment will contribute significantly towards achieving many of the SDG goals. For instance, targets like achieving the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources (SDG-12.2); and ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature (SDG-12.8).

Sustainable Consumption and Production

Global endorsement for SCP dates back to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Principle 8 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development highlights nations' responsibility to 'reduce and eliminate unsustainable production and consumption patterns.' The principle points out that this task is necessary to achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people.'

Chapter 4 of Agenda 21 explicitly identifies unsustainable production and consumption patterns, 'particularly in industrialised countries,' as 'the major cause of the continued deterioration of the global environment.' It called for "action to promote patterns of consumption and production that reduce environmental stress and will meet the basic needs of humanity." Ten years later, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg agreed that "poverty eradication, changing unsustainable production and consumption patterns and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development."

The Marrakesh Process – a global multi-stakeholder process launched in 2003 – responds to this call. It supports the implementation of SCP in all regions. It has played a vital role in elaborating the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP). Adopted in 2012 at the WSSD, the 10YFP is a global commitment to accelerate the shift towards SCP in both developed and developing countries.

Table 2.1: SDG-12 – Global Facts & Figures[1]

1.3 billion 1.3 billion tonnes of food is wasted every year, while almost 2 billion people go hungry or undernourished	**22 percent** The food sector accounts for around 22 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, mainly from forests' conversion into farmland	**2 billion** Globally, 2 billion people are overweight or obese
3 percent Only 3 percent of the world's water is fresh (drinkable), and humans using it faster than nature can replenish it	**US$120bn** If globally people switched to energy-efficient light bulbs, the world would save US$120bn annually	**20 percent** One-fifth of the world's final energy consumption in 2013 was from renewable sources

While billions of people live without life necessities, the high consumption and unsustainable lifestyles of others put immense stress on the environment (refer Table 2.1). Well-designed national policy frameworks and instruments are necessary to enable the fundamental shift towards SCP patterns. For that to happen, a strong political commitment to SCP is vital. Environmental aspects need to be mandatorily included in the procurement of projects and cost-benefit analysis should be considered in the life cycle of products. More importantly, citizens worldwide need to realise the urgency and importance of consuming and producing sustainably at all levels. Youngsters and children should be considered as an important target group for SCP.

Table 2.2: SDG-12 Targets and Indicators [as of December 2020]

TARGETS	INDICATORS
12.1 Implement the 10-year framework of programmes on SCP, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries	12.1.1 Number of countries developing, adopting or implementing policy instruments aimed at supporting the shift to sustainable consumption and production
12.2 By 2030, achieve sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources	12.2.1Material footprint, material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP 12.2.2 Domestic material consumption, domestic material consumption per capita, and domestic material consumption per GDP
12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses	12.3.1 Global food loss index; food waste index

[1] Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, UNDP. Accessible at <www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-12-responsible-consumption-and-production.html>

TARGETS	INDICATORS
12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment	12.4.1Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement 12.4.2 Hazardous waste generated per capita and proportion of hazardous waste treated, by type of treatment
12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse	12.5.1 National recycling rate, tons of material recycled
12.6 Encourage companies, especially large and transnational, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle	12.6.1 Number of companies publishing sustainability reports
12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities	12.7.1 Degree of SPP policies and action plan implementation
12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature	12.8.1 The extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development (including climate change education) are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment
12.A Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production	12.A.1 Installed renewable energy generating capacity in developing countries (in watts per capita)
12.B Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products	12.B.1 Implementation of standard accounting tools to monitor the economic and environmental aspects of tourism sustainability
12.C Rationalise inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption by removing market distortions, in accordance with national circumstances, including by restructuring taxation and phasing out those harmful subsidies, where they exist, to reflect their environmental impacts, taking fully into account the specific needs and conditions of developing countries and minimising the possible adverse effects on their development in a manner that protects the poor and the affected communities	12.C.1 Amount of fossil-fuel subsidies per unit of GDP (production and consumption)

National Perspective on SDGs and SCP

According to the Economic Survey 2019-20, Government of India, the country continued to decelerate its GDP growth from 7.2 percent in 2017-18 to 6.8 percent in 2018-19. It is now further down to 5 percent in 2019-20. The survey observed that sluggish growth of consumption and consequent decline in fixed investment led to the decrease in GDP growth during this period.

It further notes that the year 2019 was a challenging year for the global economy, with world output growth growing at its slowest pace of 2.9 percent since the global financial crisis in 2009. A weak environment for global manufacturing, trade, and demand adversely impacted the Indian economy.[2]

India and SDGs

The Indian government is strongly committed to Agenda 2030, including the SDGs. The critical actions undertaken so far by key entities responsible for spearheading the work on SDGs include:

a. **NITI Aayog:** NITI Aayog is mandated with the task of coordinating overall work on SDGs by adopting a synergistic approach, involving central ministries, state/Union Territories, civil society organisations, academia and business sector to achieve India's SDG targets. A comprehensive mapping of SDG targets with schemes and programmes has been developed. This suggests an approach to sustainable development that brings together economic, social and environmental pillars, focussing on their interlinkages.

b. **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI):** The Ministry developed a National Indicator Framework (NIF) consisting of 306 national indicators and identified data sources and periodicity following a due consultation process with concerned Ministries/Departments, UN Agencies and other stakeholders. It coordinates with line Ministries for institutionalising the data flow for SDG indicators. NIF is the backbone of monitoring SDGs at the national level and provides appropriate direction to the policymakers and implementing various schemes and programmes. MoSPI has also been leading discussions at the global level on the indicator framework for the SDGs.

c. **States/UTs:** Several States/UTs have mapped State and centrally sponsored schemes vis-à-vis the SDGs; and undertaken long-term (visioning), medium-term (strategy development), and short-term (action plan) exercises.

[2] Economy Survey 2019-20. Accessible at <www.indiabudget.gov.in/economicsurvey/>

NITI Aayog in 2018 constructed the SDG India Index spanning 13 out of 17 SDGs (leaving out Goals 12, 13, 14 and 17). The exclusion of these goals mainly accounts for the unavailability of comparable data across States and UTs. However, SDG-12 and 13 were later considered in the 2019 Index report. The Index tracks the progress of all the States and UTs on a set of 62 Priority Indicators, measuring their progress on the outcomes of the interventions and schemes of the Government of India. The SDG India Index is intended to provide a holistic view of the country's social, economic, and environmental status and its States and UTs.

Tables 2.3 and 2.4 show the SDG India Index score and the performance based on the five project states' indicators on SDG-12.

Table 2.3: SDG Index Score (2019) of States on SDG-12[3]

State Name	Index Score for Goal 12	Rank (SDG-12)	Overall Rank in SDG Index	
			2018	2019
Uttar Pradesh	62	10	29	23
Chhattisgarh	58	13	15	21
Himachal Pradesh	52	19	1	2
Kerala	57	16	1	1
Rajasthan	30	28	12	18

Table 2.4: Performance of States on indicators of SDG-12[4]

State	Indicator 1	Indicator 2	Indicator 3	Indicator 4	Indicator 5	Indicator 6	Indicator 7	SDG-12 Index Score
Index Score								
Uttar Pradesh	100	72	98	28	27	44	57	62
Chhattisgarh	100	98	94	07	09	41	100	58
Himachal Pradesh	83	89	91	00	45	05	95	52
Kerala	100	100	98	13	29	0	95	57

[3] SDG India Index, Baseline Report, 2019. Accessible at <www.niti.gov.in>

[4] Indicator: 1 Percentage ground water withdrawal against availability
Indicator: 2 Percentage use of nitrogen fertilizer out of total N,P,K, (Nitrogen, Phosphorous, Potassium)
Indicator: 3 Per-capita hazard waste generated
Indicator: 4 Ratio of pro-cessed quantity of hazard waste sent to recycle to hazard waste generated
Indicator: 5 Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) treated against MSW generated
Indicator: 6 Installed Capacity of Grid Interactive Bio Power per 100,000 populations
Indicator: 7 Percentage of wards with 100% source segregation

State	Indicator 1	Indicator 2	Indicator 3	Indicator 4	Indicator 5	Indicator 6	Indicator 7	SDG-12 Index Score
Rajasthan	27	57	78	04	10	07	78	30
India	100	81	87	05	21	36	65	55
Target	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Raw Data								
Uttar Pradesh	70.18	67.82	0.00	0.20	27.10	0.93	60.52	Not applicable
Chhattisgarh	44.43	57.76	0.00	0.05	8.86	0.86	0.86	
Himachal Pradesh	86.73	61.18	0.00	0.00	45.29	0.10	95.57	
Kerala	51.27	43.56	0.00	0.09	29.13	0.00	95.53	
Rajasthan	139.88	73.68	0.01	0.03	9.73	0.16	79.42	
India	63.33	64.49	0.006	0.04	20.75	0.758	67.76	
Target	70	57	0	1	100	2.11	100	

In spite of the national commitments and related efforts, India could not perform well in the global stage. Sweden once again topped the global SDG Index 2020, followed by Denmark and Finland. India has been ranked 117th on the index with an overall score of 61.92. The score can be depicted as the percentage of SDG achievement. The 2020 report has reviewed the performance of 193 UN Member States, out of which 166 were ranked under the SDG index. As per the report, India faces significant challenges in 10 of the 17 SDGs, and the country is not ranked due to lack of information in progress towards SDG-12.

India and SDG-12

The UN has defined 11 Targets and 13 Indicators for SDG-12. Targets specify the goals and Indicators represent the metrics by which the world aims to track whether these Targets are achieved. The current targets of Goal 12 and related policies/schemes/programmes at the national level to achieve SCP is critically examined and analysed. There is a need to check if the country is marching ahead in the right direction towards achieving the goal if it successfully makes a difference in the way policies are designed and planned for implementation.

Sustainable Management of Natural Resources

According to various studies, it is expected that the total material consumption in 2030 is projected to be 14.2 BT (billion tonnes), consisting of about 2.7 BT of biomass, 6.5 BT of minerals, 4.2 BT of fossil fuels and 0.8 BT of metals. This means a tripling of demand for primary materials compared to 2010, particularly the demand for energy carriers, metals and non-metal minerals.

Governments, both at the Centre and the states, have enacted a series of legislation to tackle this sustainably. Under the Environment (Protection) Act and Rules, there is currently the major legislative instrument for driving resource use efficiency. Resource use efficiency is one of the stated objectives of India's National Environment Policy and India's Integrated Energy Policy. The Integrated Energy Policy, a comprehensive policy on energy, is drafted to explore alternative technologies and possible synergies that would increase energy system efficiency and meet the requirement for energy services.

National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency (NMEEE) promotes energy efficiency by fostering innovative policies and effective market instruments. Various other missions like the National Water Mission, National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture refer to the need to enhance resource use efficiency. Resource-specific strategies and policies like the National Water Policy 2012 highlight the imperative for improved efficiency.

The National Mineral Policy 2019 underlines the importance of a more effective, meaningful and implementable policy that brings in further transparency, better regulation and enforcement, balanced social and economic growth, and sustainable mining practices. More recently, the MoEFCC has proposed a National Resource Efficiency Policy (NREP) 2019 to increase recycling and reuse for resource efficiency.

Challenges

Multiple policies are framed to address the issue of resource management. However, they all are sporadic and fail to capture resource efficiency prospects across all life cycle stages. The National Biodiversity Action Plan 2008 states that natural resource accounting systems are likely to play an essential role in decision-making and resource allocation in India's future. However, such systems are still evolving and easily usable methods are not as yet available.

Moreover, the country still lags in infrastructure for appropriate waste management, lack of legislation dealing specifically with various waste fractions, the absence of any framework for end-of-life product take-back, or implementation of extended producer responsibility. Though experts recognise that using secondary raw materials conserves resources and promotes recycling, there is far too little effort for reusing the secondary raw materials. This is mainly because waste is still frequently undervalued as a resource and the collection, processing, and recycling processes are inefficient and underdeveloped.

Besides, nothing much is done to promote voluntary national standards, like Green Reporting Initiative and IS/ISO 14001:2015 on environmental management systems and ecolabels to develop and strengthen initiatives for improving resource efficiency. While

an eco-labelling scheme 'Ecomark' is in place, its impact has been rather limited or almost nil. It would not be wrong to say that the various resource-efficient and sustainable environment laws enacted fail in India primarily due to a lack of people's will coupled with a lack of government support.

Recommendations

Life cycle thinking towards addressing the more significant cause of resource efficiency is vital to reducing trade-offs between economic growth and environmental well-being. For the same, a cooperative institutional mechanism is needed to successfully take forward its resource efficiency agenda, leading to sustainable development. Simultaneously, there is a need to bring in behavioural change to promote life cycle thinking at the consumption level, thereby encouraging the circular economy's adoption. It is expected that the proposed integrated resource efficiency policy can bring in the desired transition.

The country also needs to make significant advancements in the accounting of natural resources as it is crucial to highlight the link between the economy and the environment. This would help consider losses of environmental quality, human health and other sustainability costs and assets. Accounting of natural resources is currently lagging by various methodological barriers, sluggish political will, and lack of data.

Reduce Food Wastage

The Government is committed to double the farmers' income by the year 2022 through the adoption of targeted policies and multipronged schemes and programmes, including those relating to post-production, reduce food loss (inability to reach the market due to poor market infrastructure and agri-logistics) and food wastage (at various stages including storage, transportation & consumers).

The National Food Security Act 2013 supports initiatives to reduce food loss and waste. Food losses due to huge wastage are substantially minimised and the Food Corporation of India (FCI) is enabled to execute its mandated food management policies efficiently viz food procurement, storage, transportation and distribution in particular. Various schemes, including the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (Scheme for Agro Marine Processing and Development of Agro-processing clusters), supplement agriculture, modernise food processing and decrease agro-wastage.

Apart from these, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries has been implementing the Schemes of Mega Food Parks; Integrated Cold Chain, Value Addition and Preservation Infrastructure; and Setting up Modernisation of Abattoirs. Also, the National Horticulture Mission (NHM), National Horticulture Board (NHB), and National Cooperative

Development Corporation (NCDC) under the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industries, Government of India are assisting in setting up cold storages under their respective schemes.

Challenges

Farmers face significant problems and challenges in saving their harvests. These include post-harvest handling and storage in the open, lack of cemented structures for post-harvest farm operations, lack of suitable and adequate storage infrastructure, lack of packing houses, cold chain, on-farm processing facilities, fragmented supply chain, uncertain returns leading to either not harvesting or abandoning the produce on streets, besides spillage during harvesting and threshing.[5] From a larger perspective, the country faces insufficient storage capacity for rice and wheat stocks and other food items necessary for food security.

Recommendations

The first step in the prevention of food waste within the country is to quantify it correctly. Quantification gives the country an insight into the sources of food waste and loss, which can be used to implement targeted preventive measures and provide a baseline to measure any campaign's effectiveness. There is also an urgent need for more significant investments by both the public and private sectors in infrastructure, storage, transportation, food processing and packaging industries for reducing food loss and waste in India.

The use of sophisticated information technology supported by a robust monitoring and management information system can help. General public awareness about food, starvation, food wastage and loss within India should be generated, particularly among children through stakeholder interventions.

Management of Chemicals and Waste

In exercise of the power conferred under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the Central Government has made the Hazardous Waste (Management & Handling) Rules, 1989. These Rules define the Hazardous Wastes and provide a specific schedule in which waste is listed for applying the rules. The occupier generating hazardous waste should take all practical steps to ensure that such waste is handled correctly and disposed of without any adverse effect resulting from such waste. The occupier shall also be

[5] Saving the Harvest: Reducing the Food Loss and Waste, Policy Brief No. 5, National Academy of Agricultural Sciences, New Delhi May 2019. Accessible at <http://naasindia.org/documents/Saving%20the%20Harvest.pdf>

responsible for proper collection, transportation, treatment, and storage and disposal of these wastes either by himself or through a facility's operator.

The occupier shall submit an application to the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) to grant authorisation for handling hazardous waste. The SPCB shall not issue an authorisation unless it is satisfied that the operator of a facility or an occupier, as the case may be, possesses appropriate facilities, technical capabilities and equipment to handle hazardous wastes safely.

Challenges

Whether it is hazardous, biomedical, municipal solid, electronic, plastic or battery waste, lack of enforcement is the key issue concerning waste management. Also, the absence of proper infrastructure for scientific disposal and recycling of hazardous waste has resulted in India's poor handling of such waste. Burning hazardous waste at landfills is still one of the most common and primitive disposing methods, resulting in immense harm to health and the environment. Collection and transportation of hazardous waste are often casually handled similar to dry or wet waste, causing serious problems in segregating and recycling hazardous waste.

The absence of incineration infrastructure in India is also causing a problem, and most waste collectors are accustomed to burning wastes. Waste collectors collecting hazardous waste are also not adequately sensitised and are mostly ill-equipped, untrained and poorly paid.

Recommendations

The country need to do much to phase out most hazardous chemicals in manufacturing processes and prevent chemical waste from arising. Since a significant amount of total waste generated is recyclable hazardous waste, India should upgrade its hazardous waste recycling mechanisms. A well-established treatment, storage, and disposal facilities are need of the hour. Laboratories should be upgraded to carry out analytical methods required for standardising waste characterisation; specialised training should be regularly provided for all the concerned personnel who deal with such wastes.

Besides, more accountability and transparency are needed in the departments' functioning, especially in state bodies, to address the system's plagues. Building their competencies and enhancing the coordination between various regulatory bodies will facilitate positive results. Third-party monitoring by utilising a panel of experts on hazardous wastes outside the regulatory mechanism has shown excellent results in the developed countries like the USA. Such initiatives could ensure effective implementation.

Reduce Waste Generation

Environment Protection Act (EPA), 1986 is the umbrella Act that pertains to the management of solid waste in the country. To improve the legal landscape, the Centre promulgated the Municipal Solid Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), as mandated under the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, coordinates with the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) regarding the implementation of the Solid Wastes Management Rules. According to the rules, landfill sites cannot function proximate to habitation clusters, highways, public tanks, or water supply wells. However, these are hardly followed or enforced, causing great suffering to the people.

Likewise, the Biomedical Waste Management Rules, 2016 aim to improve the collection, segregation, processing, treatment and disposal is environmentally sound management, reducing the bio-medical waste generation and impact on the environment. The Rule mandates phasing out chlorinated plastic bags, gloves and blood bags within two years, though this has not happened yet. The Plastic Wastes Management Rules, 2016 comes with producer's liability. The rules contemplate the segregation of waste at the source.

The E-Waste Rules has the concept of Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR). The producers must collect e-waste generated from their products' end of life by setting up collections centres or taking back systems individually or collectively. E-waste recycling can be undertaken only in facilities authorised and registered with SPCBs/Pollution Control Committee (PCCs). The National Environment Policy (NEP), 2006 also emphasises the need to recover and reuse any material, reducing the waste destined for final disposal.

The Smart Cities Mission, Swachh Bharath Abhiyaan, Skill India, Digital India, Make in India all these schemes aim to achieve key social and economic goals and enhance the environment's quality by reducing GHG emissions. The draft National Resource Efficiency Policy seeks to double the recycling rate of key materials to 50 percent in the next five years and enable upcycling waste.

Challenges

As discussed earlier, lack of enforcement is the key issue with respect to waste management in the country. Most of the pollution control boards are functioning poorly, with inadequate staff. Rather than curbing pollution, many regional boards act as

facilitators for pollution by legitimising the illegitimate through undue consents and unholy licences.[6] Allegations of corruption against officials are also not uncommon.

If the existing rules and regulations were strictly implemented and adopted by the people, the country would have easily transformed the waste management system. Instead, the waste generated is recklessly dumped on the streets and landfills that are not adequately managed, thereby polluting the air, soil, and underground water. Hardly one could notice a public bin, even if one such bin often overspills and remain uncovered. The sizes of landfills, therefore, are continuously increasing, posing serious concerns. The country lack even basic infrastructure, waste transporting vehicles in almost all cities are not adequately maintained and left uncovered while transporting, causing littering all through the way.

The informal recycling sector that consists of waste pickers plays a crucial role in segregating and recycling waste, but unfortunately, most are not formally trained. Due to their ignorance, they often end up burning these wastes at landfills to keep themselves warm at night, ultimately resulting in setting up landfills on fire, causing serious air pollution.

Recommendations

There is a need to reinvent garbage management in cities; the country needs to focus more on processing waste and recycling it rather than just carrying on with the usual landfill practice. For this to achieve, the households and institutions must be encouraged to segregate their waste at the source. Stringent penal provisions are a must that can deter erring parties from violating rules.

Besides, civic bodies should constantly motivate rag pickers to segregate waste at the source and recycle it. Compost pits should be constructed in every locality to process organic waste. Community participation has to be encouraged through effective education and awareness campaigns on efficient waste management. Recycling e-waste on an enormous scale level is also vital so that e-waste disposal is contained.

There is a need for all stakeholders, urban local bodies, non-governmental organisations, resident associations, public and private institutions, waste management start-ups to interlink and benefit from a combination of centralised and decentralised waste management systems. For all this, the country needs to allocate a sufficient budget.

[6] The Laws and Our Environment, The New Indian Express, September 05, 2019. Accessible at <www.newindianexpress.com/opinions/2019/sep/05/the-laws-and-our-environment-2029094.html.

Companies Sustainable Practices

With the enactment of the Companies Act in 2013, India became the first country to make corporate social responsibility (CSR) mandatory. Companies with net profits greater than approximately US$7mn are mandatorily required to spend two percent of their CSR activities profits. Other than this, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has been taking various initiatives for ensuring responsible business conduct by companies. Voluntary Guidelines on CSR were issued in 2009 and subsequently revised as National Voluntary Guidelines on Social, Environmental and Economic Responsibilities of Business, 2011 (NVGS) after extensive consultations with business, academia, civil society organisations and the government.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), through its 'Listing Regulations' in 2012, mandated the top 100 listed entities by market capitalisation to file Business Responsibility Reports (BRRs) from an environmental, social and governance perspective. This was extended to top 500 companies in FY 2015-16 and further extended to top 1000 companies in December 2019. The National Guidelines for Responsible Business Conduct, 2018 (NGRBC) urge businesses to conduct business responsibly and sustainably and also encourage and support their suppliers, vendors, distributors, partners and other stakeholders to follow the same principle.

Likewise, the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 obligates producers of packaging products, such as plastic and corrugated boxes to collect, recycle, and dispose of such waste according to environmentally sound principles. The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2018, place the primary responsibility of recycling and collecting plastic waste on the producers, importers and brand owners who introduce the material in the market. The Indian Railways Vision 2020 document states its intention to conserve energy by achieving 15 percent energy efficiency and using a low-carbon, energy-efficient approach.

Challenges

In spite of all the above efforts taken, sustainable business practices are yet to take a proper shape in India. Businesses that are willing to adopt sustainable practices are obligated to follow a long process and spend high costs to obtain the certificate for environmental issues. On the other hand, most businesses do not meet the existing air pollution standards, water consumption, or even waste disposal. The government has taken steps to force improvements by defining standards, imposing CSR, etc.

According to the State of India's Environment report, there has been a 136 percent increase in the number of grossly polluting industry units in India between 2011 and 2018. These include pulp and paper mills, distilleries, sugar mills, textile units, tanneries,

thermal power plants, food, dairy, and beverage units, chemical units, and slaughterhouses.

New industries are vital for any developing economy but equally important is the need to bring in stringent governance that encourages sustainable practices. Despite several laws and regulations, businesses tend to take sustainability concepts lightly, which further gets buttressed by law enforcers' lax and corrupt practices.

Recommendations

In the spirit of reflection, the companies must build a compliance culture. For this to happen, all stakeholders should focus more on providing education and awareness while the government ensures strict enforcement action through prohibitive penalties for non-compliance. Likewise, though more prominent Indian companies have warmed up that SDGs are a globally acceptable framework and need to work in that direction, financially strained MSMEs and the agriculture sector need support to work in those areas.

The country needs to keep working on technology and market innovations to enable MSMEs to turn their business model sustainable without losing profitability. Rules and regulations related to their efficient functioning also require constant review and updation.

Sustainable Public Procurement

Currently, there is no single law or body explicitly governing procurement by the Central Government. Instead, Public Procurement (PP) is regulated by the General Financial Rules, 2005 (GFR), guidelines issued by the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) and respective ministries, departments and public sector undertakings (PSUs). The GFRs are only rules and do not have the status of law. They are treated as general guidelines on government expenditure. Violation of the rules above, particularly the GFR, seldom attracts penalties.

A Public Procurement Bill under active consideration of the Parliament failed to address the importance and need of sustainable procurement adequately. It merely states that the environmental criteria of a product may be adopted as one of the requirements for evaluation of the tender.[7]

Also, India does not have a coherent national policy on SPP. Even though the twelfth five-year plan's (2012-2017)[8] vision for India is 'Faster, More Inclusive & Sustainable Growth,'

7 Clause 21(d), The Public Procurement Bill, 2012.

8 Report of the Working Group on 'Effectively Integrating Industrial Growth and Environment Sustainability', Twelfth five year plan (2012-2017), Planning Commission, Government of India.

there is no specific Action Plan for utilising SPP as a strategy for moving towards this goal. The report merely recommends introducing frameworks/guidelines and setting up an autonomous body to promote and encourage a shift in demand towards greener products and services. Thus, there is no policy support for SPP on the ground.

A few entities such as Indian Railways, National Thermal Power Corporation, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, and Indian Oil Corporation have started internalising environmental and energy efficiency criteria in their procurement decisions. The Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure (Procurement Policy Division) had issued a memorandum in 2013 directing all Ministries/Department and subordinate offices while procuring appliances, ensure that they carry the threshold Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) Star Rating indicated against them, or higher. (Split Air Conditioners – 5 star; Refrigerators – 4 star; Ceiling Fans – 5 star; Water Heaters – 5 star) The directive was issued to affect energy savings in the long-term by promoting the procurement of energy-efficient appliances.

Also, under the Department of Expenditure, the Procurement Policy Division had constituted a Taskforce on SPP in March 2018.[9] They are entrusted with reviewing international best practices in SPP, inventories the current SPP status in India across government organisations, prepare a draft Sustainable Procurement Action Plan, recommend an initial set of product/service categories. Six meetings of the Task Force have been held until now wherein SPP issues were discussed with stakeholders.

Challenges

There exist, however, several challenges, such as:

- Absence of authentic, sustainable certifications and labelling, except for few products like the electrical and electronics goods;
- Ignorance about the preparedness of the Indian market to supply sustainable goods and services;
- Falling short of scientific and technical capacity within public institutions to successfully apply sustainable procurement processes;
- The general perception that SPP is too complex and it may increase the cost of public procurement;
- Finding the 'best value for money' is the main principle in public procurement. Unless there is explicit provision for considering the financial gains of environmental

Accessed at <http://planningcommission.gov.in/aboutus/committee/wrkgrp12/wg_es0203.pdf > on September 06, 2013.

9 Office Memorandum, Task force on Sustainable Public Procurement, Ministry of Finance, https://doe.gov.in/sites/default/files/Task%20Force%20on%20Sustainable%20Public%20Procurement.pdf

alternatives over the lifetime of a product, service or development, decisions will continue to be based on upfront costs and immediate benefits.

- Low level of political support and cooperation across ministerial departments;
- Potential impacts on small and medium-sized enterprises;
- Inadequate recognition of the advantages of environmentally friendly products and services;
- Uncertainty about the legal possibilities of including environmental criteria in procurement documents because of lack of political support;
- Limited means to implement and promote SPP;
- Lack of coordinated best practice and information exchange between various States and local authorities;
- The high initial costs for the transition to SPP appear to be beyond many developing countries, including India.

Recommendations

Encouraging sustainable procurement practices is an effective way to demonstrate the public sector's commitment to environmental protection and SCP. For that, there is a need for a change of mindset to 'Best value across the project/product/service life-cycle from 'Best value for money' concept. Building awareness and capacity among procurement officials on various standards and labels and emphasising product life-cycle cost calculation over the upfront cost have always proved to be crucial in decision-making. At the same time, consumers need to be sensitised to begin demanding more and more products made through environmentally sustainable processes. Their behavioural changes can go a long in filling up the markets with sustainable products.

Simultaneously, the national ecolabel 'Ecomark' should be revived and used as a benchmark for industries and their products. The BEE standards and labelling programme should be extended to more products. Studies and experience worldwide have proven that environment standards and ecolabels can help facilitate national SPP policy and implementation, whether these standards and ecolabels are directly supported by national governments or recognised by them for their procurement. Without reliable standards that determine what products count as green or sustainable, governments find it difficult to implement SPP. Studies have shown that the uptake of SPP strongly correlates to the existence of an ecolabel scheme.

Information and Awareness

At the national level, sensitisation of government officials is undertaken by NITI Aayog in collaboration with relevant ministries, experts, CSOs, think tanks and the United Nations.

NITI Aayog organise goal-wise sensitisation workshops for government officials, inviting relevant Union Ministries, State Governments, CSOs and subject experts. The 2030 Agenda Declaration was translated to all regional languages to ensure wider dissemination. Technical regional workshops on localising SDG indicators and developing data methodologies are held at the sub-national levels.

The government partnered with CSOs to prepare Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material and take up research and documentation on SDGs. 'Speaker's Research Initiative' (SRI) workshops were organised at regular intervals to provide SDG-related insights to Members of Parliament.

NITI Aayog's consultations also aimed at reaching out to stakeholders spearheading public awareness exercises. These consultations are expected to "set off an iterative process of information dissemination" across the country. Various schemes/ programmes of the government also have provisions for outreach and publicity.

Challenges

The extent and effectiveness of stakeholders' efforts to increase public awareness are not ascertainable in the country's absence of proper study or survey. The country's education system has also failed to address topics like sustainability, climate change, etc., thus pushing its future generations into complete darkness about the relevance and importance of such topics in the present world. The truth is that there is no awareness about SDGs or sustainability even among the school teachers.

No centralised public awareness campaign is also planned to date, though few states have taken some initiatives to spread awareness. The absence of dedicated awareness measures for the general public may dilute making the 2030 Agenda inclusive and participatory. It is undoubtedly challenging to create awareness by communicating about all the 17 Goals and their sub-goals in their entirety. While trying to share the 2030 Agenda, there is always a risk that the core messages become distorted and diverted among the stakeholders. Too little or too much information can be an obstacle in understanding an issue and effectively making decisions. Besides, almost 25 percent of India's people live below the poverty line. They cannot easily connect with terms like sustainability etc.

Recommendations

Steps for enhancing public awareness and sensitisation about SDGs need to be stepped up so that the process of implementation becomes participatory and inclusive. Policy and a strong political will are required to integrate education on sustainable development in the school curriculum as children needed to be seen as agents of change. NITI Aayog had undertaken extensive consultations with stakeholders to raise awareness, but a national

strategy to create public awareness on SDGs needs to be formulated. Similarly, efforts to enhance public awareness at the State level would also need impetus, and sharing good practices between the states should be encouraged.

Sustainable Tourism

The tourism sector's capability as a driver of sustainable and inclusive development was renewed with the National Tourism Policy, 2002. Swadesh Darshan is an important scheme of the Ministry of Tourism based on the vision to develop theme-based tourist circuits on high tourist value, competitiveness, and sustainability by synergising efforts to focus on all stakeholders' needs and concerns.

The Ministry has also taken several other steps to boost Eco-tourism in the country, including the following:

(i) Evolved & adopted Comprehensive Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI) for three major tourism industry segments, namely accommodation, tour operators, and Beaches, Backwaters, Lakes & Rivers sectors, applicable for the entire country;

(ii) Issued guidelines for approval of Hotel Projects at the implementation stage and also for Classification/Reclassification of operational hotels under various categories mandate incorporation of various eco-friendly measures like installation of Sewage Treatment Plant, Rainwater Harvesting, Waste Management System, Pollution Control and Introduction of non-Chlorofluorocarbon equipment for refrigeration and air conditioners, energy and water conservation measures;

(iii) Promotes Eco-tourism, inter-alia through domestic and international campaigns and supporting seminars, conferences and events focusing on the development of Eco-tourism in the country, from time to time.

The government is also in the process of formulating a new National Tourism Policy. The policy's salient features are developing tourism sustainably and responsibly, employment generation, and community participation. A Memorandum of Understanding with the Eco-Tourism Society of India (ESOI) has been signed to educate the tourism stakeholders on the importance of Sustainable and Responsible Tourism practices and to ensure and promote Sustainable and Responsible practices in the tourism industry.[10] ESOI would be organising a series of workshops across the country with financial assistance from the Ministry of Tourism to popularise India's Sustainable Tourism Criteria amongst stakeholders.

[10] Annual Report 2019-2020. Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

Challenges

Common roadblocks faced while implementing the sustainable tourism goals are lack of basic infrastructure like roads and providing clean, comfortable accommodation. To address such issues, the government constantly upgrades passenger terminals, improves connectivity to tourist destinations, provides safe drinking water, and establishes communication networks in tourist areas to facilitate tourists, but much more needs to be done.

However, it requires significant cooperation and coordinated strategies across government and between different government levels for successful policy intervention, which is currently lacking. The sector also demands the greater involvement of the private sector and civil society and the sharing of best practices and new ideas between the various actors.

Recommendations

Sustainable tourism policies are evolving, but none are applied or monitored seriously and therefore calls for immediate action. The mechanism needs to be devised to 'measure' sustainability implementation by stakeholders in the tourism sector and carrying capacity in a destination. There is a need to promote access to finance for sustainable tourism investment projects of all sizes. Also, sustainable tourism should not be linked only with the environmental aspects. It should be associated with every tourism growth domain, including employment generation, local community involvement, heritage conservation, and preservation.

Apart from policymaking, there is also a strong need for a stringent legislative framework with penalties for any violations. Most importantly, the country needs to encourage sharing information on best sustainability practices and greater sensitisation among public and private sectors.

Rationalise Fossil Fuel Subsidies

Since 2014, no direct subsidies for petrol and diesel but still subsidies for kerosene and LPG exist. But, subsidies for kerosene have fallen significantly over the years. In addition to removing direct subsidies, it simultaneously increased taxation. Petrol is now highly taxed, while diesel is moderately taxed. Likewise, subsidies for oil and gas decreased, but subsidies for the coal industry have remained stable. Direct electricity consumer subsidies have also grown substantially during 2014-17. A significant new electricity subsidy was introduced in 2018: Saubhagya scheme. This provides free electricity connections and subsidies for small-scale renewable energy projects.

Some of the new subsidies introduced in 2018.[11]

* Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya)
* Ujjwala Scheme – LPG subsidies for the poor
* Concessional GST on coal production
* Concessional GST rates for Domestic LPG
* Concessional GST rates for PDS Kerosene

Though the government support for fossil fuels has increased by 65 percent in the past two years, the support for renewables declined by 35 percent. However, the general trend since FY 2014 is still a net shift of support away from fossil fuels and toward clean energy.

Challenges

India's energy sector will primarily be driven by three range of factors–energy access, air pollution, and energy security. India's obligation towards climate change will probably only be the fourth factor influencing India's policymaking at this development stage.[12]

Also, the implementation of the commitment to phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies has been hampered by the lack of a practical framework, including, but not limited to: (a) ambiguity over the scope of the commitment; (b) the absence of clear implementation timelines; (c) the lack of transparency and data availability; and (d) the lack of effective monitoring and compliance mechanisms.[13]

Recommendations[14]

- ✓ Resist new oil and gas subsidies. Volatile prices make them a liability; they are hard to remove once introduced, and they cause fossil energy lock-in.
- ✓ Adopt renewable energy subsidies for emerging technologies and grid balancing. Clean electricity is essential. Other sectors, such as transport and cooking, will rely on electrification to deliver clean energy.

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11 India's Energy Transition: Subsidies for Fossil Fuels and Renewable Energy, International Institute for Sustainable Development and the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, December 2018. Accessible at <www.ceew.in/sites/default/files/IISD_CEEW_India_Energy_Transition_20Dec18.pdf>

12 Central Govt Saved $15 Bn On Energy Subsidies; Fossil Fuels Still Largest Beneficiaries. Accessible at <www.indiaspend.com/central-govt-saved-15-bn-on-energy-subsidies-fossil-fuels-still-largest-beneficiaries-77674/>

13 Phasing Out Fossil Fuel Subsidies in the G20: Progress, Challenges, and Ways Forward, International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), 2017. Accessible at <www.greengrowthknowledge.org/sites/default/files/downloads/resource/Phasing%20Out%20Fossil%20Fuel%20Subsidies%20in%20the%20G20_Progress%2C%20Challenges%2C%20and%20Ways%20Forward.pdf>

14 Mapping India's Energy Subsidies 2020 – A Report. Accessible at <www.ceew.in/publications/mapping-india%E2%80%99s-energy-subsidies-2020>

- ✓ Target consumption subsidies for energy access - LPG and electricity - without harming energy access.
- ✓ Address the total costs of coal. A plan is needed to address coal pricing socially, including diversifying revenues and protecting consumers and workers.
- ✓ Monitor and adapt electric vehicle subsidies to ensure effective, efficient and equitable support, including for two-wheelers, public transport, waste treatment, and battery recycling.
- ✓ Develop formal reporting structures on subsidies in line with proper guidelines for SDG-12(c) and India's G20 peer review of fossil fuel subsidies.

3 Ecolabels: A Perfect Tool to Facilitate Acceleration Towards SDG-12

Introduction

Ecolabels are an important market-based management tool that facilitates a vital part of communication between diverse societal players in a sustainable market - business to consumers, authorities to consumers, business to business, etc. Though ecolabels are not the only reliable route for communicating sustainable information to the consumer, it remains an effective tool. It allows the consumer to make an informed choice at the point of sale about purchasing a product.

The history of ecolabels began when Germany in 1978 initiated the release of the "Blue Angel" programme. The programme's objective was threefold – to enlighten consumers about the environment-friendly nature of various products, encourage manufacturers to develop and deliver environmentally sound products, and use it as a market-oriented instrument of environmental policy.

Today the topic of labelling and voluntary standards, in general, has become progressively more critical. More countries are either in the process of introducing new labels or reviving the dormant ones. There is no doubt that ecolabelling is spreading over the world. For most countries, particularly, the intertwining of eco-labels with government procurement paved the way for the wide acceptance and expansion of the schemes. Most national ecolabels' experience shows that their acceptance enhanced extensively when such additional tools and measures supplemented them. For instance, the "Act on Promotion of Purchase of Green Products" was enacted by the Ministry of Environment in Korea in 2005. This dramatically boosted the market for eco-labelled products in Korea.

Ecolabels and SDGs

Eco-labels are a tool that could ensure a sustainable future. They can actively support countries to meet several UN SDGs and, more importantly, achieve SDG-12. Table 3.1

summarises how ecolabels effectively work as an efficient tool to facilitate acceleration towards SDG-12.

Table 3.1: Ecolabels to Facilitate Acceleration towards SDG-12

SDG-12 TARGETS	ECOLABELS
Target 12.1: SCP action plans	All ecolabels strive to reduce the environmental impact of production and consumption. This ensures sustainable production and control of the value chain and provides the end-user with sustainable products. Eg: GECA's (Good Environmental Choice Australia), EU Flower Label licensees, etc., impacts all of the environmental indicators: climate, atmosphere, biodiversity and ecosystems, water, waste and natural resources. For instance, the requirements in their standards related to timber sourcing are about protecting both resources and biodiversity and ecosystems. The limits placed on VOCs help to protect the atmosphere. Criteria relating to energy can limit greenhouse gases and hence impact climate.
Target 12.2: Sustainable management and use of natural resources	Ecolabels sets requirements for the sustainable use of natural resources, raw materials, energy and water in manufacturing processes. It regulates the mismanagement of natural resources. Eg: Green Product Mark from TÜV Rheinland mandates the use of electricity, fuels, raw and processed materials, and water more responsibly.
Target 12.3: Halve global per capita food waste	Certain ecolabels work towards reducing/prevent food waste. It also aids a consumer to shop for foods grown and raised sustainably. Eg. The Nordic label requires ecolabelled grocery stores to measure their amount of food waste; grocery stores, hotels, restaurants, and canteens are rewarded if they take measures to waste less food.
Target 12.4: Responsible management of chemicals and waste	Ecolabels are strong instruments for phasing out hazardous substances to health and the environment in products and manufacturing. Eg: Japans Ecomark, Germany's Blue Angel Mark, EU Flower ecolabel aims to help ensure proper management of chemical substances by establishing criteria and informing business partners of using the strict chemical in the manufacturing process of products.
Target 12.5: Substantially reduce waste generation	Ecolabels strive to reduce waste, for example, by promoting the reuse of materials and setting strict chemical requirements that allow the materials to be recycled. Strict quality standards ensure that the product works as desired and has a long lifetime. Eg: GECA develops a standard for products it sets criteria to minimise waste. It sets criteria to cover the product from 'cradle to cradle' rather than 'cradle to grave'. The difference between these two approaches is that the former focuses on re-using components of the product at the end of its life.

SDG-12 TARGETS	ECOLABELS
Target 12.6: Encourage companies to adopt sustainable practices and sustainability reporting	Most of the third-party certified schemes are absolute and transparent regarding requirements. This makes it easier for companies to document their sustainability work. Eg: The Nordic Swan Ecolabel is a third-party certification scheme with absolute and transparent requirements. This makes it easier for companies to document their sustainability work. The requirements for ecolabelled investment funds stimulate both the funds and the companies they invest in to report sustainability. Hotels, restaurants and grocery stores must also report the progress of their sustainability work.
Target 12.7: Promote SPP practices	In most countries, public procurement manual/directives allow public procurers to prefer ecolabelled products. Ecolabel makes it easy for procurers and consumers to make sustainable choices. Eg: Green Product Mark is a multi-attribute ecolabel recommended by US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help US federal purchasers identify and procure environmentally sustainable products and services.
Target 12.8: Promote universal understanding of sustainable lifestyles	Ecolabel licenses act as a powerful tool to promote a sustainable lifestyle. Eg: The Nordic Swan Ecolabel's vision is to be a Nordic guiding star for a sustainable lifestyle. The communication of the certified companies and the Nordic Swan Ecolabel itself contributes to this.

Challenges of Ecolabels

To run an ecolabelling scheme is no easy task unless approached well planned. Establishing and maintaining any system usually proves costly at the beginning few years of its launch. Many research studies have emphasised that the financial requirement to collect and assess the production and output data required to do the life-cycle analysis methodology commonly used to develop standards has proved challenging for many countries.

In most countries, government agencies' legal requirements to purchase the lowest-priced products instead of giving purchase preference to sustainable products act as challenges. For instance, in India, the Ecomark label failed to take off as expected due to several reasons, including the absence of support through government procurement.

SPP was overlooked mainly due to funding restrictions to pay the premiums for environmentally preferable alternatives. Budget allocation and financial mechanisms, like in most countries, are prejudiced against sustainable products because of the common perception that sustainable options are more expensive. Despite the proven

fact[15] that sustainable products reduced operating costs make them the most cost-effective choice over the product's lifetime or service being procured.

India's Ecomark[16]

In 1991, the Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF), Government of India, launched India's ecolabelling scheme called "Ecomark" to easily identify environment-friendly products. The label is awarded to consumer goods, which meet the specified environmental criteria and the quality requirements of Indian Standards. Ecomark was identified by the symbol of a 'matka' or the earthen pot. The scheme adopted a 'cradle to grave' approach, i.e., from raw material extraction to manufacturing to disposal.

Although the Ecomark was similar in many ways to the ecolabels of other countries, it differed from most in one crucial aspect; ecolabels in most countries were awarded solely based on environmental considerations, whereas in India, it was also linked with the quality of products. In other words, to be eligible, products must meet both environmental and quality criteria.

Over the years, the scheme has not been able to take off as expected due to a number of reasons, including the absence of support through government procurement. Neither producers nor consumers are either aware of its existence or willing to go for this label. Those who have got the licence for their product hardly use the same on their pack. The reason – no consumer demand for such labelled products and hence no extra profit!

However, lately in light of increased focus on sustainability and report of Group of Secretaries constituted by Hon'ble Prime Minister which recommended revival of the Ecomark scheme, particularly for goods made out of waste, there is a renewed focus to revive the scheme with a focus on 'cradle to cradle' or regenerative approach.

[15] The study *Costs and Benefits of Green Public Procurement in Europe* (Oko-Institut e.V. and ICLEI, 2007) compared the costs and benefits of green public purchasing versus non green purchasing. Similar other studies, include *Collection of statistical information on Green Public Procurement in the EU* (PricewaterhouseCoopers, et al 2009); Senate Administration for Urban Development and the Environment of the Berlin Region (ÖkoInstitut e.V., 2015).

[16] Mehta, Pradeep S. Why was India's Ecomark Scheme Unsuccessful?, Research Report, 2007, CUTS CITEE, Jaipur. Accessible at <www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/RREPORT07-01.pdf>.

Conclusion

In 2007 alone, there were 2,400 trademark applications for terms and phrases with "green" in them and 900 more with "eco." The number increased in 2008; there were 32 percent more applications for trademarks containing "green" and 98 percent more containing "eco".[17]

Consumers are generally perplexed and suspicious of such self-acclaimed declarations, yet a significant population gets carried away by these tall claims. This is where the significance of an ecolabel comes into the picture. But years of ecolabel experiences have consistently shown that eco-labels do not function as stand-alone tools. Ecolabels need to be supported with the promotion of complementary tools and instruments like public procurement.

An overall picture of India's Ecomark scheme would have been entirely different if it had been linked with the government's procurement policy in the early stages. Doing so might have provided producers with an incentive to adopt environmentally-sound production methods and offer more environmentally-friendly products and services.

[17] Green Marketing and CSR, International Journal of Research in Finance & Marketing, Vol 1, Issue 6, October, 2011. Accessible at <www.researchgate.net/publication/303923746_GREEN_MARKETING_AND_CSR>

4 Impact of COVID on Sustainable Consumption and Production in India

Introduction

India's consumption per capita and ecological footprints are far below those of the developed nations, but its rapidly rising population and environmental degradation act as a challenge. Environmental degradation has become evident with the loss of biodiversity, degradation of forests and wetlands, climate change impacts, pollution, and invasive species dominance. The situation seems to further aggravate due to the extensive deviations and unprecedented circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Issues, such as environment and sustainability, slowly gaining pace in recent years have been almost ignored under the coronavirus spread.

India and COVID

In India, COVID cases crossed 2.26 million on August 12, 2020, with 80 percent cases from states like Maharashtra, Kerala, Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, West Bengal, Bihar and UP. The first cases of a novel coronavirus in the country were confirmed on January 30, 2020, in Kerala, which rose to three by February 03. All were students who returned from China. Gradually the transmissions grew after several people with travel history to affected countries and their contacts tested positive.

Post-Pandemic Scenario

The SDGs Report 2020[18] brought together the latest data to show that progress remained uneven before the COVID-19 pandemic. Most countries were not on track to meet the Goals by 2030. With the pandemic, things are getting even worse like never before and economic, financial and social crises are threatening lives and livelihoods, making the achievement of Goals even more challenging.

[18] Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020. Accessible at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2020.pdf>

SCP Impact on Sustainability

SPC which slowly gained acceptance among the policy developers, producers and consumers, have been almost ignored under the coronavirus's spread. This is even though the COVID-19 is creating a significant impact on society and the environment, both positively and negatively.

According to World Bank, among regions of the world, South Asian countries might witness the most significant increase in the number of poor because of COVID-19. To be more specific, the International Labour Organisation,[19] in a recent report, claims that in India, with a share of almost 90 percent of people working in the informal economy, about 400 million workers are at risk of falling deeper into poverty during the crisis. Current stringent lockdown measures in India have impacted these workers significantly, forcing many of them to return to rural areas. Recession, loss of job and physical distancing have largely affected the way people produce and consume. Nothing remains the same as before the pandemic. People's needs and wants change drastically.

The world witnessed a major shift in lifestyles, social norms, behaviour and interactions, and India is no exception. There is a tremendous increase in the use of plastics like never before in healthcare. The campaigns educating people to wear a mask to contain the spread of COVID-19 have led to an unexpected rise in the production and sales of disposable masks'.

The UN trade body, UNCTAD, estimates that global sales of disposable masks will touch around US$166bn this year, up from around US$800mn in 2019. What is more alarming is the rise in the production and sale of fake healthcare products. According to the Preventive Wear Manufacturers Association of India, almost 150 new manufacturing units have been set up in just three months in India during this pandemic, of which most are counterfeiting brands.[20]

Apart from the medical wastes, one could also witness an increased dependence of consumers on disposables, such as plastic plates, cups, carry bags, sanitisers and bottled drinking water as a hygiene measure to avoid COVID-19. Also, increased dependence on online delivery of consumer goods and foods has resulted in a surge in packaging material usage.

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19 ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work, Second edition, April 2020. Accessible at <www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_740877.pdf>

20 COVID-19 Investigation: The Indian Market Is Flooded with Fake N95 Masks, July 2020. Accessible at <https://science.thewire.in/health/covid-19-counterfeit-n95-masks-cdsco-bis-standards/>

However, to date, there is no ground estimate to show how much plastic wastes have been generated in India since the COVID scare. To make matters worse, waste collection and recycling came to a halt during lockdown across the country. Before the pandemic, India's performance in the circular economy was exceptional.[21]

It was leading in the collection and recycling of plastic waste and almost 60-70 percent of it was collected and recycled into other useful products. But now the recycling centres have been temporarily shut and collection staffs are either unwilling or unable to report because of the pandemic scare. Even after lockdown relaxations, only a very few recycling plants have resumed their operations with a handful of staffs, because of which nothing much significant could be achieved. All these have pushed people to go back and practice unsustainable habits of burning household wastes or throwing them on the roadside, creating conditions for the spread of infectious diseases.

Apart from plastic and medical wastes, one could witness an increased dependence of consumers on information technology during the pandemic. The country's total wireless subscribers increased to 1,144.18 million by the end of July 2020 and the overall broadband subscriber base increased to 705.40 million. India generated 3.2 million tonnes of e-waste last year, ranking third globally.[22]

Following the current growth rate of e-waste, an ASSOCHAM-EY joint report, titled 'Electronic Waste Management in India' estimated India to generate 5.2 million tonnes by 2021. The study also identified computer equipment and mobile phones as the principal waste generators in India. So, as electronic gadgets' dependence increases, the e-waste issue will swell up if not for an adequate intervention. Unfortunately, at present, India is the only country within the region to have e-waste legislation.

Way Forward

When the health concerns are over, governments may not invest in healing these environmental damages and companies may not have CSR funds. Economic insecurity and financial drainage caused by the pandemic will prompt individual consumers and even the governments across the country to avoid consuming comparatively highly-priced environment-friendly products and services.

[21] COVID-19: India's circular economy faces a rough ride, Down to Earth, May 12, 2020. Accessible at <www.downtoearth.org.in/blog/waste/covid-19-india-s-circular-economy-faces-a-rough-ride-71069>

[22] The why and how of disposing electronic waste, Mongabay, August 26, 2020. Accessible at < https://india.mongabay.com/2020/08/explainer-the-why-and-how-of-disposing-electronic-waste/>

Much needs to be done to withstand these adversities and one can achieve far more by working together than by acting in isolation. Sustainable opportunities created by the pandemic like avoiding unnecessary travels, less dependent on office space and work from home culture, people's dependence on local food stores and business should be encouraged. Encouraging and making people adopt such simple, sustainable practices could enhance sustainability and reduce carbon footprint to a considerable extent.

Likewise, with effective policies, improved technology, responsible investment, and awareness generation, a country could play an important role in fighting the pandemic and address the unsustainable menace associated with it. India undoubtedly needs to bring back the momentum and create green infrastructure while fighting pandemic and associated unemployment, especially for accelerating progress on the SDGs.

5 State Programme on SDG-12

Chhattisgarh

Chhattisgarh located in central India, is a state endowed with rich natural resources. It has extensive mineral deposits, five major river basins and a forest area covering 44.21 percent of its geographical area. The state's geographical area is approximately 137.8 lakh hectares and the total population is about 2.55 crore.[23] As per details from Census 2011, Chattisgarh has a population of 2.55 crores, increasing from the figure of 2.08 crore in the 2001 census. Chhattisgarh's economy grew at 5.32 percent (at constant prices) as against 7.06 percent (at constant prices) in 2018-19.

SDGs

Chhattisgarh is committed to develop in synchronisation with nature, and to ensure the participation of the most disadvantaged ones among ourselves, in this process. The idea of sustainability is not new to rural India, which organically cohabits with nature through centuries of our civilisation. This connection of natural resources with the sustainable rural economic system is reflected in an old saying. छतीसगढ़ के चार चिन्हारी नरवा, गरुवा, घुरवा, अऊ बारी, गॉव ला बचाना हे सॅगवारी [Chhattisgarh has four key characteristics- *Naruva* (rivulets), *Garuva* (livestock), *Ghuruva* (waste-management system) and *Badi* -backyard farms].

The government aims to harness this spirit of co-existing with nature and hence prepared the development plan accordingly. With this vision, all the departments under state government have jointly designed a strategy and a roadmap for development through the SDG framework. The state is committed to working tirelessly towards SDGs and making all efforts to achieve the related target well before their scheduled deadline.

[23] 'Chhattisgarh SDG Vision 2030' (State Planning Commission, Chhattisgarh, 2019) <http://spc.cg.gov.in/pdf/SDG_Vission_2030.pdf> [accessed 4 February 2020].

State Insights

- The Chhattisgarh State Planning Commission has been designated as the nodal agency for SDG implementation and monitoring. The Commission has initiated efforts towards establishing an 'SDG Cell' under its overall guidance and supervision.
- State Planning Commission is working on state-level SDGs Indicators. The commission will modify and add new indicators in the existing National indicator framework. The commission is also working on district and block-level indicators.
- State Planning Commission has formed 11 working groups of SDGs and identified nodal departments for each SDG. SDG-12 comes under working group-1 and the Agriculture Department is the nodal department.
- The State has made efforts in localising SDGs through 'Panchayat Development Goals' as a strategy under Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP). The State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) has developed planning cum monitoring formats and a training module. Further, to facilitate SDG-based planning, implementation and monitoring at the district level, State level guidelines on 'Decentralised District Planning' are being modified to align to SDGs.
- The State intends to develop an SDG Dashboard to track progress on SDGs and detailed district-wise analysis. Simultaneously, departments are advised to set yearly and half-yearly milestones for the targets and monitor the achievements accordingly.
- The State government is partnering with various stakeholders, including UN agencies, in integrating SDGs in panning processes for capacity building and advocacy.

Challenges identified through the Study

- Defining Indicators at the local level is one of the major challenges. The concerned indicators should ensure their quality and integrity. The government is working on localising the indicators according to the state's needs.
- Monitoring the progress regularly is a real challenge. Indicators will be the backbone of monitoring of SDGs at the local, state and national levels. The State Planning Commission is playing a significant role in tracking progress. Still, monitoring at the district and block levels is a major challenge.
- The concerned departments related to SDG-12 are 10. Hoverer, there is a lack of coordination among various departments.

- There is no dedicated fund for SDGs. The available fund is inadequate to achieve SDG-12 targets.
- Shortage of technical staff.

Successful Practices

Case Study: Gothan

In Chhattisgarh, there is an ancient tradition of keeping cows in Gothan (a place known as cow shelter). Reviving the tradition, Gothan is being constructed under the Narva, Garwa, Ghurwa and Badi Yojana. Every *Gram Panchayat* builds a Gothan on 3 acres of land these sheds and pasture will be provided for cows, goats and poultry. Organic manure prepared from animal dung will be sold to farmers who will promote organic farming.

Solid Residual Management

Clean India Mission (Swachh Bharat Abhiyan) is one of India's ambitious schemes. The Central Government took the initiative and the states also try to help in every possible way in its implementation.[24] There are some cities where the common people have participated in *Swachh Abhiyan* by taking the responsibility into their hands. In such cities, the name of Ambikapur of Chhattisgarh is also included. Ambikapur is the head-quarter city of Surguja district in the state of Chhattisgarh.

Garbage Cafe

The Municipal Corporation started a garbage cafe at the Ambikapur bus stand in the Surguja district of Chhattisgarh state. The main objective of this Garbage Cafe is to make the city plastic-free. This garbage cafe was opened in the bus stand in the city centre on October 09, 2019, to add more people to the plastic-free campaign. A request was placed before the people to bring plastic to Garbage Cafe and eat free food.[25]

Dung lamp

The Chhattisgarh government is initiating efforts towards making cow dung items, like making dung lamps, an eco-friendly idol of Ganesh and other things. Only a few groups have started working in this direction. Still, people are taking an interest and serious

[24] Simar Singh, 'How Chhattisgarh's Ambikapur Is Turning Its Trash Into Treasure | Features', *NDTV-Dettol Banega Swasth Swachh India*, 2017 <https://swachhindia.ndtv.com/how-chhattisgarhs-ambikapur-is-turning-its-trash-into-treasure-7548/> [accessed 9 December 2020].

[25] Cherrupreet Kaur, 'India's First Garbage Cafe to Come up in Ambikapur | Raipur News - Times of India', *The Times of India* <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/raipur/indias-first-garbage-cafe-to-come-up-in-ambikapur/articleshow/70339167.cms> [accessed 9 December 2020].

regarding protecting the environment, promoting such projects.[26] This was initiated by women SHG in Arang in the Raipur district.

Himachal Pradesh

HP is one of the northernmost states of India. It is a mountain state and has a 26.40 percent area under forest cover. Another 1.36 percent area outside the forest is covered with trees. The state population increased by 17.53 percent between 1991-2001 and then further expanded by 12.81 percent from 2002 to 2011. As per the Revised Estimates Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) at constant prices, the state's economy is estimated at 1.24 lakh crore in 2019-20 as against 1.17 lakh crore in 2018-19, showing an increase of 5.98 percent during the year.[27]

SDGs

The state is vulnerable to climate change events which can undermine it progress to achieve SDGs. However, HP took the second spot with 69 composite scores in SDG Index 2019 released by NITI Aayog. It followed a whole-of-government approach for the preparation of the Vision document for SDGs. Consultations were held among the thematic groups formed by the government with farmers, hoteliers, representatives of the industry association, and civil society to ensure the reflection of diverse voices in the Vision document. HP has shortlisted 138 key indicators for monitoring progress on SDGs. The state is planning to develop a dashboard for monitoring progress on the indicators.[28]

State Insights

The Planning Department is the nodal department in the State to facilitate implementing the SDGs framework in HP. The government has taken several initiatives in close collaboration with the nodal departments, training institutions, other organisations like the UN in India and National Foundation for India (NFI). In HP, social-economic and human development indicators are much better than in many states in the country. Some of the initiatives are summarised below:

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26 'Kondagaon News: गोबर से बना दीया करेगा घर-आंगन रोशन ऐसे होगा पर्यावरण संरक्षण- Naidunia.Com' <https://www.naidunia.com/chhattisgarh/kondagaon-dia-made-from-cow-dung-will-illuminate-the-house-this-will-be-environmental-protection-3249601> [Accessed on December 09, 2020].

27 'Economic Survey 2019-20' (Economic and Statistics Department, Government of Himachal Pradesh) <https://himachalservices.nic.in/economics/pdf/Economic_Survey_eng2019-20.pdf> [Accessed on September 20, 2020].

28 *The Localisation of SDGs Early Lesson From 2019* (NITI Aayog, 2019) <http://164.100.94.191/writereaddata/files/document_publication/LSDGs_July_8_Web.pdf> [Accessed on September 07, 2020].

- **Mapping SDGs with targets and identifying Nodal departments:** The goal-wise mapping of SDGs with targets and implementing departments was done. The nodal department for each goal was identified. Accordingly, the Administrative Secretary's working groups were constituted to prepare the vision document for the respective goal.
- **Development of State Vision Document-2030**: The Drishti Himachal Pradesh 2030 (State Vision Document 2030) has been prepared and launched. In this Vision Document, only 16 Goals have been taken and Goal No. 14 is left being related to Marine Life as HP is a landlocked State.
- **Popularisation of SDGs:** Awareness of SDGs is essential, as all stakeholders' participation is imperative in achieving the SDGs. The government has taken several initiatives to propagate the SDGs.

The Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration, popularly known as HIPA, has organised training and capacity-building programmes for departmental officers.

- **Monitoring of targets and indicators:** The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), GoI, has developed 300+ indicators to be monitored to assess sustainable goals and targets. However, considering the State's better socio-economic condition, many indicators may not be relevant for the State. Besides, in the absence of the required data, it may not be possible for the State to monitor these many indicators. Therefore, the State Government has considered 138 indicators in consultation with the nodal departments.

Efforts to achieve SDGs

- The mapping of the 16 goals was done. Accordingly, 11 working groups were constituted with one nodal department and other major stakeholder departments as its members for vision documentation on SDGs-aligned with 15 year Vision, 7-year Strategy and 3-year Action Plan.
- The State has resolved that each SDG will be monitored against two sets of indicators. The first set of indicators will be used to monitor the progress made on SDGs for the use of the State Government and the second set of indicators will be based on the indicators suggested by the MoSPI/NITI.

Challenges identified through Study

- The Environmental Department is the nodal department for SDG-12 and SDG-13. However, they are more focused on SDG-13.

- Concerned departments for SDG-12 targets were unaware of SDG-12. For instance, the Department of Urban Development is responsible for a target, but they do not know the same.
- Staff shortage is a key challenge for the progress of SDG-12.

Successful Practices

HP- Sustainable Plastic Waste Management Plan

The initiative aims to establish environment-friendly plastic waste disposal solutions. The process seeks to ban plastic bags and products and reduce plastic littering across the state. Further, to ensure sustainability and continued community participation, the initiative seeks to spread environmental awareness among the local population. The Sustainable Plastic Waste Management Plan has been implemented by the Department of Environment, Science and Technology (DEST), Government of HP.

Kerala

According to the Economic Review 2019 released by the State Planning Board, in 2018-19, the Kerala economy grew at 7.5 percent (at constant prices) against 7.3 percent (at constant prices) in 2017-18. The growth in 2018-19 was mainly due to the increase in the secondary sector, which recorded 8.8 percent (at constant prices). The tertiary sector grew at 8.4 percent in the same year. Kerala's Gross State Value Added (GSVA) grew at relatively fast rates from 2016-17 to 2018-19 despite many setbacks faced by the State and the growing signs of recession in the national economy.

The sectors contributing to this fast growth are fishing and aquaculture, manufacturing, trade, hotels and restaurants, social services, mainly education and health, public services and professional services.[29]

SDGs

Kerala has been ahead of other Indian States in achieving demographic and human development indicators. In the achievement of SDGs by the States in India as computed by the NITI Aayog, Kerala is the front runner with a score of 70, thus topping once again among other states in progress towards SDGs in SDG India Index.

Kerala also ranks first in SDGs concerning 'health' and 'industry, innovation and infrastructure' and ranks second in 'education' and 'gender equality.' The Government of

[29] Economic Review 2019 – Vol 1, State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, January 2020. Accessible at <www.spb.kerala.gov.in/images/pdf/whats_new/ER_2019_Vol1_E.pdf>

Kerala's policy is to invest in people, ensure social justice to all, and encourage productive forces in the economy.

Kerala has set up an elaborate institutional mechanism to ensure that all government departments come together on a common platform and collaborate with experts and training institutions on the SDG agenda. Under Secretary, Environment Department is appointed as the nodal officer to implement the SSDG Goals 12, 13, 14 & 15 in the state successfully.

State Insights

Central Plan Monitoring Unit (CPMU) functions in the Planning and Economic Affairs Department to monitor all SDGs in the State. Task forces for each Goal have been set up and a series of Goal-specific meetings are conducted at the CPMU level to identify the data gaps and efforts to bridge the gaps. According to senior staff at CPMU, an SDG vision document of the State is under preparation and expected to be released sometime in late 2020.

A state-level Steering Committee and SDG Monitoring Group have been set up to review progress with respect to SDGs. With Planning Secretary as a convener and Chief Secretary as Chairperson, the Steering Group acts as the apex body in implementing and monitoring SDGs in the State. The SDG Monitoring Group, with Planning Secretary as Chairperson and Director (CPMU) as the convener, has formed teams to coordinate the implementation of SDGs at District, Urban Local and *Panchayat* levels.

Monitoring Group functions as a Technical Forum. All types of technical issues connected with SDGs' performance raised by the departments shall be discussed and sorted out by this group. Monitoring Group shall recommend those issues to Steering Group, which need intervention at higher levels.

At the same time, to meet the human resource requirement, an SDG Cell has been constituted. The government constituted this SDG Cell in the CPMU Department under the direct supervision of the Assistant Director, CPMU, with the four Research Associates on a contract basis and one Research Officer as a member. SDG Cell will document all activities related to SDGs in the State and prepares status reports, as and when required. The SDG Cell upkeep and maintains all data/reports/publications related to SDGs.

The Economics and Statistics Department has been designated as the nodal department for data management. Necessary information and communication tool has been procured for the use of nodal departments and nodal offices.

SDG cell Research Associates are appointed by the Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) with UNICEF's support. CPMU works in tandem with KILA to sensitise officials about the importance of SDGs and coordinate effective implementation and monitoring of SDGs. For this, KILA coordinates with all training institutes under various government departments in Kerala.

Challenges identified through Study

Major challenges that hamper the effective implementation of SDG works within the State are: a) lack of coordination between various departments, b) inadequate funds, c) shortage of technical staffs, d) very poor awareness among the officials, except a handful, about SDGs across various departments, e) inconsistent and unreliable data collection, and f) priorities shifted to rebuild Kerala, after the State got affected by consecutive floods, heavy rain and landslides past few years.

Coordinated institutional mechanisms are vital for creating partnerships across sectoral ministers and agencies and managing inter-connections between Goals and Targets. Kerala needs to seriously address this shortcoming and remediate actions to ensure their mechanisms' better functioning.

Likewise, while the State implements many successful schemes and sustainable programmes most of the officials responsible for the implementation are unaware that such schemes and programmes are linked to SDGs.

Successful Practices in Kerala

Solid Waste Management – Alappuzha Municipal Cooperation

In coordination with the district Suchitwa Mission, the Alappuzha municipality started implementing a 'Nirmala Bhavanam Nirmala Nagaram'[30] (Clean Homes Clean City) in November 2012. The focus of the initiative is the segregation and treatment of wet waste at the source itself.

Responsible Tourism

Kumarakom, a cluster of islands, is part of Kuttanad, the Rice Bowl of Kerala. Blessed with its picturesque beauty, Kumarakom is a declared Special Tourism Zone since 2005 by Kerala. With the growth of tourism, there was a shift in the occupational trends of the villagers. It was in March 2008 that the RT project was officially inaugurated in Kumarakom. Kumarakom is now a major RT destination of the State. Within years of its initiatives, RT in Kumarakom is recognised as a grand success more than the other RT tourist destinations.

[30] *Ibid.*

Rajasthan

Rajasthan faces severe water scarcity, inadequate rainfall, and is classified as an arid/semi-arid region situated in the country's western part. It is the largest state in the country in terms of geographical area. As per Census 2011, the population of Rajasthan is 6.85 crore and it is 5.66 percent of the national population. According to the Economic Review 2019-20 released by the Department of Planning, Rajasthan, in 2019-20, the Rajasthan economy grew at 5.05 percent (at constant prices) as against 6.97percent (at constant prices) in 2018-19.[31]

SDGs

Rajasthan has undertaken various initiatives to implement and achieve the SDGs in line with the Central Government initiatives. As per the 'SDG India Index Baseline report 2018', Rajasthan has been ranked as a performer on the Composite SDG India Index with an Index Score of 59. SDG India Index 2.0, launched in December 2019, ranks Rajasthan as 'Performer' on Composite SDG India Index 2.0 with an Index Score of 57.

Rajasthan has set up a State-level implementation and monitoring committee under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan. This Committee is responsible for setting up the state's SDGs agenda, developing the state level's institutional framework, assigning roles and responsibilities to various stakeholders in the state, and reviewing the progress made in the State.

State Insights

State Planning Department has been declared as nodal department for SDGs and the Department of Environment is the nodal department for SDG-12 implementation & monitoring. A dedicated cell has been established in the Directorate of Economics & Statistics to collect data on Targets/ National Indicators and review progress.

Based on the state-level committee's recommendation, 7 Sectoral Working Groups have been constituted for effective SDGs implementation. The sectoral working group examines the strategic context and prioritises issues/concerns that need to be addressed in achieving SDGs. It also conducts a gap analysis to monitoring indicators; examines gaps in the related data reporting systems; and suggests State-specific indicators for each SDG.

[31] 'Economic Review 2019-20' (Directorate of Economics & Statistics Rajasthan, GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN) <http://plan.rajasthan.gov.in/content/dam/planning-portal/Directorate%20of%20Economics%20and%20Statistics/Publication/Regular%20Publications/economic%20review%20english/Economic_Review_English_2019-20.pdf> [Accessed on September 09, 2020].

Keeping in view the localisation for better planning and implementation of SDGs at the grassroots level, the Government of Rajasthan has constituted District level SDGs implementation and monitoring committees under the respective District's chairmanship Collector. District level SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Committee prepare a district-level road map for SDGs implementation, district profile/fact sheet regarding SDGs as per targets and national indicator framework and District Annual SDGs report. All 33 districts have constituted the above district-level committee.

In Rajasthan, the State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) and Panchayati Raj is guiding sensitisation/implementation of SDGs at the PRI level and the integration of SDGs with GPDP.

The State has already conducted a mapping of the Goals and associated targets with Central Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) and State Government schemes/programme/ initiatives. In this regard, Planning Department's detailed guidelines have been issued for mapping schemes being implemented in the State (CSS/State Sector) with respective Goal and Targets.

Challenges identified through Study

- The vision document for SDG is in progress.
- The concerned department for SDG-12 target did not finalised yet.
- Localising the SDG indicators is in progress.
- The government approach towards Responsible tourism is in progress. Responsible Tourism is one of the critical targets of SDG-12.

Successful Practices in Rajasthan

Rejuvenating River Dravyavati

Drayavati river foundation was laid and the work started in April 2016. The entire route was evacuated by removing the encroachment in the way of the river's flow. The main part of this entire project is five large sewage treatment plants. Like any other major city in the world, these plants can treat the city's sewage with the capacity of 170 million litres per day. The sewage of the city will be treated here in the treatment plants. The clean and safe water will then be discharged into the river. Now neither will there be problems of polluted water nor any lack of water in the river. It will also help the groundwater recharge.

A Successful Strategy for Conserving Water

The 'Mukhya Mantri Jal Swavlamban Abhiyaan' (Chief Minister's Water Self-reliance Mission) was launched in Rajasthan to converge various schemes and bring them on a

single platform to conserve the four-waters concept, i.e., Rainfall, Runoff, Ground water and Soil moisture up to its maximum potential in each region. The Rajasthan government's flagship water conservation project aims to harvest rain water and make villages self-reliant in water and create 'Islands of Excellence.'

Saving Initiatives in Street Lighting

Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC), the entity responsible for maintaining and operating the lighting system, is also responsible for the municipality's social development needs and often cannot fund the city's lighting system.[32]

Jaipur's street lights are responsible for approximately 9 percent of the city's total corporate emissions.[33] Historically, JMC's ability to make repairs was severely limited by its old public lighting system. When it did make repairs, it replaced archaic technology instead of exploring innovative and more cost-effective solutions. New LED technology requires less maintenance and reduces energy consumption by around 77 percent — both of which amount to lower government expenditures. Taking these efforts ahead, a street light policy is also under formulation for other cities of Rajasthan state.

Uttar Pradesh

UP, often described as India's heartland, is the fourth largest state in India and has the largest population. The state's population of 20.42 crores is equivalent to the people of Brazil. UP's economy grew at 4.38 percent (at constant prices) against 5.33 percent (at constant prices) in 2018-19.[34] UP's economy is primarily dominated by the tertiary sector, followed by primary and secondary sectors.

UP has very fertile land and its economy is primarily driven by agriculture. It is also a popular tourist destination due to the Taj Mahal, Buddhist places of pilgrimage such as Sarnath and Kushinagar and prominent Hindu pilgrimage places such as Allahabad and Varanasi.

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32 'Lighting up Jaipur's Streets While Cutting Emissions' (IFC Climate Business) <https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/c9e8ac95-5bcc-4d88-9604-d5249f3c6127/10StoriesOfImpact-Jaipur+Lighting.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=lpnmrMo> [Accessed on October 20, 2020].

33 'Energy and Carbon Emissions Profi Les of 54 South Asian Cities' (ICLEI-South Asia, 2009) <https://e-lib.iclei.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Energy-and-Carbon-Emissions-Profiles-for-54-South-Asian-Cities.pdf> [Accessed on October 20, 2020].

34 'Uttar Pradesh Budget Analysis 2019-20', PRS India, February 14, 2019, https://www.prsindia.org/parliamenttrack/budgets/uttar-pradesh-budget-analysis-2019-20.

SDGs

According to Composite SDG India Index, 2019 prepared by NITI Aayog, UP is an aspirant state. UP has identified nodal departments for each of the 16 Goals. The nodal department for Goal 12 is the Department of Environment. UP has identified monitoring indicators based on the National Indicator Framework. A baseline report is under preparation. UP, budgetary requirements for centrally and State-sponsored schemes based on the SDG framework have been prepared and forwarded to the Department of Finance.[35] However, according to Composite SDG India Index, 2019 prepared by NITI Aayog, UP is a performing state with a 23rd rank. The state is ranked 10 for SDG-12.

UP has improved its overall score from 42 in 2018 to 55 in 2019 and is the highest gainer. The biggest improvement has been in Goal 7 – affordable and clean energy, where the jump has been by 40 points. Scores in Goal 6 – clean water and sanitation and Goal 9 – industry, innovation, and infrastructure, have climbed by 39 and 34 points, respectively.

UP has created an interactive dashboard that presents the current levels of achievements of UP and its districts towards achieving the SDGs. Currently, it consists of 75 indicators included in the state's SDG monitoring framework. These indicators are spread across 12 SDGs. One SDG (Goal 14) is not applicable for UP and the remaining four goals (Goal 10, 12, 15 and 17) are not included due to lack of data.

According to the UP SDG dashboard website, more indicators will be added once data is available. Following the method used by NITI Aayog, the achievement score for 10 SDGs is calculated for the state and districts to assess their progress against the targets. Overall SDG score for the state and districts was calculated as the arithmetic mean of achievement scores for SDGs.

State Insights

The State's Vision 2030 has 16 goals (Goal number 14 is not applicable in UP) with a nodal department and a nodal officer designated for each Goal. The nodal officer for each Goal is mandated to raise awareness of related departments on the goal's issues. Nodal officers have also been identified for every Goal at the State Planning Commission. Department of Environment is the nodal office for SDG-12. The Planning Department has been designated as the nodal department for work on SDGs.

[35] 'Department Wise SDG Brochure', accessed on November 12, 2019, http://planning.up.nic.in/Go/SDG/Departmentwise_SDG%20Brochure%20-%20High%20Res-converted.docx.

A high-level task force, chaired by the Chief Secretary, has been set up to guide SDGs' progress. The task force led by the Chief Secretary has instructed Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to integrate SDGs in their planning tools. The Government of UP has already integrated SDGs in the Gram Panchayat Development Plans.

SDG Cell is constituted with the support of UNICEF. It works in coordination with various government departments. The State government has identified measurable indicators based on the National Indicator Framework. The Directorate of Economics and Statistics is entrusted with collecting, analysing, and maintaining data to be uploaded on a dashboard.

Challenges identified through Study

- Most of SDG-12 targets have not concerned departments.
- Officials are not aware of the SDG-12 progress. There is a lack of coordination among various departments.
- SDG Dashboard was not up to date about SDG-12.

Successful Practices in UP

Vermi Composting from Solid Waste by KGS, Kanpur in UP

This case study is about round the year production of vermicompost by reuse & recycling of cattle dung and cow dung slurry from Gaushla and Biogas plants and its successful management through a low-cost technology at village Bhounti; promoted by Kanpur Gaushala Society (KGS), Kanpur, UP. This is an excellent example of income generation from solid waste management by using very low-cost technology.

Noida's Green Women

Green Crusaders, a women's group in Sector 47, Noida (UP), has reduced food wastage since August 2018. The self-sustaining initiative has benefitted all stakeholders, including waste collectors, residents and the city authorities. The group started with informal social media discussions and gatherings. Members charted priorities and began by organising cleanliness drives, collating data, interacting with residents, researching best practices, training domestic help and waste collectors. Non-profits then helped them with new technologies and techniques for sustainable waste management.

6 Conclusion

SCP and Goal 12 have a vital role in the growth and development of our country. Growing urbanisation, changing lifestyles, resource-intensive growth patterns all need to be carefully tamed and diverted through a sustainable channel to stop any further depletion of resources and ecosystem degradation. Joint and concentrated efforts are required from the policymakers, governments, businesses and the people to increase resource efficiency, fundamentally shift consumption patterns and production process, improve waste management systems and transit towards a more circular economy approach.

Areas with Progress and Challenges

There are good programmes and policies at both National and State levels which are forward-looking and supportive of achieving the SCP goal. But when it comes to implementation and enforcement, our country falls behind, mainly due to lack of continuity in government policies, lack of sufficient funds, inadequate human resources and/or lack of enthusiasm among the officials concerned to implement them in their true spirits.

Not just these, due to ignorance and lack of community participation during policy developments at times, even common people stand in the way of implementing policies. People's lethargy to change or adapt to new sustainable habits is the prime factor for such behaviours. This was evident in Swachh Bharat Mission cases, where adequate funds and enthusiasm among government officials were on full display. Still, the Mission felt a jerk after failing to get people's cooperation regarding issues like waste segregation at source.

Reducing and Managing Waste

While the country is making considerable progress in tackling waste covering the target 12.4 and 12.5 of SDGs, much more needs to be done. The Swachh Bharat Mission or Clean India Mission is a country-wide campaign initiated by Indian government in 2014 to eliminate open defecation and improve solid waste management. The mission was split into two for effective management: rural and urban. In rural areas, "SBM - Gramin" was financed and monitored through the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, whereas

"SBM - urban" was overseen by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. SBM largely contributes towards the achievement of SDG-12 targets. Both the Central and State governments are reporting its progress through Management Information System (MIS) system, making it available to the public domain.

Likewise, most states in India have banned plastic carry bags, but despite all these years, its usage is rampant across the states and consumers are less reluctant to shift to alternatives. Many reasons can be attributed to this, but foremost being the callous attitude of the officials who are in charge of enforcing it with the required vigour. Failure to provide cost-effective, sustainable alternatives and the absence of any effort to raise community awareness pushed the matter worse.

At the same time, the recycling potential of our country is poor. Almost 90 percent of our e-wastes are handled by the unregulated informal sector that handles it unscientifically, causing significant risk to the environment and the recyclers, who are frequently women and children. Often, no actual recycling happens within these informal sectors due to a lack of formal support, training, and awareness. Most of them often dump the remaining wastes irresponsibly at landfills.

Sustainable Standards

Over the years, the scheme has not been able to take off as expected due to a number of reasons, including the absence of support through government procurement and lack of awareness-raising campaigns to promote the label. Neither the producers nor the consumers are aware of its existence or willing to go for this label. Those who have got the licence for their product hardly use the same on their pack. The reason – no consumer demand for such labelled products and hence no extra profit!

However, things proved different in the government's energy efficiency labeling scheme through the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE). The scheme launched in 2006 gained much popularity and acceptance from the consumers as they started making an informed choice on energy and cost savings on marketed household and other appliances. This is because BEE worked tirelessly and closely with various key stakeholders to implement and monitor the programme through its Steering & Technical committees.

Resource Efficiency

The government has formulated the National Resource Efficiency Policy, 2019. It seeks to create a facilitative and regulatory environment to mainstream resource efficiency across all sectors by fostering cross-sectoral collaborations, developing policy instruments, action plans and efficient implementation and monitoring frameworks.

Common Challenges

Even though considerable efforts are being taken to progress towards SDG-12, there are still challenges across the sectors that need to be addressed while moving towards SCP. This section summarises the common challenges identified during the study.

- ✓ SDG-12 is one of the least focused goals and the country failed to monitor its progress until the 2019 National level ranking of NITI Aayog, where SDG-12 has been covered.
- ✓ Different departments deal with SDG-12 at the state level and there is no specific department responsible for its implementation. The departments such as Environment and Planning are responsible for monitoring only.
- ✓ There is a shortage of technical staff at the state level associated with SDG-12. Most of the departments are engaged with the implementation of their priority areas instead of SDG-12. Most of the staff in some states were either on deputation from other departments or on a contractual basis.
- ✓ Various departments are involved under SDG-12 at the state level, but there is still a lack of coordination. The Department of Planning is the nodal department for SDG implementation at the state level.
- ✓ The capacity of existing officials is not matching with the requirement of SDG-12 performance. Various departments are involved in the progress, but down the line, departments and agencies which are implementing the schemes and programmes at ground level lack capacity and technical knowledge.
- ✓ Most of the sustainable activities go unreported because of the government officials' lack of awareness, except a couple of officials involved in reporting about SDG and its importance. They miss out on connecting the sustainable activities implemented by their department with the SDGs. During the study, most of the officials were unable to recognise what an SDG is. This lack of awareness among government officials coupled with lack of funding, shortage of technical staff resulting in inadequate monitoring and reporting appears to be the most significant challenges at the state level in SDG implementation.

Recommendations

The concept of SCP makes an understanding which goes beyond SDGs and their targets. This particular study looked at SDG-12 from consumers' perspective, who are the main force to drive change in any direction. Based on the CUTS study, few recommendations are made here for the effective implementation of SDG-12.

Policies on SCP

Several policies are talking about environmental protection, reducing waste and promoting environmental conservation, protecting natural resources and many more environmental aspects. But there is a lack of a comprehensive sustainable consumption policy or framework which talks about sustainable consumption in the country through all of its elements are captured by different existing policies. Policy on National Resource Efficiency that seeks to enable efficient use of natural resources and promote up-cycling of wastes across all sectors of the economy is still under process and not finalised. The National Public Procurement Policy with some elements of sustainability is also not finalised yet and under consultation. The country needs such policies at the earliest to create a more substantial impact on SCP.

Strengthening waste management system

Solid and other waste management systems are well designed in the country through one of the government's active programmes – the Swachh Bharat Scheme. The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs is implementing the programmes with the urban local bodies in the states. However, there is are various categories of waste, such as plastic, biomedical waste, hazardous waste, that come under the departments like health, industries, science & technology, etc. Other than local municipal bodies, no other state governments are much concerned about waste management. There has to be an inter-departmental coordination committee to strengthen the waste management system at the state level.

More importantly, India should attempt to establish itself as a world leader in a circular economy and allocate sufficient resources to demonstrate ways of reducing and recycling waste resources genuinely.

Policy on Sustainable Procurement

India does not have a comprehensive national policy on SPP. Nothing concrete emerged even after a Task Force on SPP was constituted recently by the Department of Expenditure with the following objectives, i.e., review international best practices in the area of SPP; inventorise the current status of SPP in India across government organisations; prepare a draft Sustainable Procurement Action Plan; recommend an initial set of product/service categories (along with their specifications) where SPP can be implemented.

According to a statement made by the Minister of State for Finance in Lok Sabha last year, six Task Force meetings have been held wherein SPP issues were discussed with stakeholders. However, no Action Plan could be developed as preparation for the same is a complex process, requiring balancing all stakeholders' interests.

A government lead in adopting a green public procurement policy would send a strong message to the business community. It could create demonstration and ripple effects, not just in public procurement but also indirectly in companies' private consumption. Small and medium-sized enterprises stand to benefit since they are often at the forefront of innovation in developing and marketing environmentally friendly products. Most importantly, the government can demonstrate sustainable and environmental leadership, raise public awareness of the benefits of environment-friendly products, help sustainable innovation and technologies, reduce GHG emissions, and encourage economic development by fostering markets for environmentally preferable products.

Consumer Information Programmes

Consumers cannot decide about product selection in the absence of consumer information regarding the products and their impact on the environment. There is a need to provide the consumer with all the relevant information about the products they consume. This should include information like carbon footprint, the number of pesticides present, and the product's life cycle. India also needs to work hard on reviving Ecomark. Without an ecolabelling scheme or voluntary third-party certification, it is really hard to verify vendors' environmental claims while making a purchase.

Increasing Awareness

CSOs, consumer groups and environmental organisations should take the lead to organise the awareness programme for common people and to make them aware of the need for sustainable consumption to protect the environment. While many people like the idea of sustainability, only very few consumers support it. This is so as people often find it difficult to relate their consumption habits to large-scale global warming and climate change issues. Therefore, the consumers need to be well informed, empowered and realise that their actions make a difference. Overall SDG-12 implementation should include civil societies and consumer organisations in the implementation of SDG-12 programmes, which will help promote the concept of SCP and engage common consumers in the process.

Likewise, most government officials lacked awareness of SDGs. This means there is also a lack of awareness of the active role in addressing the core issues under SDG and SDG-12. In most states, knowledge and understanding of the SDGs rests among a few selected government officials, failing to trickle down to other local authorities and junior officials in the department. Therefore, the importance of raising awareness among all stakeholders should never be overlooked and taken under high priority.

Coordination

Various government departments are working at the national, state level to further down at the district and grassroots levels. Government agencies and departments are working tirelessly and different working groups are constituted for different SDG targets. The Department of Environment deals with SDG-12 in most of the states along with few other departments as well. Similarly, task forces are formed at the district level by involving various departments.

Differing agendas, lack of coordination and integrated policy approaches among these departments and officials, including lack of information exchange among the staffs, seriously hinder and even counteract countries' efforts towards achieving SDGs. The Government should clearly state that all ministries, offices, and even individuals depend on each other to meet specific targets and the SDGs.

Engagement of Consumers

As consumers play a vital role in achieving SCP targets through consumption, there has to be a consultation mechanism with the consumers at different levels. Regular feedback from consumers can be crucial to design the strategy and plan for action. Such feedback and inputs are being taken in various government programmes, which make them effective. There should be some platform where common consumers can be engaged in providing their feedback.

Enhancing Capacity

Implementation of the schemes or programme that comes under SDG-12 is with the department at the state level such as urban local bodies, consumer department, etc. These departments are overburden with the day-to-day work and also managing the work with limited staff. The larger issue is the capacity of concerned officials at the department level is not enhanced as per the need, that is why the indicators at various levels are not able to be fulfilled. There have to be some SDG-specific capacity-building programmes implemented, which will help in implementing SGD12.

Summing Up

India has a history of low carbon footprint and lifestyle. Because traditional practices that are sustainable and environment-friendly continue to be a part of people's lives, technology and innovation have taken over such practices considerably. Most of the recommendations listed above in this study, if well addressed, could help establish India as the world leader in SCP. India's step for achieving SDGs means a lot to the world, as it has the second largest population in the world. Therefore, India 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 country and beyond.

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