

Dialogue on ‘Greening Priority Sectors for Sustainable Economic Recovery in Bihar’

Development Alternatives in collaboration with the Centre for Studies on Environment and Climate at the Asian Development Research Institute, Patna, organised a 'Green Dialogue' on 27 July, 2022 in Patna, Bihar. This was convened as part of a series of dialogues, focused on 'Greening the Priority Sectors for Sustainable Economic Recovery in Bihar'. The chief guest for the event was Dr S. Siddharth (IAS), Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Finance, Government of Bihar.

The discussion aimed to brainstorm on the following two goals:

- Facilitating green growth and recovery in the priority sectors, such as industries, agriculture, and allied sectors through technological and financial innovations, and skills enhancement to achieve the targets of low carbon pathways and sustainable development goals
- Encouraging policy frameworks to mainstream issue-based budgetary, financial, and investment planning in the existing fiscal scope

The Green Dialogue workshop witnessed representation from the Department of Agriculture and Finance, Government of Bihar, Bihar Pollution Control Board, and independent organisations such as the Bihar Industry Association, Development Environergy Services Ltd, and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), New Delhi.

Dr Prabhat P. Ghosh, Member Secretary, ADRI, gave the welcome address and stated that Bihar was the first state in India to introduce a Green Budget Framework. Additionally, he mentioned that this had a positive spillover to other states as well. To set the background for the session, Gitika Goswami, Associate Vice President, Development Alternatives Group, provided the background of what is meant by Green Recovery and Green Economy.

The workshop comprised two sessions – the first session focused on technological and financial innovations in agriculture, industry, and allied sectors. During the session, Srikant Kasturi, Senior Consultant, Development Environergy Services Ltd discussed about the technological innovations. He emphasised that the material footprint of India is lesser than other countries; however, this is likely to increase in the near future. In this context, some of the opportunities for greening could be in supply side, demand side, and management interventions, he mentioned.



Key speakers and experts at the panel discussion

This was followed by a lecture on financial innovation by Dr Shailly Kedia, Senior Fellow and Associate Director and Dr Saheli Das, Associate Fellow, TERI. They focused on the need to understand concepts such as sustainable, green, and climate finance. They pointed out that the green recovery should be tackled through six pillars, including economy, infrastructure, system, demography, and demand sectors. Furthermore, they gave the example of the EU Green Recovery Taxonomy, and how their policy should be such that it positively impacts one pillar with no negative impact on the other five pillars.

Dr S. Siddharth remarked on the vision, strategy, and priorities of Bihar's Green Budget. He explained that Bihar was the first state to launch a Green Budget with a vision to calculate the positive impact on the environment of each department. He also pointed out that as of now, Bihar's Green Budget is

an accounting procedure where they have only calculated the gross budget. But the aim is to navigate through and come up with a budget that is holistic and calculates the net green budget, he informed.

The second session of the workshop was a panel discussion. In this, Dr N. Sarvanan Kumar (IAS), Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Government of Bihar, pointed out that the agricultural mechanism in Bihar is generating crop residue at a large scale, leading to pollution hazards due to stubble burning. Hence, crop residue management is essential. He further stated that both, in situ and ex situ strategies are being adopted by Bihar for climate resilience of the agricultural sector.

Further, S. Chandrasekar (IFS), Member Secretary, Bihar State Pollution Control Board, pointed out that Bihar is growing at a rate higher than the national average. To support achieving the net zero emissions target, the state needs to ensure proper policy and optimal resource allocation while ensuring minimal negative impact on the economy.

Arun Agrawal, President, Bihar Industries Association, explained that while the policies in Bihar are supportive of the green transition of micro and small enterprises, there is still a need of rigorous handholding at each stage, especially since there are many first-time entrepreneurs in the state.

The workshop was attended by around 50 participants from diverse background including government departments, civil society organisations, academia, voluntary associations, etc. The outcomes of this workshop are being used to develop a plan of action to take the agenda of a green and inclusive economy further by improving the financing ecosystem for key potential sectors like agriculture and industry.



Glimpse of the attendees roundtable discussion at the workshop