switchasia SCP FACILITY

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COUNTRY PROFILE

INDIA

India National Context for SCP and Connection to the Global Agenda

India's rapid development of the past 30 years has lifted hundreds of millions of its more than 1,4 billion population out of extreme poverty. Meanwhile, many of the challenges relating to SDG 12, Responsible Consumption and Production, are magnified in India. This is due to its large population size and low prioritisation of environmental protection in the context of its 6-7% GDP growth in the past decade. India today is the third-largest carbon emitter worldwide. Its per capita emissions at 2 metric tons / year are below the global average, which can be partly explained by the fact that still more than 200 million people can be considered poor. Yet due to its sheer size, the motto "grow now, clean up later" cannot apply in India any longer, and the highly detrimental effects of environmental damages on health and prosperity are already visible today – for example, air and water pollution levels are high, especially in industrial and urban regions.

Climate change threatens the development progress made, as single events such as droughts or thunderstorms and longer-term changes, for example in monsoon patterns, become more visible. Due to India's geographic diversity, its adaptation endeavours are complex. With more than 50 million Indian households in the past decades having moved up into the middle class, and many more projected to join, consumption patterns modelled by Western industrialised societies need to be urgently reshaped in India if climate mitigation is expected to have serious long-term impacts.

India has numerous policies and strategies relevant to Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), governed by various ministries. The country is part of international initiatives and agreements, including the Paris Agreement and the SDGs as well as the 10 Years Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP) process. With its National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) from 2008 as part of the international process governed by the UNFCCC, India committed to eight government missions many of which are of relevance in the context of SCP. Other important policies include the National Environment Policy (2006); the National Forest Policy (last updated draft: 2018), the National Manufacturing Policy (2011), the National Mineral Policy (2008; 2019) and the Strategy on Resource Efficiency (2017, with the support of the EU). Additional relevant policy initiatives quoted by a recent publication on supporting India's SDG 12 Monitoring and Reporting conducted by SWITCH-Asia RPAC include its Zero-Defect, Zero-Effect (ZED), Ecomark Labelling Scheme, Perform, Achieve and Trade Scheme (PAT), National Clean Energy and Environment Fund (NCEEF). An advisory body, the Resource Efficiency Cell, under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) is tasked with supporting its implementation. All policies and strategies share a high level of ambition. The central government body NITI Aayog is in charge of overseeing the SDG implementation and publishes regular updates by way of a dashboard, including reporting on several SDG 12 indicators.

In the context of the SWITCH-Asia Programme, 22 grant projects have been implemented since 2009, covering a wide range of themes, from eco-innovation and entrepreneurship building to consumer education. Out of these, eight projects are currently operating. All projects profit from India's vivid NGO ecosystem, with various national and local organisations acting as implementing partners.

CHALLENGES

Policy Ecosystem

- As a geographically and economically diverse federal country, national policies need to cover a broad spectrum, and be cognisant of interconnectedness and complexity. State-led strategies and legislation are diverse and make coordination and monitoring difficult. There are many national and federal policies of direct relevance to SCP. The overall strategies of the current government mention the importance of SDG achievement in India's development trajectory. There is no overarching commitment specifically to the shift towards SCP or a government institution acting as coordinating and mainstreaming agency.
- Data gathering on SCP is done by NITI Aayog on all SDGs including SDG 12. Countrywide data gathering and analysis is challenging, as there is no clear standardisation for SDG 12 and other SCP related targets since many SCP-relevant activities are carried out by informal sector.
- In its voluntary national review of 2020, NITI Aayog stated the importance of improving resource efficiency of several sectors, including waste management and recycling, building and construction, transport, and public procurement as essential for achieving greater impact on SDG 12. It also showed the large regional and state differences with regard to SDG 12 achievements.
- Partnerships exist across sectors to conduct research on resource efficient technologies, between business, industry and academia, but more scaling up and impact are needed.
- Communication on SCP-relevant goals and practices exists as national programmes on visible issues. These comprehensive programmes are complemented by initiatives at state and local level which target predominantly individual consumption behaviour or singular issues. Both general public and industry players are often not aware of the systemic shift required in the field of SCP and the necessary and interconnected changes in policies, production and consumption patterns.

SCP Practices

- Sustainable consumption is of high relevance in India and has received considerable attention from national, state and local governments. For example, Delhi was one of the first cities worldwide to ban single-use plastic bags. At the same time, a more comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between consumption, production and economic growth and the potential for decoupling and of circularity is in a nascent stage among key stakeholders.
- In the sustainable production field, India's formal collection and recycling rate is relatively low across waste sectors compared to global averages. Traditional industrial or agricultural practices often integrate circularity, and materials of high value (e.g., metals, PET bottles) are recycled in unknown amounts in the informal sector. It is reported that this is oftentimes done under unsafe und environmental unsound conditions.
- India's resource use has been described as inefficient across sectors – particularly energy and water supply are often outstretched by demand, due to aging machinery and practices that do not prioritise efficiency. This applies to both among large-state owned enterprises

and small-scale industries. Circularity is currently only rarely used as concept for business strategy development by companies, as linear business models are considered more profitable and of less risk.

- Despite predominantly stringent pollution legislation at federal and state-level and existent state-level implementation agencies, many companies continue to contaminate soil and water with unsafe practices. Oversight is not coherently and effectively implemented, exposing workers and communities to unhealthy work and living conditions. Indian companies can adhere to strict supply chain rules regarding health and environmental standards if required by international clients.

PRIORITIES

In addition to responding to the challenges, there are key activities for promoting SCP efforts and the long-term success of the SDG implementation including:

- Aligning SCP-related activities with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and acknowledging the importance of SCP as key factor for realising SDG 12 and many other SDGs.
- Mainstreaming the concept of SCP in the existing policy and regulatory framework.
- Exploring a policy framework that assures wellbeing and continued development while reducing environmental impacts of consumption and production, e.g., through new lifecycle practices.
- Strengthening initiatives to promote green public procurement.
- Key sectors that require attention include: energy efficiency, sustainable housing, sustainable transport and waste-to-energy solutions, hazardous waste management, industrial water reuse and reduction (including reduction in unsustainable ground water use).
- Improving sustainability along the entire supply chain, from producers to the final consumer. Regulation of producers and awareness among consumers about sustainable consumption choices.
- 10 YFP priorities: Natural Resource Management and Food Systems, (2) Resource Efficiency, particularly with regard to reducing import dependency for the majority of the 'most critical' materials, (3) Sustainable Buildings and Construction, particularly in view of increasing urbanisation, (4) Public Procurement, (5) Sustainable Tourism.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase international cooperation, facilitating technology transfer and financing innovation and implementing key pilot initiatives in the above priority areas or challenges identified.
- Continue engaging with international processes regarding SCP, including 10YFP and SDG monitoring; development of National Action Plan on SCP.
- Sharing of experiences, including the "Indian model of localisation" on (a) creating institutional ownership, (b) establishing a robust review and monitoring system, (c) developing capacities for SDG planning and monitoring and (d) promoting a "whole of society" approach, specifically for SDG 12.

GRANT PROJECTS IN INDIA

Ongoing

SWITCHING TO GREEN & FAIR FASHION

Advancing sustainable production and consumption in cotton and textile value chains

Theme: Textiles and Leather

India

Ongoing

PROMOTING CIRCULARITY IN THE TAMIL NADU LEATHER CLUSTERS FOR SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Facilitating adoption of CE for MSME tanneries in Tamil Nadu

Theme: Textiles and Leather

India

Ongoing

PROMISE

Prevention Of Marine Litter In The Lakshadweep Sea

Theme: Plastics

India, Maldives, Sri Lanka

Ongoing

PROTOPRINT

Promoting Socio-economic Transformation by Empowering Informal Waste Pickers for Production of 3D Printing Filaments in Pune

Theme: Plastics

India

Ongoing

SWITCHING INDIA'S CONSUMPTION TO FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE GOODS

Contributing to sustainable development and poverty reduction in India

Theme: Multi-industry

India

Ongoing

EFFECTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MSME TANNING COMPANIES IN THE KOLKATA LEATHER CLUSTER

Theme: Textiles and Leather

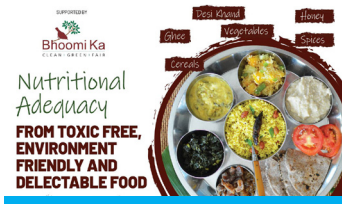
India

Ongoing

PROMOTE BAMBOO MSME CLUSTERS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Promoting bamboo as a sustainable resource and generating green jobs

India



Ongoing

BHOOMI KA

Promoting sustainable consumption and production systems for safe and organic foods in India

Theme: Agri-food

India


Completed

GOING GREEN

Promoting economic competitiveness of the Indian textile industry and artisans' well-being

Theme: Textiles and Leather

India


Completed

AGRIBUSINESS ACCESS TO FINANCE

Access to Finance for Sustainable Production and Consumption of Agribusiness MSMEs in India

Theme: Agri-food

India


Completed

WOOD PROCESSING AND TRADE

Sustainable trade promoted to wood processing SMEs through forest and trade networks

China, India, Vietnam


Completed

WEEE RECYCLE

Establishing e-waste channels to enhance environment friendly recycling

Theme: Electrical and Electronics

India


Completed

SUSTEX

Sustainable Textiles for sustainable development in India

Theme: Textiles and Leather

India


Completed

PRO-SUSTAIN

Promoting fair trade and sustainable consumption in India

Theme: Multi-industry

India


Completed

MSME CLUSTERS

Scaling up Sustainable Development of MSME Clusters in India

Theme: Multi-industry

India


Completed

ECO-JUTE

Jute: An eco-friendly alternative for a sustainable future

Theme: Textiles and Leather

Bangladesh, India

Completed

LEAD PAINT ELIMINATION

Market leaders eliminate lead paint in seven Asian countries

Theme: Multi-industry

Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand


Completed

GREEN RETAIL INDIA

Greening the food and beverage supply chain in India

Theme: Agri-food

India


Completed

ACIDLOOP

Sustainable production through Market penetration of closed loop technologies in the metal finishing industry

Theme: Multi-industry

India


Completed

WOMEN-CENTRED ICS

Improved Cook Stoves for sustained adoption at scale

Theme: Cook Stove

India


Completed

ACMFN

Promoting sustainable cleaner development

Theme: Multi-industry

China, India, Indonesia


Completed

INDTUK - SUSTAINABLE AUTO-RICKSHAW

Switching to a sustainable auto-rickshaw system

Theme: Transport and Logistics

India