

### Concept Note

## **The Air We Share : Ensuring Blue Skies in Jharkhand**

07 September 2022, Ranchi

### **Motivation**

Air pollution is one of the biggest challenges of the Anthropocene Era. It doesn't only affect human health, but negatively impacts the climate, economy and the general environment. Air pollution is a global concern attributed to the nature of long-range transport and other properties that can induce climate change, biodiversity loss, social and gender parity, and economic development. Some specific air pollutants, such as particulate matter (PM), black carbon (BC), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and ground-level ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), are also short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) that play significant roles in altering the micro and regional climate as well. Due to a closer link between air pollution and climate change, an integrated approach is required to resolve both issues to achieve significant co-benefits.

Jharkhand is a resource-rich state with several natural and anthropogenic activities that can impact the local and regional air quality. Activities associated with mineral extraction and utilization, agro-forestry, and small, medium and large industries not only affect the air quality but are also affected by the alteration in the air pollution-induced climate variability. A wider range of geographical features in Jharkhand i.e. plains and uplands over the north-east and north-west Jharkhand, highlands over central and western Jharkhand, and a larger fraction of elevated lands over the northern and southern part of the state also suggests the role of meteorology and topography in driving local air quality. Moreover, the spatio-temporal variability in economic activities and land use also affects the state's air quality.

A robust roadmap for developing and implementing clean air action plans for various districts of Jharkhand relies on a concrete understanding of the source and their respective strengths of air pollution. The state's preparedness for short-term changes in air quality, air pollution hotspot identification and the development of effective strategies for air pollution mitigation largely depends on the synergistic approach using science-based evidence, stakeholder consultations and the development of a state-specific sustainable roadmap for air quality management.

On the commemoration of the 3rd International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies, as set out in the UN General Assembly resolution 74/212, the state of Jharkhand also acknowledges that improving air quality can supplement its existing policies and strategies for climate change mitigation and adaptation. On account of this, a dedicated workshop is being organised by Ranchi Municipal Corporation (RMC) and Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED) to bring the key stakeholders of the complex socio-economic, research and policymaking community of the state of Jharkhand on a common platform to brainstorm the idea of building a roadmap for ensuring blue skies over Jharkhand. It is conceptualized by keeping the idea of integrating both the challenges of air quality and climate change over the state. The idea of this workshop is based on the following broader goals and objectives as mentioned below.

### **Objectives of the Workshop**

- To understand the state of air quality, key sources and drivers of air pollution over the state.
- To discuss local administration's role in enabling existing air quality management policies and challenges experienced by them. Moreover, to also brainstorm over the development of city-specific strategies for clean air action and micro-action plans.
- To discuss the role of regulatory agencies of Jharkhand responsible for air quality management towards their coordination with the other stakeholders as well as national level regulatory agencies for air quality.
- To integrate the efforts of research, policy interventions and financial mechanisms for ensuring cleaner air for Jharkhand.