







Concept Note

Regional Conference

Perspectives for Low Carbon Pathways and Future Readiness

Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and West Bengal are among India's most resource-rich yet climate-vulnerable regions. Together, they play a critical role in ensuring the country's energy security, driving economic growth, and promoting inclusive development. Despite significant development challenges, these states are making substantial progress towards sustainability by prioritizing climate adaptation and mitigation efforts. To safeguard their future and lead India's green transition, these regions must embrace green development strategies and enhance their resilience to climate change. Building a sustainable, future-ready framework will not only protect natural resources but also secure their economic and environmental well-being.

Resource-Rich yet Climate-Vulnerable Region

Falling under the eastern part of India, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and West Bengal collectively hold a significant share of the nation's natural resources, with about two-thirds of coal and iron ore reserves located here. These states also possess large shares of major minerals, including bauxite, aluminium, copper, manganese, tungsten, mica, and several critical minerals. With a robust industrial base consisting of large, medium, small, and micro enterprises, this region propels India's growth trajectory.

However, despite resource abundance, these states are highly vulnerable to climate change due to geographical factors, socio-economic conditions, and reliance on natural resources. Jharkhand ranks 1st in India with the highest vulnerability index of 0.674, followed by Odisha in 3rd place with 0.633, Chhattisgarh in 4th place with 0.623, and West Bengal in 8th place with 0.592.

These four states have seen substantial growth in CO2 emissions, reflecting the expansion of their industrial activities. From 2000 to 2022, Chhattisgarh's emissions increased by nearly 210%, Odisha's by 218%, Jharkhand's by 87%, and West Bengal's by 73%. In 2022, Chhattisgarh led with 255 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent, followed by Odisha (232 million tonnes), West Bengal (209 million tonnes), and Jharkhand (140 million tonnes).

These trends underscore the escalating environmental impact and the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to manage future emissions while supporting industrial growth.

Imperative of Energy Security and Growth Trajectory

As part of its updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), India has committed to reducing the emissions intensity of its GDP by 45% from 2005 levels by 2030 and achieving 50% cumulative electric power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources. The Sustainable Development Goals and these climate ambitions call for recalibrating strategies. Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha are already exploring renewable energy options, such as solar power projects and bioenergy initiatives, signalling a shift toward a more sustainable energy future. Chhattisgarh, in particular, shows strong potential for expanding its solar capacity, which could position it as a leader in renewable energy. Additionally, West Bengal's extensive river network presents significant opportunities for hydroelectric power, further diversifying the energy mix.

Need for Green Development and Future Readiness

Promoting green development and enhancing climate resilience is imperative for the future of these states. This involves diversifying their economies, advancing sustainable industries, and investing in clean energy technologies. The pathway to industrial decarbonization offers several strategies, including resource efficiency, transitioning to cleaner energies and technologies, and incorporating best practices. Initiatives that encourage public-private partnerships, stimulate innovation in renewable energy, promote green investment, and strengthen climate-resilient infrastructure are crucial. Empowering local communities through capacity building and inclusive approaches can significantly enhance impact on the ground.

Regional Conference and Its Objectives

Set in this context, a regional conference titled 'Perspectives and Learning for Low Carbon Development Pathways and Future-Readiness' has been organized by the Task Force-Sustainable Just Transition (Government of Jharkhand) and its technical partner, the Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED) on 27 September 2024 in Ranchi.

The conference aims to foster cross-learning on critical initiatives to strengthen climate resilience and promote low-carbon development in the region. It strives to serve as a platform to facilitate dialogue, cooperation, and regional understanding, focusing on the following objectives:

- Discuss pathways for energy transition, decarbonization, and low-carbon development to enhance the region's readiness for a sustainable future.
- Explore key strategies for reducing emissions, including developing green hydrogen ecosystems and advancing sustainable mobility solutions.
- Share lessons and experiences on sustainable livelihood opportunities and innovative economic development approaches, emphasizing the transition towards a greener economy.

To sum up, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and West Bengal have the potential to spearhead India's shift towards a sustainable and inclusive growth paradigm. By managing their natural resources responsibly, scaling up investments in renewable energy, and implementing robust climate adaptation strategies, these states can pave the way for economic prosperity that is resilient and environmentally sustainable, securing the well-being of their populations for generations to come.

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