

Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships for Sustainable Forest Management and Livelihood

As part of

CRB Annual Conference: India & Sustainability Standards (ISS 2021)

Date: 28th October, 2021

Duration: 15.45 – 17.15 hrs.

with co-hosts: Bharti Institute of Public Policy, Indian School of Business



1. Background

The Indian forest landscape provides a unique opportunity to create an economy that is based on responsible value chains. Forests continue to play a pivotal role in national development, be it food security, poverty alleviation and creation of sustainable livelihood opportunities. In 2020, during and after the lockdowns and economic downturn, non-timber forest produce (NTFP) collection in India became a significant income generating tool, as workers migrated to their home states. The Ministry of Home Affairs supported the forest-based economy by relaxing rules on harvesting, processing, packaging, sale and marketing of these products. It resulted in crores of income for few states, as there was also subsequent hike in the minimum support price (MSP). But it was not something that could be sustained due to absence of strong market linkages as well as a robust value chain. To build economies of scale, business and communities need to collaborate. It is certainly inevitable for public and private sector to evolve in response to uncertainties and a consumer base growingly insistent of sustainable products. In light of these events and opportunities, relevant businesses are required to come together to invest in dialog and action that presents steady finance and livelihood opportunities. “Investing in Forests” an insight report by the World Economic Forum, urges businesses to value the local community leadership that manage the forests and its resources.

The ISB-BIPP initiative aims to enhance the value created in forests by encouraging businesses to see communities as entrepreneurs while procuring forest produce. We are building strong local institutions, capable leadership, and an institutional design in several pilot clusters across India. Our initiative provides a unique opportunity for the private sector to procure forest-based industrial raw material from local communities.

2. Linkage with ISS 2021 Theme

This year's session will focus on developing it further in consultation with businesses by bringing specific business stakeholders that are already working with communities and the ones interested in discussing a responsible forest economy. The forest governance team at BIPP-ISB and CRB aims to bolster government's efforts in implementing community tenure security, in association with stakeholders to set up a framework that also contributes towards the achievement of the SDG goals (SDG 1, SDG12, SDG13, SDG8) and national priorities of 'sabka saath, sabka vikas'. During the previous ISS conference co-hosted by ISB, the roundtable 'Towards a forest-based economy' was organized. The Conference report for last year may be accessed using the following link:

<https://www.sustainabilitystandards.in/ISS-2020-Post-Conference-Report-Final.pdf>

3. Objectives of the Session

The session will be curated for business leaders, civil servants, and industry experts to develop arguments for a forest-based economy with the specific aim of highlighting:

- Opportunities for short- and long- term market linkages with communities as suppliers.
- Potential forest landscapes for procurement.

The key questions to moderate the session will be:

- What could be the road to **responsible sourcing**?
- Advantages of adopting a responsible value chain to procure forest-based raw material.
- Factors to be prioritised while procuring/sourcing from communities.

4. Session Output

The session will create a framework to mobilize the private sector to energize a forest-based economy through an ISB-C4RB led Working Group.

5. Structure of the Session

The session will be conducted in a panel discussion format. Each panelist will bring a specific perspective aligned to their area of work/expertise and the session objectives.

6. Programme outline

Time	Agenda Items (Indicate topics, speakers/panelists, chairs)
15.45 – 15.55	Welcome, Introduction and Opening Remarks By CRB
15.55 – 16.55	Panel Discussion

	<i>Moderated by: Dr. Ashwini Chhatre, Executive Director BIPP-ISB</i>
16.55 – 17.10	Q&A
17.10 – 17.15	Closing Remarks and Way Forward: CRB and BIPP-ISB

7. Speakers Profiles

- Ms. Kanika Pal: South Asia Head, Community Investments & Sustainability Programmes
- Mr. Dr. Deep Narayan Pandey, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
- Mr. Ashish Saraf, President Manorama Industries
- Mr. Kunal Sekhar from, General Manager – Raw Material, BILT GRAPHIC PAPER PRODUCTS LIMITED

8. Co-host(s) Profile(s)

Bharti Institute of Public Policy aims to lead education and research in the domain of public policy. The institute stands tall as one of India's eminent public policy think tanks' engaging with eminent policy makers and providing them with critical, data driven evidence, research and analysis of relevant and critical concerns. The institute works on policy challenges across diverse domains, primarily Agriculture & Food, Environment, Education, Finance, Governance and Digital Identity.