



# WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2023

MAINSTREAMING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

February 22-24, 2023  
New Delhi



TATA STEEL FOUNDATION

## A Tata Steel Foundation-TERI Initiative

Phase V

# Younger Collectives for Greener Future

---

## THEMATIC TRACK SUMMARY

Venue: Dr R K Pachauri Conference Hall

Date: 23 February 2023

Time: 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM (IST)

### Suggested Citation

World Sustainable Development Summit (2023), Younger Collectives for Greener Future, Thematic Track Summary (Rapporteur: Lovish Raheja), New Delhi: The Energy and Resources Institute.

## Actionable Messages

**Message 1:** Climate action has to learn from, be driven by, and be a conscious part of the lives of those who are likely to experience the most profound impacts, i.e., children living in the remote regions of India. They must be given the best access and resources for building resilience to save their future.

**Message 2:** Successful environment educational models must be locally and vocally adapted to build capacities of the future generations to fight the ongoing climate crisis. The key to the transformation would lie in how education is being imparted; hence, the focus should be on addressing the pedagogical issues and providing appropriate resources at all levels.

**Message 3:** The partnership approach in the Green Schools has been the key to transition and behavioural transformation. It is essential to develop local, state-level, national, regional, and global partnerships to initiate and implement sustainable solutions for achieving the vision of SDG 17.

**Message 4:** The 'net zero' approach should not only focus on becoming carbon neutral in terms of atmospheric emissions, but it must also be applied to minimize the water footprint and biodiversity loss by deploying the modern tools and techniques of conservation, so that the future generation can also harness the true sense of life from our beloved nature.

**Message 5:** Environment education is not something to be preached but practised. Children and youngsters can be the agents of change and spread the word in wider communities. The Green School Initiative has demonstrated this in a practical way, and such initiatives must be adaptively replicated across and beyond the country to prepare for a greener future.

## Narrative

The climate urgency is deepening, as is the need for climate action at all levels. The future generation must be ready to face the upcoming challenges. The Green School by Tata Steel Foundation and TERI is one such initiative which was highlighted in the thematic track session on “Younger Collectives for Greener Future”, which was conducted as part of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) - the annual flagship initiative of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). About 950 participants attended this session, which aimed to highlight the actions being undertaken by students under Phase V of the Green School Initiative, which works toward awareness creation and action projects at school/community levels to develop solutions for a sustainable environment. This was the only thematic session where children were the speakers, who shared action points for a greener future.

The session was inaugurated by the opening remarks from **Mr Sourav Roy, CEO, Tata Steel Foundation**, who put forth the ambitions and vision of TSF as a socially responsible venture. He said, “Climate action has to learn from, be driven by, and be a conscious part of the lives of those who are likely to experience the most profound impacts, i.e., children living in the remote regions of India. This has been the guiding spirit behind the Green School programme and many other efforts of the Tata Steel Foundation. It is a matter of immense pride and gratitude that our children got a platform at the WSDS, and we hope their spirit resonated with those who heard them today.”

Two panel discussions were organized during the session, where the children from the experienced and early schools of The Green School showcased their activities and achievements for a greener future.

**Dr Neha, Senior Fellow, TERI**, moderated the first panel in which the Green Skippers from experienced Green Schools highlighted their activities concerning the constitution of Environment Management Committee (EMC), Waste Recycling, Water Conservation, Green Artwork and Environment Impact Review (EIR) of Water and Waste, and much more. The panel discussion revealed how these schools are contributing towards making their schools and communities greener and ready for future challenges due to environmental degradation. Dr Neha also mentioned, “The Green School Initiative has successfully promoted environmental consciousness amongst the students. The six experienced Green Schools brought 36 panchayats for the steps for a greener future; that is the power of The Green School Initiative.”

The second panel, moderated by **Ms Khusbhu Prajapati, Manager, Education, TSF**, discussed the partnership between experienced and early green schools. The discussion highlighted the true sense of SDG 17 concerning partnership for the goals, where experienced Green Schools’ collaboration with the early schools was demonstrated by their students (Green Skippers and Green Buddies) for building mutual capacities for a greener future.

The panel discussions were followed by a talk delivered by **Ms Smita Agarwal, Head of Education, TSF**, which touched upon how to mainstream green education through their education signature programme, which has reached about 6000 schools and the Green School Initiative, which is constantly evolving. The talk specifically highlighted the pedagogical ways for sensitizing children towards the issue of biodiversity loss.

The most thought-provoking part of the session was the dialogue on a greener tomorrow between the youth and global leaders, where young children from schools showed their curiosity towards learning about the present scenario and future actions for sustainability and climate action. **Mr A.K. Bhatnagar, General Manager, OMQ Division, Tata Steel; Mr Manish Mishra, Chief Corporate Affairs, Tata Steel; Mr Amitava Bhattacharyya, Distinguished Fellow, TERI; and Dr Kavita Sharma, Professor, NCERT** addressed the queries raised by the students. Addressing the questions, Mr Mishra appreciated the initiatives and efforts these young Green Skippers were making. Furthermore, addressing one of the queries,

Mr Bhatnagar highlighted the efforts made by industries to transition towards sustainability. Moreover, Dr Sharma touched upon the formal integration of environmental values in the educational curriculum, which is already happening, and she stressed upon pedagogy and innovative ways of teaching.

Finally, the way forward was explained by Dr Neha, who thanked the dignitaries and the young speakers and said, “The partnership approach in the Green Schools is the key to transition and behavioural transformation in a collaborative way and achieving sustainability in the true sense.”

## Making Words Count @WSDS 2023

“	<p>Climate action has to learn from, be driven by, and be a conscious part of the lives of those who are likely to experience the most profound impacts, i.e., children living in the remote regions of India. This has been the guiding spirit behind the Green School programme and many other efforts of Tata Steel Foundation. It is a matter of immense pride and gratitude that our children got a platform at the WSDS, and we hope that their spirit resonated with those who heard them today.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Mr. Sourav Roy</b> <b>CEO, Tata Steel Foundation</b></p>
“	<p>Appropriate disincentive and punishment structures along with incentives and motivation for collective actions are very much needed to make people realize the urgency of the issue. Brand Ambassadorship Influence could play a vital role in delivering the crucial messages and bringing behavioural transformation in the communities.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Mr. Amitava Bhattacharyya</b> <b>Distinguished Fellow, TERI</b></p>
“	<p>Environmental actions of any type need to be local and vocal in any spatial and temporal context. For the environment, every drop counts, a bucket of polluted water might not attract attention, but polluting ponds and rivers makes us realize the problem in the buckets.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Ms. Anjali Patra</b> <b>Green Skipper, RBC Girls, Joda</b></p>
“	<p>The Green School Initiative is not only transforming the schools but also helping in transforming communities through its activities. Children are more sensitive towards environmental values than the adults and therefore, inspiring them to take actions and steps for conservation could prove to be the key driver of the positive behavioural change in the communities.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Ms. Smita Agrawal</b> <b>Head of Education, Tata Steel Foundation</b></p>
“	<p>Environmental education is not a separate subject to be taught and graded, it is provisioned to be delivered in an infused way. It is not something to be preached but practised. The key lies in transforming the pedagogical strategy rather than the textbooks and learning materials, and The Green School initiative is making commendable efforts, and it is visible through the work shared by the kids.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Dr. Kavita Sharma</b> <b>Professor, NCERT</b></p>
“	<p>Tata Group has pledged to achieve net zero by 2045 and all its industries have been aligned towards the goal. In the mining industry, for instance, we take the responsibility to return the land to the same state so that minimal loss of biodiversity, water, and air among others is caused.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Mr. Atul Kumar Bhatnagar</b> <b>General Manager, OMQ Division, Tata Steel</b></p>
“	<p>A rise in population and consumption is causing increased emissions; however, relevant stakeholders are now in action mode. Various initiatives like National Carbon Market, Emission Trading, and others could prove to be crucial in the fight against climate change. The Paris Accord in 2015 has been one of the most important initiatives taken for the transition towards sustainability.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Mr. Manish Mishra</b> <b>Chief Corporate Affairs, Tata Steel</b></p>
“	<p>The Green School Initiative has been successful in promoting environmental consciousness amongst the students. The six experienced Green Schools were able to bring 36 panchayats for the steps for a greener future. The partnership approach in the Green Schools is the key to transition and behavioural transformation in a collaborative way and achieving sustainability in the true sense.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Dr. Neha</b> <b>Senior Fellow, TERI</b></p>