

Economies for People and Planet



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Plenary Session

22nd September, 2017 | 10:00 am - 01:30 pm

Development Alternatives

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Economies for People and Planet: Plenary

22nd September, 2017

The global movement towards sustainable development has seen increasing participation from national governments, citizens and businesses with the recent collaborations on ***Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*** (popularly known as the Sustainable Development Goals). This has presented India with an opportune time to address its exceptional economic growth in conjunction to its present social inequalities and environmental injustices. Social inequalities in the country manifest themselves not simply through disproportionate income gains, but further through inequalities in access to basic needs, life opportunities and education. According to the World Economic Forum, female labour force participation in the economy currently stands at a low 36%. (*The Global Competitiveness Report 2015-16, 2015*) Similarly, the health of India's natural systems contradicts its claim to prosperity and growth. A study by the Forest Research Institute indicates that 60% of India's forests are in poor health with inadequate regeneration status. (FRI, 2017)

As the country achieves impressive growth in its Gross Domestic Product (7.1% in 2015-16, according to World Bank estimates), it must also acknowledge the need for a holistic, equitable and sustainable development paradigm. A fundamental shift in principles that govern our current understanding of development is imperative for such a progress to actualise. A Green Economy framework based on the following principles provides governments, businesses and civil society groups a concrete way for achieving such a transformation:

- Redefining development
- Increasing financial flows to green and fair actions
- Increasing people's access to natural and financial capitals
- Greening the economy's high impact sectors
- Valuing our natural systems

TARAGramYatra (TGY) is Development Alternative Group's annual flagship event, organised in partnership with leading research and action based development organisations. It seeks to nurture conversations and collaborations which work with a common aim of solving India's social, environmental and economic issues. On the concluding day of TGY 2017, the Plenary will identify challenges and solutions towards a green and fair economy through a multi-stakeholder group of speakers and guests. This will include development practitioners, activists, government officials, policy makers, academicians and experts, business persons and youth leaders. Experiences and learning on thematic tracks from the first two days of the Yatra in Madhya Pradesh will also be shared during the Plenary.

Keeping the current economic paradigm in view, the Plenary will seek to deliberate upon and look for answers to the following questions:

- What are the priorities of the Indian economy today and how do these impact its people and environment?
- What form should a green and fair economy take in India?
- What are the solutions (existing and probable) that could further our movement towards a green economy?
- What opportunities for collaboration amongst and within stakeholders does a transition towards green and fair economies present us with?

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Insights from this Plenary will contribute towards forming and realising India's narrative on Green Economy as policy and practice recommendations, and establishing opportunities for collaboration and sharing among various Green Economy actors. This will further accelerate the transformation required in our current economic systems, such that development and growth are no longer co-terminus, our natural systems are valued and societies and individuals are nurtured and invested in, rather than exploited.

TARA Machines and Tech Services (P) Ltd.: A Green Economy Solution



TARA Machines and Tech Services (P) Ltd. (TMTS), established in 2008, is a *social enterprise* of the Development Alternatives Group. It is a leading business solution provider for green building material, through small and medium scale enterprises. TMTS has innovated and designed technologies that use fly ash, a waste product of thermal power plants, to produce eco-friendly and low cost bricks. This has a tremendous potential for replication and scaling up as it requires only small-scale investments and has a steady demand from the construction and building sector. TMTS has installed fly ash units at over 100 locations across the country. Each unit produces 2.4 million bricks a year, consuming 3,600 tonnes of fly ash, and saving 7,200 tonnes of soil, 1,656 tonnes of CO₂, and 528 tonnes of coal, annually. This green solution generates livelihoods while helping India with its goal of providing affordable housing for all by 2022, thereby furthering India's transition to a green and fair economy.

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