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DAKSHIN Workshop

Enabling Circular Economy for a Sustainable Global South

11 April 2025

Report



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Concept Note

The collaborative workshop between DAKSHIN – Global South Centre of Excellence and the International Council for Circular Economy (ICCE), India, served as a platform to integrate global expertise with local knowledge and promote a unified approach to implementing circular economy practices across the Global South. The initiative aligns DAKSHIN's focus on South-South cooperation with ICCE's mission to advance circular economy principles globally.

The workshop underscored that traditional linear economic models have contributed to resource depletion, environmental degradation, and social inequality. At the same time, the Global South holds rich traditions of community innovation, indigenous knowledge, and resourcefulness that can be leveraged to build circular systems. It explored how circular economy approaches can help address pressing challenges such as resource scarcity, climate change, poverty, and the integration of the informal sector.

This webinar explored the potential of the circular economy to address critical development challenges in the Global South, such as:

- **Resource scarcity:** Circular models can optimize resource use, reduce waste, and promote resource independence.
- **Climate change:** Circular strategies can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from production and consumption.
- **Poverty and inequality:** Circular economy initiatives can create new economic opportunities, promote social inclusion, and improve livelihoods.
- **Informal sector integration:** Recognizing and integrating the informal sector is crucial for successful circular economy implementation in many Global South contexts.

Objectives of the workshop

- **Raise awareness:** Increase understanding of the circular economy concept and its relevance to the Global South.

- Share knowledge and best practices: Showcase successful circular economy initiatives and business models from across the Global South and the globe.
- Identify challenges and opportunities: Discuss the specific barriers and enabling factors for circular economy implementation in different contexts within the Global South.
- Foster collaboration: Create a platform for networking and collaboration among researchers, policymakers, businesses, and civil society organizations working on the circular economy in the Global South.

Agenda

4:30 pm - 4:35 pm	Welcome Remarks · Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi , Director General, RIS
4:35 pm - 4:45 pm	Keynote Presentation: Ms. Shalini Goyal Bhalla , Managing Director, International Council For Circular Economy (ICCE), India
4:45 pm - 5:20 pm	Panel Discussion: Special Remarks from Representatives of Global South Countries <i>Moderated by Mr. Piotr Barczak, Circular Economy Program Manager, African Circular Economy Network (ACEN) Foundation, The Netherlands</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Wekesa Zablon, Circular Economy Expert, Africa Circular Economy Network (ACEN), Kenya • Mr. Wale Arewa, Founder & CEO, Xperien, South Africa • Ms. Ni Lu Putu Yuniari, CEO, Aludra Impact & SIWA Impact, Indonesia • Mr. Pravashen Naidoo, Founder & MD, Ewaste Africa, South Africa
5:20 pm - 6:10 pm	Thematic Presentations by Experts <i>Moderated by Prof. Gulshan Sachdeva, Chief Coordinator, DAKSHIN - Global South Centre of Excellence, India</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing Circular Economy Initiatives - Ms. Neha Vyas, Sr, Environment Specialist, The World Bank • Circularity in Materials - Mr. Reza Bath, E-waste Management Expert, Indonesia • Knowledge Circularity - Prof. Shannon B. Olsson, Founder and Global Director, the echo network • Bio-Waste in the Wine Industry & Treatment Practices - Dr. Biljana Matevska, Program Manager, Center for Research and Policy Making (CRPM), North Macedonia • State of Circular Economy in Latin America - Dr. Glenn Aguilar, Central America Academy (CAA), Costa Rica • Circularity and Waste Management in Mauritius - Dr. Myriam Blin, Head, The Charles Telfair Centre, Mauritius
6:10 pm - 6:25 pm	Open Discussion
6:25 pm - 6:30 pm	Concluding Remarks · Prof. Gulshan Sachdeva , Chief Coordinator, DAKSHIN - Global South Centre of Excellence, India

Summary Report

DAKSHIN - Global South Centre of Excellence organized an online workshop on April 11, 2025, titled “*Enabling Circular Economy for a Sustainable Global South*,” in association with the International Council for Circular Economy (ICCE), India. This event, the tenth in the DAKSHIN workshop series, focused on the critical role of circular economy practices in advancing sustainability within the Global South.

Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director-General of RIS, inaugurated the session by stressing the need for stronger South-South collaboration in light of rising barriers to technology transfer and financing, which hinder progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He highlighted the immense potential of circular economies to drive sustainable growth and urged collective action in areas such as reuse, recycling, and repair throughout the Global South.

Ms. Shalini Goyal Bala, Managing Director of ICCE, shared various initiatives promoting circular economy principles, including decentralized waste management, the integration of the informal sector, and the creation of industry-specific frameworks. She underscored ICCE’s role in supporting the Global South through knowledge-sharing and emphasized the importance of ensuring equitable development.

A panel discussion, moderated by Mr. Piotr Barczak from the ACEN Foundation, Netherlands, addressed key issues such as regulatory frameworks, knowledge gaps, product design, and recycling infrastructure. The following panelists contributed valuable insights:

Mr. Wekesa Zablon, Circular Economy Expert at ACEN (Kenya), discussed challenges in waste recovery, particularly due to knowledge gaps and technological limitations. He called for improved recovery infrastructure, greater investment, tax incentives, and better product design and supply chains to enhance recycling viability.

Mr. Wale Arewa, CEO of Xperien (South Africa), highlighted trade challenges, focusing on the continued reliance on Western markets despite Africa’s access to 55 nations. He urged reflection on why Global South businesses continue to be drawn toward Western trade networks.

Ms. Ni Lu Putu Yunari, CEO of Aludra Impact & SIWA Impact (Indonesia), addressed the regulatory challenges in Indonesia, particularly the lack of cross-country recognition, and called for reform in regulatory frameworks and greater stakeholder awareness to enable the adoption of circular solutions.

Mr. Pravashen Naidoo, Founder & Managing Director of EWaste Africa (South Africa), emphasized the Global South’s potential to manage e-waste locally, drawing attention to the importance of utilizing regional expertise.

Following the panel discussion, Prof. Gulshan Sachdeva, Chief Coordinator at DAKSHIN, led thematic presentations. He highlighted the center's efforts to foster partnerships across 86 countries to tackle global challenges related to climate change, agriculture, health, and digital solutions. He stressed the significance of responsible product design in reducing waste and promoting sustainable consumption.

Ms. Neha Vyas, Senior Environmental Specialist at the World Bank, emphasized the importance of collaboration between governments and the private sector to adopt circular strategies. She pointed out that such strategies are essential not only for meeting climate goals but also for mitigating economic risks and fostering sustainable development.

Mr. Reza Bath, an e-waste management expert from Indonesia, discussed the technological gaps in rare metal extraction from e-waste and the prevalence of unsafe recycling practices. He introduced Redonic, an app designed to ensure safe resale and recycling of electronics and shared innovative, eco-friendly metal extraction techniques utilizing bacteria.

Prof. Shannon Olsson, Founder and Global Director of The Echo Network, introduced the concept of "knowledge circularity," which involves the sharing and reuse of knowledge among stakeholders. She highlighted that while physical resources can be recycled, knowledge is unique and non-renewable, and its effective sharing requires collaboration and trust-building.

Dr. Biljana Matevska, Program Manager at the Centre for Research and Policy Making (CRPM), North Macedonia, presented a case study on repurposing biomass waste from Macedonian wineries into products such as pellets, fertilizer, and oil. She emphasized that the initiative aims to reduce pollution and stimulate local economic growth.

Dr. Glenn Aguilar, from Costa Rica, explored the challenges and opportunities related to circular economies in Latin America and the Caribbean. He noted commonalities with the Global South and emphasized the importance of strong policy frameworks, effective monitoring systems, and financial investment to enable circular economies.

Dr. Myriam Blin, Head of the Charles Telfair Centre, Mauritius, outlined Mauritius's circular economy strategy, which includes initiatives such as source segregation, recyclable exports, improved governance, data transparency, regional partnerships, and financial incentives.

Outcomes

The **key outcomes** of the *webinar on “Enabling Circular Economy for a Sustainable Global South”* include:

- The workshop reinforced the **importance of circular economy practices** as a driver of sustainability and green growth across the Global South, highlighting the need to integrate reuse, recycling, and repair into mainstream development strategies.
- Participants emphasized **stronger South-South collaboration** to overcome barriers in technology transfer, financing, and policy implementation, ensuring that developing nations can jointly advance toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The discussions highlighted the need for robust regulatory frameworks, inclusive stakeholder participation, and capacity building to support the transition toward circular models in industries and communities.
- Experts from Africa, Asia, and Latin America underscored challenges such as technological gaps, unsafe recycling practices, knowledge deficiencies, and limited cross-border regulatory alignment, calling for shared solutions and targeted investments.
- The session emphasized the role of the private sector and public-private partnerships in advancing circular strategies, particularly in waste management, product design, and resource recovery.
- The concept of “knowledge circularity” was introduced as a key enabler for sustainability, encouraging the exchange, reuse, and co-creation of knowledge among countries and stakeholders in the Global South.
- The workshop reaffirmed DAKSHIN’s role as a convening platform for policy dialogue, knowledge sharing, and partnership building to promote sustainable and inclusive circular economy practices across developing nations.

Glimpses





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RIS specialises in issues related to international economic development, trade, investment and technology. It is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue and capacity-building among developing countries on global and regional economic issues. The focus of the work programme of RIS is to promote South-South Cooperation and collaborate with developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. Through its following centres/forums, RIS promotes policy dialogue and coherence on regional and international economic issues.



The word “DAKSHIN” (दक्षिण) is of Sanskrit origin, meaning “South.” The Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, inaugurated DAKSHIN – Global South Centre of Excellence in November 2023. The initiative was inspired by the deliberations of Global South leaders during the Voice of the Global South Summits. DAKSHIN stands for Development and Knowledge Sharing Initiative. Hosted at the RIS, DAKSHIN has established linkages with leading think tanks and universities across the Global South and is building a dynamic network of scholars working on Global South issues.



AIC at RIS has been working to strengthen India’s strategic partnership with ASEAN in its realisation of the ASEAN Community. AIC at RIS undertakes research, policy advocacy and regular networking activities with relevant organisations and think-tanks in India and ASEAN countries, with the aim of providing policy inputs, up-to-date information, data resources and sustained interaction, for strengthening ASEAN-India partnership.



CMEC has been established at RIS under the aegis of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPS&W), Government of India. CMEC is a collaboration between RIS and Indian Ports Association (IPA). It has been mandated to act as an advisory/technological arm of MoPSW to provide the analytical support on policies and their implementation.



FITM is a joint initiative by the Ministry of Ayush and RIS. It has been established with the objective of undertaking policy research on economy, intellectual property rights (IPRs) trade, sustainability and international cooperation in traditional medicines. FITM provides analytical support to the Ministry of Ayush on policy and strategy responses on emerging national and global developments.



BEF aims to serve as a dedicated platform for fostering dialogue on promoting the concept in the Indian Ocean and other regions. The forum focuses on conducting studies on the potential, prospects and challenges of blue economy; providing regular inputs to practitioners in the government and the private sectors; and promoting advocacy for its smooth adoption in national economic policies.



FIDC, has been engaged in exploring nuances of India’s development cooperation programme, keeping in view the wider perspective of South-South Cooperation in the backdrop of international development cooperation scenario. It is a tripartite initiative of the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, academia and civil society organisations.



FIRD aims to harness the full potential and synergy between science and technology, diplomacy, foreign policy and development cooperation in order to meet India’s development and security needs. It is also engaged in strengthening India’s engagement with the international system and on key global issues involving science and technology.



As part of its work programme, RIS has been deeply involved in strengthening economic integration in the South Asia region. In this context, the role of the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) is very important. SACEPS is a network organisation engaged in addressing regional issues of common concerns in South Asia.



Knowledge generated endogenously among the Southern partners can help in consolidation of stronger common issues at different global policy fora. The purpose of NeST is to provide a global platform for Southern Think-Tanks for collaboratively generating, systematising, consolidating and sharing knowledge on South South Cooperation approaches for international development.



DST-Satellite Centre for Policy Research on STI Diplomacy at RIS aims to advance policy research at the intersection of science, technology, innovation (STI) and diplomacy, in alignment with India’s developmental priorities and foreign policy objectives.

— Policy research to shape the international development agenda —

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