



THE ENERGY AND
RESOURCES INSTITUTE
Creating Innovative Solutions for a Sustainable Future

WSDS-ACT4EARTH NATIONAL DIALOGUE

Multilateralism and Global Governance: Road to COP30 and Beyond

Date: 10 October 2025 (Friday) | **Time:** 3:00 pm – 5:30 pm (IST)

Venue: The Energy and Resources Institute, 6C, Darbari Seth Block, India Habitat Centre
Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110003

EVENT SUMMARY



Summary

1. Reinvigorating Multilateralism and Global Governance

- Urgent need to protect the institutional integrity of the UNFCCC amid declining commitment from major economies and geopolitical fragmentation.
- Consensus that multilateralism itself must be saved, not just reformed, through renewed trust, inclusivity, and Global South leadership.
- Brazil's COP30 presidency seen as an opportunity to focus on implementation and restore faith in collective climate governance.
- Recognition that climate negotiations are now intertwined with trade, finance, and geopolitics, demanding cross-sectoral cooperation.

2. India's Strategic Role and Leadership

- India's leadership must balance ambition with equity and cooperation with autonomy in the Global South.
- Strategic communication identified as a gap—India must frame its narrative to counter perceptions of being obstructionist.
- Hosting COP33 in 2028 would require India to strengthen its credibility through policy consistency and narrative leadership.
- India's domestic energy strategy, including approval of 30 new coal plants, must be reconciled with its international climate commitments.

3. Operationalising Equity and Justice

- Equity and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR-RC) must be translated into measurable frameworks linking responsibility, capability, and vulnerability.
- Developing countries called for predictable, concessional, and grant-based finance, especially for adaptation and resilience.
- Ethical and justice-based dimensions of climate governance need revival—equity must move from principle to practice through equity indices and justice metrics.
- Reciprocity within CBDR highlighted as essential to restore fairness and long-term legitimacy.

4. Reforming Climate Finance

- Persistent gap between pledges (USD 300 billion) and needs (USD 1.3 trillion annually until 2035) underscores the urgency of reform.
- Call to revive the Long-Term Finance track for predictable, transparent, and continuous flows.
- Proposal for a “Mission on Climate Finance Reform” to simplify procedures and ensure timely, impactful disbursements.
- Emerging Southern-led institutions such as the New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank are being urged to evolve from co-financiers to agenda-setters, with a proposed framework for finance reform built around five pillars: targeted

transformation, regional resilience, unified governance, measuring accountability, and platformisation for coherence.

5. Law, Diplomacy, and Climate Litigation

- The International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion (July 2025) recognised states’ legal obligations to act on climate change.
- Over 3,000 climate litigation cases globally and 24 international tribunals are shaping obligations under climate law.
- The ICJ opinion replaces diplomatic ambiguity with legal precision (“must”, “shall”), narrowing interpretive flexibility that sustained consensus.
- Risk of a “chilling effect” on negotiations at COP30 as legal enforceability increases caution in diplomatic language.
- The emerging duality between climate law and diplomacy defines future climate governance.

6. South–South Cooperation and Emerging Multipolarity

- South–South mechanisms such as ITEC, NDB, and ISA must be better resourced and empowered.
- India and China’s combined share of world GDP has risen from 12% in 1950s to ~30% today, signalling a multipolar shift in climate governance.
- Larger developing economies urged to take leadership through grant-based finance and knowledge partnerships.
- “Mission Energy Access” and “Mission Resilience” proposed as collective Global South agendas.

7. Climate–Trade–Finance Linkages

- Climate commitments are increasingly embedded in trade and investment agreements (e.g., India–UK FTA, CBAM).
- Integration of climate and trade seen as inevitable; India must engage proactively to shape these evolving frameworks.
- Financing mechanisms must link trade, technology, and energy transitions through coherent governance systems.

8. Localisation, Justice, and Community Action

- Local innovation and traditional knowledge (e.g., Kathkuni architecture in Himachal Pradesh, APCNF model in Andhra Pradesh) demonstrate pathways for contextual resilience.
- Climate justice must be rooted in local action, financial decentralisation, and participatory governance.
- Youth engagement and grassroots initiatives were recognised as vital connectors between global frameworks and on-ground implementation.

9. Energy Transition and Technology

- AI energy demand is expected to double to 950 terawatt-hours by 2030, matching Japan's electricity use, while its optimisation potential could offset up to three times its own emissions.
- Call to address the technological equity gap, as 75 per cent of data centre capacity is concentrated in a few developed countries.
- Strengthening institutions like the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) is vital for a just energy transition.

10. Emerging Ethical and Conceptual Shifts

- Climate governance must re-centre ethics, fairness, and justice as guiding principles for policy reform.
- Calls to integrate Global Commons governance (oceans, atmosphere, outer space) under reimagined UN mechanisms like a repurposed Trusteeship Council.
- Multilateralism should evolve beyond annual negotiations into a continuous, inclusive, and cooperative system grounded in shared values.

Suggested Citation: The Energy and Resources Institute (2025), Roundtable on "Multilateralism and Global Governance: Road to COP30 and Beyond", (Rapporteur: Abhilash Kolekar), Event Summary, Act4Earth and World Sustainable Development Summit, New Delhi: The Energy and Resources Institute.

Annexure 1: Roundtable Discussants

- **Mr Abhishek Acharya**, Director, *Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)*
- **Mr Siddharth Singh**, Energy Investment Analyst, *International Energy Agency (IEA)*
- **Dr Prodipto Ghosh**, Distinguished Fellow, *The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)*
- **Dr Ritu Mathur**, Director, *The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)*
- **Dr Manish Kumar Shrivastava**, Associate Director, *The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)*
- **Mr Varun Grover**, Fellow, *The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)*
- **Mr Manjeev Singh Puri**, Distinguished Fellow, *The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)*
- **Prof Archana Negi**, Professor, *Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)*
- **Dr Debajit Palit**, Head, *Chintan Research Foundation (CRF)*
- **Dr Ashish Chaturvedi**, Head of Environment, Energy, and Resilience, *United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)*
- **Prof Anandajit Goswami**, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead, ACPET, *Ashoka University*
- **Ms Jayashree Nandi**, Environment and Climate Correspondent, *Hindustan Times*
- **Mr Jatinder Cheema**, Advocate, *Lawyer and Author*
- **Mr Soumya Bhowmick**, Fellow and Lead, World Economies and Sustainability, *Observer Research Foundation (ORF)*
- **Ms Avni Sablok**, Research Associate, *Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA)*
- **Mr Jai Kumar Gaurav**, Senior Advisor, Climate Change and Circular Economy, *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)*
- **Mr Syed Arsalan Ali**, Research Assistant, *Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)*
- **Dr Anand Madhukar**, Assistant Professor, *South Asian University (SAU)*
- **Dr Pooja Sehbag**, Research Associate, *Chintan Research Foundation (CRF)*
- **Dr Dipak Dasgupta**, Distinguished Fellow, *The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)*
- **Mr Venkat Jayagopi**, Senior Programme Manager, *Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation*
- **Dr Saurabh Mishra**, Research Fellow, *Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA)*
- **Dr Shailly Kedia**, Director, *The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)*
- **Ms Taruna Idnani**, Associate Fellow, *The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)*
- **Dr Abhilash Kolekar**, Research Associate, *The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)*
- **Ms Ishita Srivastava**, Research Associate, *The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)*
- **Ms Neha Misra**, Climate Finance Programme Lead, *World Resources Institute (WRI) India*
- **Dr Vibha Dhawan**, Director General, *The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)*
- **Mr Anup Kumar Dey**, Project Associate, *Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS), Government of Andhra Pradesh*
- **Ms Asmita Biswas**, Policy Analyst and India Coordinator, *International Energy Agency (IEA)*
- **Mr Joy Chakravorty**, Lead, Policy and Stakeholder Design, *ekgaon Technologies Private Limited*

About World Sustainable Development Summit

The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) is the annual flagship multistakeholder convening organized by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). Instituted in 2001, the Summit series has a legacy of over two decades in making ‘sustainable development’ a globally shared goal. As the only independently convened international summit on sustainable development and the environment based in the Global South, WSDS strives to provide long-term solutions for the benefit of global communities by assembling the world’s most enlightened leaders and thinkers on a single platform. Since its inception, WSDS has convened 59 Heads of State and Government, 149 Ministers, 13 Nobel Laureates, 2,158 Business Leaders, 3,730 Speakers, and more than 41,000 Delegates representing a diverse base of ecosystem actors from around the globe.

About Act4Earth

The Act4Earth initiative, launched at the valedictory session of the 21st World Sustainable Development Summit, builds on WSDS discussions to sustain engagement through research and dialogue. Its core objectives are to amplify Global South perspectives for equitable global governance, and to accelerate progress towards climate and sustainable development goals through knowledge-based dialogue. Act4Earth comprises two interlinked components. The COP Compass seeks to promote equitable multilateral mechanisms capable of driving paradigm shifts in climate action. The SDG Charter focuses on identifying policy gaps and recommending measures to embed sustainability within governance frameworks, thereby advancing environmental, social, and economic outcomes.