

CSR TODAY

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FOR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS, HOW DO 'PLANETARY BOUNDARIES' DEFINE THE NEW RULES?

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Can Eradicate Poverty, lead to
sustainable development

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CSR participation in Covid-19 vaccine must



Rajesh Tiwari

Publisher

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**THE MINISTRY OF
CORPORATE AFFAIRS
HAS AMENDED THE
SCHEDULE VII TO
INCLUDE R&D FOR
DEVELOPMENT OF
DRUGS TO CURE
COVID-19 AS ONE OF
THE APPROVED CSR
ACTIVITIES**

The Covid-19 pandemic is the biggest challenge that the world is facing. With no clear cut course of treatment, the best option is to cover the population by way of vaccine.

India has a population of 130 crore plus and it would need a few years and a huge amount of money to cover each and every person – and it is not going to be easy.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already started a plan for production and implementation for vaccines.

At this stage what is important is the delivery mechanism and money – and for this CSR will need to play a major role.

The critical drivers of the supply chain highlighted by experts were: demand forecasting and prioritization, vaccine availability, construct of the vaccine, sourcing, warehouse and cold chain, vaccine wastage, robust MIS, pricing, resources, and capacity building.

The Companies Act requires firms with a net worth of Rs 500 crore or more, or turnover of Rs 1,000 crore or more, or net profit of Rs 5 crore or more in the immediately preceding financial year, to mandatorily spend 2% of average net profit of the preceding three years on CSR. Money earmarked for spending on CSR activities in a year is about Rs 15,000 crore.

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has amended the Schedule VII to include R&D for development of drugs to cure Covid-19 as one of the approved CSR activities, a second official said. The government has specified broad areas of mandatory CSR spending in Schedule VII.

Accordingly, contributions to R&D projects in the field of science, technology, engineering and medicine, funded by the central or state governments or any public sector entity would also be counted under CSR.

Companies can now contribute their CSR funds to public funded universities, Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Department of Pharmaceuticals, he said. They can also participate in institutions under the ministry of ayurveda, yoga and naturopathy, unani, siddha and homoeopathy (AYUSH).

Coming to specifics, what would be the cost per vaccine – but there are indications that it could be between Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 – and one may need two doses. So the cost is enormous and it is difficult for the government to bear it.

CSR can show the way.

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Tata Motors fuels engineering ambitions of India's underprivileged students

Tata Motors, one of India's leading automaker, in association with Avanti Fellow NGO is conducting special coaching classes and grooming unprivileged students to prepare for NEET, IIT JEE Mains and IIT JEE Advanced competitive exams. This year, 43 students skilled from this programme have succeeded to ace the IIT JEE Mains while 27 students have cleared IIT JEE Advanced. This year, JNV Puducherry has emerged as the leading center with over 89% and 100% success for IIT JEE Advanced JEE Mains respectively.

Conducted at JNV centres across India for students of class 11th and 12th, the programme aims to identify, nurture and enable young minds with a penchant for science and technology to achieve their career aspirations. Over the years, graduates of this programme have featured in the top 500 on the IIT Joint Entrance examination list and achieved full-time scholarships at the world's best universities.

The phenomenal achievement of this programme has been attributed to the unique peer-to-peer learning approach along with focused preparation from skilled mentors that help the students better understand the concepts and instill smarter problem solving, furthering their confidence. Success delivered by this programme has motivated the students to work harder and pursue their dreams with hope, perseverance and hard work.

In spite of the on-going pandemic, this programme is currently operational virtually and coaching is being



IIT JEE offline coaching (pre-covid)



IIT JEE coaching students

imparted through online medium owing to the safety of the students. Over 212 students from 41 schools nationally are registered to attend the above batches of online classes.

The recent NEET results have been quite encouraging as well- In the JNV Palghar programme supported by TML, 23 students appeared for NEET, out of which 22 students qualified the exam (95% selection rate).

Elaborating on the success of Tata Motors' Education programmes, Vinod Kulkarni - CSR Head at Tata Motors, said "Tata Motors firmly believes that quality education is the cornerstone of nation-building and



Online lessons

has therefore committed to ensuring a conducive learning environment for disadvantaged students across India. Through our programmes, we aim to accelerate the career aspirations of talented young individuals with limited resources, who will further contribute to moving the nation forward. It is a matter of immense pride for Tata Motors to have assisted these future engineers in their educational journey. Tata Motors will continue to design and invest in programmes for better learning of the underprivileged by introducing advanced technology in academics to cater to the evolving times."

CSR INDIA UNITED

Supporting India to tide over the Pandemic

A global pandemic. A nationwide lockdown. A humanitarian crisis. Natural Calamities. All in a steep span of 7 months. Mukul Madhav Foundation (MMF), a Pune based NGO: working in the areas of healthcare, education, social welfare and water & environment conservation, stepped up to help the country get through this crisis by ensuring that nobody was forgotten and left behind.

Quick in their efforts, team MMF was at the forefront to mobilize support. Immediate steps were taken to ensure that the frontline warriors across multiple hospitals of urban Pune and rural Maharashtra had adequate supply of PPE kits, face-masks, equipment and other medical necessities. Within the first 2 months of the pandemic MMF had supported nearly 80k daily wage earners with grocery essentials and cooked meals. Reaching out to the many displaced families across West Bengal, Assam and Maharashtra, Mukul Madhav Foundation assisted to rescue and rehabilitate those affected by Cyclone Amphan, Cyclone Nisarga and floods across Assam.

To support India get back on its feet - with sheer grit and resilience Mukul Madhav Foundation launched its initiative #GiveWithDignityTM which is serving grocery and hygiene essential kits to more than 70,000 households across 24 states with a hope to spread joy and happiness, this festive season. 20,000 kits are being

distributed between October 25th and November 13th across 20 districts of Maharashtra (Mumbai, Pune, Amravati, Beed, Osmanabad, Vidharb, Marathwada, Gadchiroli, Washim, Ratnagiri, Palghar, Buldhana, Parbhani, Nashik, Solapur, Sangli, Satara, Ahmednagar, Aurangabad and Jalgaon). These 20k kits for Maharashtra have been sponsored by IndusInd Bank, Finolex Industries



and Mukul Madhav Foundation.

The beneficiaries belong to marginalized communities who have been identified with the help of NGOs, like-minded friends, well-wishers of the Foundation along with the support of local District Administration. Majority of the kits contents have been procured from SHGs, MSMEs and other NGO's. The ration supplies have been sourced from Purti Group, Maandeshi Foundation and Star Foods. Masks have been made by CYDA (Centre for Youth Development and Activities) and SOBATI, Baramati have supported us with sanitary napkins.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhavji Thackeray, inaugurated and

flagged off the drive on Saturday 7th November, 2020 in Mumbai in a small ceremony at the Matoshree Sports Club. Others present at the drive were Gauri Chhabria, Paul Abraham, CEO, Hinduja Foundation, B R Mehta, Vice President, Finolex Industries, and Sanjay Asher, Director, Orbit and Minister of Industries Subhash Desai.

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Minister of Shipping and the Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Nitin Gadkari applauded and blessed the Foundation for this initiative and its effort of empowering small local businesses. Collaboration has ensured we could upscale this initiative and the generous donations from institutional and individual donors has allowed us to reach many more beneficiaries. Finolex Industries Ltd, CavinKare, Marico, Hinduja Foundation, Nestle, Indorama, IndusInd Bank, Ashok Leyland, Gulf Oil and other corporates have willingly come forward this Diwali to #GiveWithDignity

Speaking about the activity, Ritu Prakash Chhabria, Managing Trustee, Mukul Madhav Foundation said, "The pandemic has been a true test of strength, determination and grit. At MMF we are committed to serve the society – irrespective of the challenges thrown at us as we strive to rise to the occasion and ensure we are there to assist the most vulnerable in any situation. What was a dream 9 weeks ago has transformed into reality and will culminate on Diwali. #GiveWithDignityTM is an emotion that has strived to empower SHG's & MSME's while in turn ensuring those who have lost their livelihood are provided with basic grocery and hygiene essentials. The power of collaboration has brought some of the leading brands to join hands with us and support us in our mission to spread hope and happiness this festive season. I am indebted to all those who have had faith in the work we do and lent us their support thereby rippling the benefit to many more."

Climate change, if not managed, could deliver large social and economic impacts.

In some ways, India may be more vulnerable than other regions, says new report

Climate change is already having substantial physical impacts across Asia, and the affected regions are likely to grow in number and size. Climate risk and response in Asia, a new report from the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) on the socioeconomic risks of the changing climate for Asia, suggests that many assumptions about the nature of the risk and the potential damage it could cause, need to be revisited.

“India is on the front line of a changing climate. As we seek to grow the economy—and remain a key source of growth for the world—climate change is a critical challenge that the region will need to manage and mitigate,” said Suvojoy Sengupta, Partner, McKinsey & Company and co-author of the report.

The report draws on climate model projections to highlight how a continuously changing climate creates new risks and uncertainties in the next three decades, and what steps can be taken to manage them. Building on MGI’s January research, *Climate risk and response: Physical hazards and socioeconomic impacts*, the new report estimates the inherent risk from climate change without

adaptation and mitigation to size the potential impact and highlight the case for action.

India could become one of the first places in the world to experience heat waves that cross the survivability limit for a healthy human being. Without targeted adaptation action, around 160-200 million people in India could annually bear a 5 percent chance of being exposed to a lethal heat wave as early as 2030, a ~40 percent cumulative likelihood over the decade centered on 2030. We estimate that the number of daylight hours during which outdoor work is unsafe will increase approximately 15 percent by 2030, resulting in approximately 2.5-4.5 percent, or \$150-250 billion, risk to GDP. While establishing the overall risks of climate change in Asia, this report seeks to also emphasize the path forward through adaptation and mitigation.

“Much as thinking about information systems and cyber-risks has become integrated into corporate and public-sector decision making, climate change and its resulting risks will also need to feature as a major factor in decisions,” said Jonathan Woetzel, Director, McKinsey Global Institute and Senior Partner of McKinsey & Company in Shanghai. “The intent of this report is to clarify and quantify the level of systemic physical risk that is currently accumulating in Asia, so that it can be taken into account by insurers, investors, lenders, governments, regulators, non-financial corporations and individuals as they make strategic decisions.”

Findings from the analysis include:

1 In many ways, Asia is expected to experience more severe socioeconomic impacts of climate change than global averages in the absence of adaptation and mitigation. Under RCP 8.5, by 2050, up to 1.2 billion people globally could be living in areas with

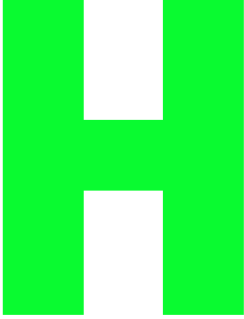
INDIA IS ON THE FRONT LINE OF A CHANGING CLIMATE. AS WE SEEK TO GROW THE ECONOMY—AND REMAIN A KEY SOURCE OF GROWTH FOR THE WORLD—CLIMATE CHANGE IS A CRITICAL CHALLENGE THAT THE REGION WILL NEED TO MANAGE AND MITIGATE

FOR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS, HOW DO 'PLANETARY BOUNDARIES' DEFINE THE NEW RULES?

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Tropical forest in Balok, Malaysia. Tropical forests are immense carbon stores and, due to exploitation, droughts and extremes of heat, could soon start to release more carbon than they absorb.

Image: Eutah Mizushima via Unsplash



How does a business grow and expand, but function in a way that doesn't overexploit the Earth? A new enterprise is offering an answer to this question. Last week, the Science Based Target Network (SBTN), an offshoot of a global partnership called the Global Commons Alliance (GCA), launched a program to help companies, consultancies and industry coalitions set environmental targets that would help them operate sustainably.

The SBTN will not just advise companies on how to curb carbon emissions, which is often the focus of sustainable business models. Instead, it will offer guidance on how to take action to protect all aspects of the natural world.

While the SBTN is still in its infancy, the organisers say the project has the potential to draw an array of companies — from small businesses to large, multinational corporations — into a global partnership that can proffer solutions to the world's sustainability issues.

The SBTN's goal, as set out in its initial guidelines for companies, is to create a "nature-positive world," in which nature loss is brought to a standstill, enabling the natural world to mount a recovery.

'No one can accomplish what needs to be done alone'

The GCA is a coalition of more than 50 organisations that came together with the shared interest of empowering individuals, companies, cities, and even entire countries, to help protect the global commons — that is, resources essential to our survival, including biodiversity, climate, land, ocean and water. Since its formation in 2019, the GCA has initiated several projects that align with its goals, the SBTN being one of these.

Erin Billman, executive director of the SBTN, said the project was born from a collective desire among business leaders to implement changes that would help protect nature, but also an uncertainty about how to do that beyond the curbing of carbon emissions.

"[T]he business community was saying, 'It's great that we've got this guidance from NGOs

on climate science based-targets, but what about beyond climate?'" she told Mongabay in an interview.

Last week, the SBTN launched its first corporate engagement program, inviting companies, as well as their subsidiaries, consultants, and industry coalitions, to work alongside the SBTN as it shaped its tools and strategies.

"[We realised] that rather than just holing away for two and a half years until 2022, and debuting a complete methodology, we need to defer initial guidance to make sure that we're bringing people along in the direction that we're headed, as well as to make sure that we don't lose two years of ambitious corporate action inadvertently by suggesting that they that they wait until our methodologies are done," Billman said.

Numerous multinational companies such as Pepsico, L'Oréal, Unilever, and Kering, as well as several consultants and coalitions, have already joined as early signers to work alongside the SBTN as it develops over the next two years.

While each company has its own agenda in terms of how and when it will set sustainability targets, the SBTN emphasises the importance of working together and creating a consolidated approach to protecting nature.

"No one can accomplish what needs to be done alone," Billman says. "[When you] look at the corporate environmental space, previously, companies were getting pulled in a lot of different directions by different NGOs in terms of, 'Here's what you should be doing, and here's the approach.'"

And increasingly, we're realising that we need to unite under a common voice to give consensus guidance, so that we're simplifying and harmonising what has grown to be a complex space."

Planetary boundaries

The SBTN may still be in a planning phase, but it is drawing on an established foundation of science. One of the guiding principles for the SBTN is the nine planetary boundaries, a concept developed by 28 international researchers, including Johan Rockström of the Stockholm Resilience Centre and Will Steffen from the Australian National University, to describe certain thresholds that have the potential to destabilise the world. The concept was introduced in an article in *Nature* in 2009.

Joe Biden is the next president of the United States

What does it mean for sustainability in Asia Pacific?

A president who has laid siege to environmental causes over his four years in office has been replaced by another septuagenarian who wants the world's biggest economy back in the Paris Agreement, according to

Robin Hicks



After a closely fought election, Joe Biden was elected 46th president of the United States.

Image: Joe Biden.com

Joe Biden has won a closely fought presidential election in the United States, removing from office an incumbent who laid siege to the environment over his four-year term. President Donald Trump falsely claimed victory the day after the first day of polling on Tuesday (3 November) and, as his opponent gained ground, blamed “big money, big media and big tech” for “stealing” the election. Against the backdrop of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, Biden declared victory on Saturday (7 November) after securing the electoral college vote. A new record for daily cases in the US was set on Wednesday (4 November), with more than 132,000 new infections recorded.

Trump, who has called the Covid-19 pandemic “the Chinese virus” and sidelined the role of science and public health experts in managing an outbreak that had killed 235,000 Americans at the time of publishing, will make way for a Democrat who has pledged to reinstate the world’s largest economy’s position as a signatory to the Paris Agreement.

The US officially left the Paris accord, which was drafted in 2015 to strengthen the global response to climate change, on Wednesday (November 4), the first day of the election. Trump has said the accord would cost the American economy US\$3 trillion and 6.5 million jobs, and “effectively decapitate” America’s ailing coal industry. Biden has said the US will

rejoin the accord when he’s elected president. During his term, Trump has reversed or diminished more than 70 regulations on climate, clean air, water, wildlife protection, and toxic chemicals, according to a study by Harvard Law School and Columbia Law School.

Biden has pledged to invest \$1.7 trillion in clean energy and climate research over the next 10 years as part of his plan to revitalise the US energy sector and transform the country into a clean energy “superpower”.

So what will a Biden presidency mean for sustainability in Asia Pacific? Eco-Business asked experts what the post-Trump era will mean for climate leadership, the energy transition and eco anxiety in this region:



UN SDGs sustainability reportingA sustainability report outlining the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

Image: Alex Berry, CC BY 2.0

Small and medium companies lagging on sustainable business practices globally, study reveals

A survey conducted over the last five years revealed that while businesses are taking sustainability more seriously, small and medium companies have more work to do, especially in the area of reporting, reports **Sonia Sambhi**

Aerial view of
Amazon River

As gold surges, mining threatens one-fifth of Indigenous lands in the Amazon

The struggle for land rights is prevalent throughout the Amazon, writes **Patricia Quijano Vallejos & Peter Veit**

A wall made out
of bamboo. Image:
Pik-Pik, CC-BY 2.0

FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE WITH BAMBOO

Bamboo is a surprisingly effective carbon sink and is being promoted by the government as a uniquely Chinese solution to climate change.

They are synonymous with the giant panda, and a ubiquitous part of life and culture across much of the south. China's bamboo forests – all 6.8 million hectares of them – could also play an outsized role in the country's plans to check climate change.

Fast-growing, versatile and able to thrive on sloping, degraded soils, giant bamboos have long been con-

sidered a valuable source of income – sometimes called “poor man's timber” – as well as an important tool for stabilising slopes and preventing soil erosion.

More recently, bamboo has gained attention alongside tree-planting for its potential role in removing large amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, which would contribute to keeping global warming below 1.5C.

A fast-growing super grass

Bamboo can help China curb greenhouse gas emissions in two ways: through its forests, which act as giant carbon sinks, and its durable products, which store carbon and can serve as a replacement for timber, concrete and steel.

The secret to bamboo's success is that it's a grass, not a tree. It grows fast and accumulates carbon quickly, with an extensive root system that survives annual harvesting. This makes bamboo a fast-regenerating resource, which can supply more biomass than both natural and planted forests.

Once mature, bamboo poles can be selectively harvested every year, and used to make a wide range of durable

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COMPANY: Naryana Health

DESIGNATION: DGM/GM- Corporate Social Responsibility

- Experience: 10 to 15 yrs
- Salary: As per Industry Standards
- INDUSTRY: Healthcare (Other Healthcare Equipments & Supplies Manufacturing)
- Location: Bengaluru/ Bangalore (Karnataka)
- Key Skills: Coordination, billing, project manager, measurement, civil
- Job Function: Corporate Planning/Consulting/Strategy
- Specialization: Corporate Planning/Strategy
- Qualification: Any Graduate

Job Description:

The role involves direct CSR program implementation, monitoring and evaluation activi-

ties. impact assessment and dissemination.

The role also involves fund-raising, either for CSR programs or for any other social initiatives in the healthcare & educational domains.

Job Responsibilities:

- To roll out initiatives, methodologies, strategies, processes, policies, and plans that build a robust, sustainable organization across all business units and geographies.
- Through the measurement and performance management systems ensure all functional areas have goals which are fully aligned to organizational strategy.

There are two major roles which GM-CSR would need to undertake:

1) Program Management:

- To develop an effective CSR framework encompassing environment, workplace and community which is in alignment with the organizations vision and mission.
- Managing and executing designated CSR program operations with cognizance of CSR policies and procedures.
- Envisioning new CSR programs in keeping with vision and mission of the group, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Schedule VII of Companies Act 2013.
- Streamlining the CSR program processes and ensuring adherence to the mandatory guidelines and practices
- Create and direct baseline and KAP surveys, where necessary, in projects
- Build strategic relationships with partner