

Kolkata kicks off an innovative approach to energy transformation

In a multi stakeholder roundtable discussion on Green Growth and Energy Transformation, an innovative approach was adopted to arrive at transformative and implementable projects in the state. A wide array of stakeholders came together to discuss strategy for decarbonisation of electricity sector for West Bengal, which still generates 90 percent of its electricity from fossil fuels. Changing this scenario is critical to not only meet national and international commitments but also is an imperative to ensure sustainable growth in the state.

Speaking in the opening session of the roundtable organised by CUTS International Anindya Narayan Biswas, Special Secretary, Department of Power, WB set the tone by spelling out the challenges for the state, which amongst others, include the need to offset the limitation emanating from land availability and solar insolation.

The innovative approach facilitated by CUTS International and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) focussed on building societal coalitions to identify projects with potential for scalability and replicability. Some of these included scaling up solar roof top initiative, greening of buildings, green irrigation and eco-tourism. The discussion aimed at coming up with win-win propositions for the government, utilities, financial institutions, consumers, developers, manufacturers, media and NGOs. The initiative was put in place with an aim to further deepen this discourse to arrive at technically feasible, commercially viable, socially acceptable and politically doable projects.

The stakeholders included representatives from industry chambers, entrepreneurs, utility, regulator, civil society, media, grassroots practitioners and state officials.

The roundtable ended with a positive way forward shown by the state officials. Amongst others, Mr R. N. Sen, Chairman, WBERC expressed willingness of the state to facilitate development of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures by way of enabling regulations and policies. The state officials also received constructive feedback from other stakeholders which they welcomed.

In line with the discussions held, the initiative on green growth and energy transformation facilitated by CUTS International, envisages a deeper engagement with stakeholders over a sustained period to aid transition to a sustainable growth and development in the state.

For more please contact: Prithviraj Nath, Head, CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre, pn@cuts.org, +91-9830481370