



Research Unit
Press Information Bureau
Government of India

12th High-Level Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific

India's Leadership in Circular Economy

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

March 6, 2025

Introduction



The 12th **Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific** was held in **Jaipur, India**, from 3rd to 5th March 2025, marking a significant milestone in regional cooperation for **sustainable waste management** and **circular economy initiatives**. This Forum plays a crucial role of providing a critical platform for policymakers, industry leaders, researchers, and development partners to discuss and implement sustainable solutions for **waste management** and **resource efficiency**. As economies in the Asia-Pacific region experience rapid urbanization and industrialization, the need for a shift towards a circular economy model has never been more urgent.

The Forum focused on the principles of **Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle (3R)**, aiming to create a roadmap for sustainable production and consumption patterns. Through insightful discussions, policy recommendations, and collaborative partnerships, the Forum helped strengthen **global and regional commitments** with a focus on resource efficiency, climate resilience, and environmental sustainability.

The last Forum was hosted in **2023** by **Cambodia**. India has previously hosted the Forum in **2018**, when the **8th edition** was held in **Indore**.

Inauguration of the 2025 Forum

The **inaugural session** of the 2025 Forum was attended by the **Union Minister of Housing & Urban Affairs**, and the **Chief Minister of Rajasthan**. Further, international dignitaries of countries like **Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Maldives** and **Japan** also joined the session. **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** shared a special written message with the delegates of the Forum emphasising that India follows & strongly advocates the **P-3 (Pro Planet People) approach**. He has also mentioned that India has always been more than willing to share its experiences and learnings in its journey towards Circular Economy.

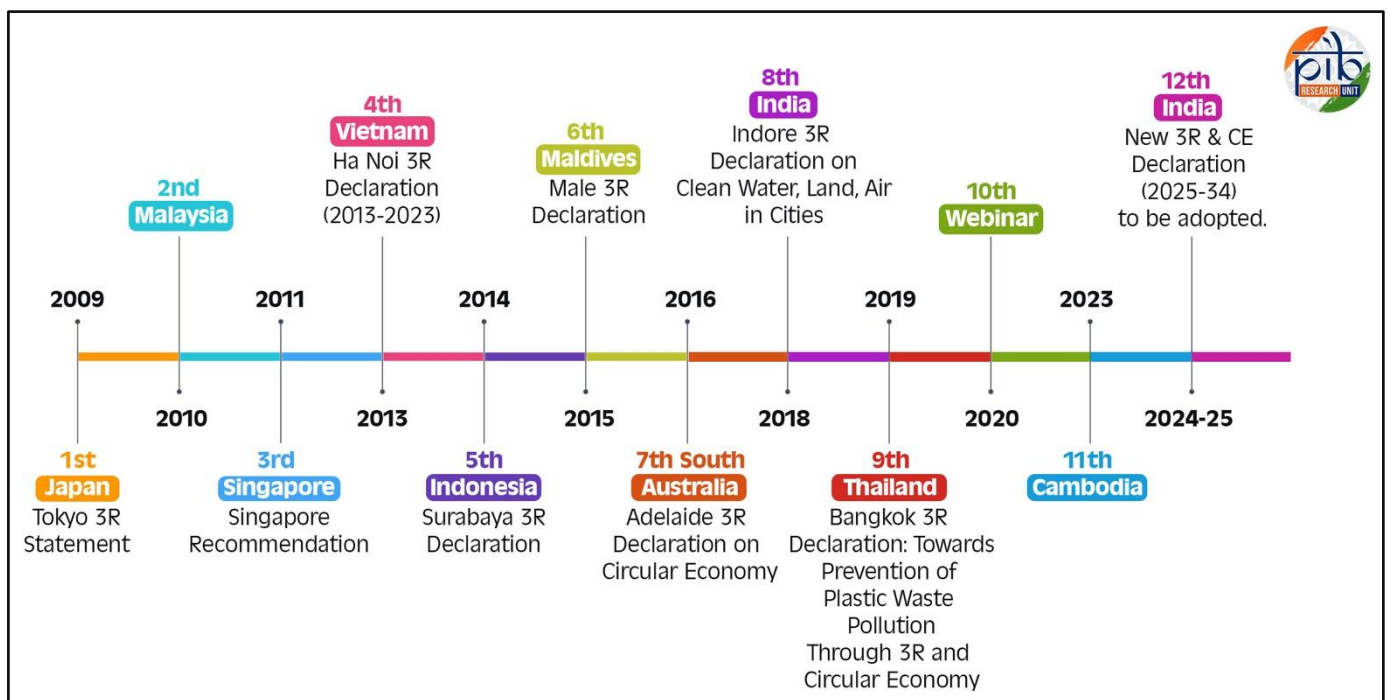
Taking forward PM Modi's vision, the Union Minister of Housing & Urban Affairs announced the **Cities Coalition for Circularity (C-3)**, a multi-nation alliance for city-to-city collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and private sector partnerships.



Further, during the event, a key **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** for **CITIIS 2.0** was signed, marking a significant milestone in urban sustainability initiatives. CITIIS 2.0 is a flagship initiative driving **integrated waste management** and **climate action**. The Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs announced that agreements worth **₹1,800 crores** will be signed under this initiative, benefiting **18 cities** across **14 states**, and serving as lighthouse projects for other urban areas.

History of the High-Level Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific

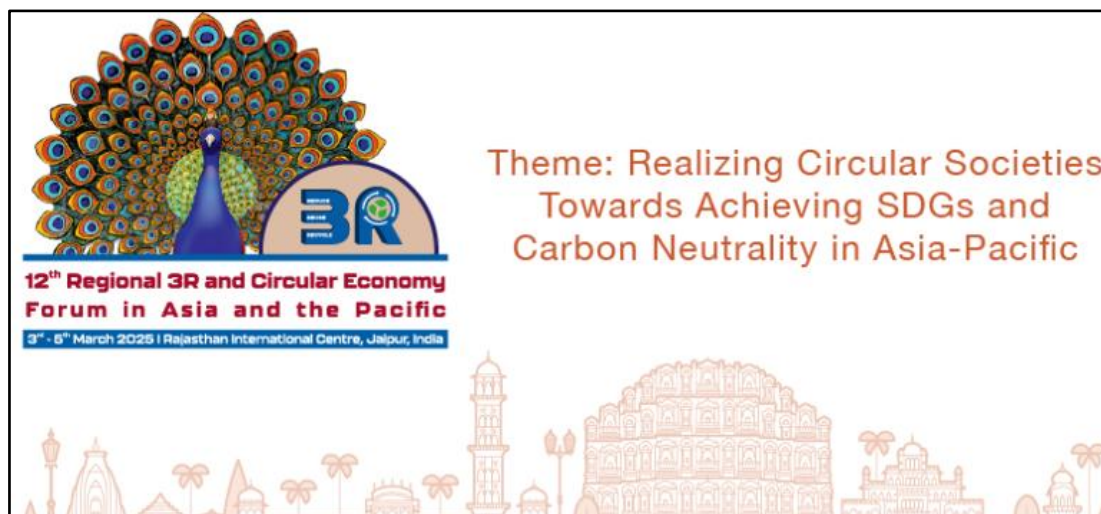
The **Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific** was launched in **2009** to promote sustainable waste management, resource efficiency, and circular economy principles across the region. Recognizing the environmental challenges posed by rapid economic growth, resource depletion, and rising waste generation, the Forum has served as a **key platform** for **policy dialogue** and **capacity building**. A major milestone was the adoption of the **Hanoi 3R Declaration (2013-2023)**, which outlined **33 voluntary goals** for shifting towards a more resource-efficient and circular economy. Over the years, the Forum has played a crucial role in aligning regional efforts with global sustainability commitments, including the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, the **Paris Agreement**, and the **UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)**.



Building on the momentum of past initiatives, the **new 3R and Circular Economy Declaration (2025-2034)** aims to catalyze transformational changes in resource and waste management. The Forum continues to support

multi-stakeholder collaboration, particularly in tackling plastic pollution through initiatives such as the negotiations for a **Global Plastics Treaty**. With Asia-Pacific accounting for the **largest share of global material use**, the Forum emphasizes the region's pivotal role in achieving carbon neutrality, environmental sustainability, and economic resilience.

Key Details of the 2025 Forum



Theme: Realizing Circular Societies Towards Achieving SDGs and Carbon Neutrality in Asia-Pacific.

Dates: March 3-5, 2025

Venue: Rajasthan International Centre, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Organized by: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (India), United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), and Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES).

Supported by: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Japan's Ministry of Environment, and various other international and regional organizations.



The Forum featured **high-level plenary sessions, technical discussions, roundtables and knowledge-sharing opportunities** to explore innovative policies, practices, institutional arrangements and technologies. A curtain-raiser event was organized on 24 February 2025 at the National Media Centre, New Delhi as a precursor to the main Forum.

Objectives of the 2025 Forum

The Forum served as a collaborative platform to:

- **Promote circular economy principles** for sustainable resource use.
- **Discuss circular economy policies and practices** to accelerate achievement of the SDGs.
- **Discuss how circular economy strategies** can be **integrated** into **national and regional policies** aimed at reducing carbon emissions and achieving net-zero targets.
- Discuss how to **strengthen regional cooperation** and **foster collaboration** between governments, businesses, and civil society to accelerate the transition from **traditional linear economy** to **more resource efficient and circular societies** across Asia-Pacific.
- **Discuss challenges** (policy regulatory gaps, financial barriers, infrastructure gaps, technological limitations) **and opportunities** in addressing circular economy principles for various sectors and waste streams.
- **Discuss and agree a new voluntary and legally non-binding 3R and Circular Economy Declaration** (2025-2034) for achieving resource efficient, clean, resilient, sound material cycle and low-carbon society in Asia and the Pacific.
- Discuss and pave way towards realization of a **Circular Economy Alliance Network (CEAN)** towards **Zero Waste Cities and Societies** - a **digital multi-faceted collaboration platform** involving key stakeholders – government (national and local), private and industry sector, including MSMEs, academic and research institutions, donors and development banks, and NGOs, among others, in **support of the effective implementation** of the new 3R and Circular Economy Declaration for Asia and the Pacific (2025-2034).

Participation in the 2025 Forum



The Forum saw the **physical participation** of **24 Asia-Pacific** member countries, with ministers from **Japan, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Maldives** attending in person. **Nearly 200 international delegates**, including government officials, experts, and private sector representatives, joined the discussions. **From India, 800 delegates** from 33 States & UTs, 15-line ministries, private sector, and technical institutions took part. The event had representation from **75 cities** (9 international and 66 Indian cities).

The forum featured **120 speakers** contributing to **29 plenary sessions, 10 thematic sessions, 6 country breakout sessions, and 7 side events**. To ensure broader participation, a **virtual platform** was also created for stakeholders across India and internationally.

Key Theme and Discussion Points

The key points that were discussed include:

1. Policy and Governance

Effective governance is key to achieving a successful circular economy. The Forum will examine the role of governments in fostering an enabling environment for sustainability.

2. Technological Innovations in Waste Management

Advancements in technology can play a transformative role in achieving sustainability goals. This segment will highlight new and emerging technologies in waste management.

3. Financing Circular Economy and 3R Initiatives

A successful circular economy transition requires strong financial backing. The discussion will revolve around investment opportunities and sustainable financing models.

4. Circular Economy for Climate Action

The Forum explored how circular economy initiatives can contribute to climate resilience and emissions reduction.



Highlights at the 2025 Forum

1. Delegates had an opportunity to undertake **technical field visits** to the solid and liquid waste management facilities and visit key heritage sites in Jaipur.
2. A dedicated **‘India Pavilion’** showcased India’s remarkable initiatives and achievements in the 3R and circular economy domain. This Pavilion featured exhibitions from key line ministries and national missions, reflecting India’s whole-of-government approach to sustainable development. It also served as a **hub for interactive knowledge-sharing**, with sessions such as the ‘Ministers & Ambassadors Roundtable Dialogue,’ ‘Mayors’ Dialogue,’ ‘Policy Dialogue’ and the signing of agreements under the CITIIS 2.0 program.
3. **Multiple launches of knowledge products** took place at the Forum including a compendium of over **100 best practices** put together by the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA).
4. The Forum hosted an international **‘3R trade and technology exhibition’**, providing a platform for **over 40 Indian and Japanese businesses and start-ups** to showcase best practices, ideas and solutions that support circularity and 3R principles while encouraging cross-learning.
5. **‘Waste-to-wealth’ initiatives** by NGOs and self-help groups across India were also showcased at the Forum promoting sustainability-driven entrepreneurship and community engagement.

Conclusion of the 2025 Forum

The 2025 Forum concluded on the 5th March 2025 with the unanimous adoption of the ‘**Jaipur Declaration**’ by the member countries. A **guidance document** has been prepared to suggest **indicative strategies** to countries as per national policies, circumstances and capabilities. As part of the Jaipur declaration, a **collaborative knowledge platform** as a **global alliance C-3 (Cities Coalition for Circularity)** has also been agreed upon. Jaipur Declaration speaks about **different waste streams** and **circular economy goals** for each of them. It speaks about the resource efficiency and sustainable material consumption. The declaration also covers informal sectors, gender issue and labour issues. It also provides for **means of implementation**, partnerships, technology transfer, funding mechanism and research and development.



Key Outcomes of the 2025 Forum



Key outcomes included:

1. The **launch of several initiatives** such as the **SBM Waste to Wealth PMS Portal**, **IFC Document Reference Guide**, and **India’s Circular Sutra**, a compendium of 126 best practices compiled by the **National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)**.
2. Additionally, a study on best practices in **solid waste management** in million-plus cities, prepared by **CEEW**, was released.
3. A crucial **MoU** was signed between **CSIR** and **MoHUA** to advance scientific research and innovation in circular economy solutions.

India's Leadership in Circular Economy and 3R Policies

India has been at the forefront of promoting sustainable development and circular economy principles. The country has implemented **several landmark policies** and **initiatives** aimed at addressing waste management challenges. Some of the key initiatives include:

- **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM-U)** – Strengthening urban waste management with 3R principles. Under SBM-U, India has achieved **108.62%** success in household toilet construction, where the mission target was **58,99,637** and the constructed number stands at **63,74,355** as of 27 February 2025. Further **80.29%** of solid waste in India is being processed successfully.
- **GOBAR-Dhan Scheme** – Promoting waste-to-wealth initiatives through biogas and organic waste processing. This scheme currently covers **67.8%** of total number of districts in India, with **1008** biogas plants being fully operational as of 27 February 2025.
- **E-Waste Management Rules (2022)** – Strengthening circular economy practices in electronic waste disposal. As of **December 2024**, for FY 2024-25, the quantity of **e-waste** collected and **recycled** stood at **5,82,769 MT** and **5,18,240 MT** respectively. The quantity of e-waste collected and recycled in the FY 2023-24 were 7,98,493 MT and 7,68,406 MT respectively.
- **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Plastic** – Encouraging industries to take accountability for plastic waste. India **banned single use plastic** on 1st July 2022.

Conclusion

The 12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Jaipur is a landmark Forum that shaped the future of waste management and circular economy strategies in Asia and the Pacific. As economies in the region seek sustainable solutions to address growing environmental challenges, this Forum provided a critical avenue for knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and policy advocacy.

By fostering **cross-sectoral collaborations**, discussing **innovative policy approaches**, and advancing 3R principles, the Forum contributed significantly to achieving a **zero-waste** and **circular economy-driven future**. The discussions and commitments made at this Forum will not only guide policy implementation but also drive investments in sustainable infrastructure and technological innovations.

References

https://uncrd.un.org/sites/uncrd.un.org/files/20240806_1ldcs-consultation_p2-uncrd.pdf

<https://3rcefindia.sbmurban.org/>

<https://uncrd.un.org/content/12th-3r-ce-Forum>

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2105805>

https://uncrd.un.org/sites/uncrd.un.org/files/12th-3r-ce_draft-concecp-note_prov-programme_24feb2025.pdf

https://x.com/MoHUA_India/status/1894002736670056803

<https://gobardhan.sbm.gov.in/state-biogas>

<https://sbmurban.org/>

[https://greentribunal.gov.in/sites/default/files/news_updates/Report%20of%20CPCB%20in%20EA%20No.%2004%20of%202024%20IN%20OA%20No.%20512%20of%202018%20\(Shailsh%20Singh%20Vs.%20State%20of%20U.P.%20&%20Ors.\).pdf](https://greentribunal.gov.in/sites/default/files/news_updates/Report%20of%20CPCB%20in%20EA%20No.%2004%20of%202024%20IN%20OA%20No.%20512%20of%202018%20(Shailsh%20Singh%20Vs.%20State%20of%20U.P.%20&%20Ors.).pdf)

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2107712>

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2108605>

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2106635>

Santosh Kumar | Ritu Kataria | Rishita Aggarwal