

# Bamboo Over Fossil Fuels: Pasha Patel Advocates for a Sustainable Energy Revolution at FMC's International Conference

Category: Business

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The Foundation for MSME Clusters (FMC) successfully concluded its international conference on “**Just Transition to Net Zero – Role of Bamboo in the SAARC Region**” at Deventure Sarovar Portico, Kapas Hera, New Delhi. The event marked a significant step toward promoting bamboo as a sustainable development tool across SAARC countries, bringing together policymakers, industry leaders, financial institutions, and civil society representatives to foster meaningful dialogue.



**Inaugural Conference on the Role of Bamboo – Leaders like Pasha Patel, Ajay Shankar (Chairman, FMC), Mukesh Gulati (Executive Director, FMC), Ms. Rinzi Prem, Assistant Director, SDF**

The inaugural session was graced by Shri Pasha Patel, Chairman, Price Commission, Maharashtra, as the Chief Guest. Other distinguished dignitaries included Shri Ajay Shankar, Chairman, Foundation for MSME Clusters and Former Secretary to the Government of India, and Ms. Rinzi Pem, Assistant Director, Social Window, SAARC Development Fund. Their presence and insights enriched the event, setting the tone for impactful discussions.

Shri Pasha Patel, Chairman, State Agricultural Price Commission, Maharashtra, and Chairman, Executive Committee, Chief Ministers Task Force for Environment and Sustainable Development, shared insights on the potential of bamboo as a sustainable resource. Citing a study, he said all government thermal power generation units in the country release 5,90,000 MT of carbon per day into the atmosphere, adding bamboo can be an alternative to coal as a fuel for power generation.

Shri Ajay Shankar, Chairman, Foundation for MSME Clusters, and Former Secretary to the Government of India, shared his long-term vision on the integration of bamboo into MSME and development ecosystems. Developed countries have limited scope for change as they have already followed a carbon-intensive path. In contrast, South Asian developing countries have the opportunity to adopt a more sustainable approach.

Ms. Rinzi Pem, Assistant Director, Social Window, SAARC Development Fund, emphasized on developing the collaborative opportunities within the SAARC countries for leveraging bamboo to achieve net-zero targets.

The conference was part of the project “Promoting Integrated Bamboo-Based Enterprise Development among SAARC Countries,” supported by the SAARC Development Fund since 2017. The project, implemented across Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal, engages partners such as Women’s Economic Empowerment Rural Development Program (Afghanistan), BRIF (Bangladesh), Tarayana (Bhutan), FMC (India), and ABARI (Nepal). During the event, project partners from Bhutan, Nepal, and Bangladesh presented case studies showcasing challenges, achievements, and innovations, offering valuable insights for advancing bamboo enterprise development.

Three engaging panel discussions were the highlight of the conference. The first discussion, moderated by senior journalist Naghma Sahar, focused on industry integration of bamboo. Prominent speakers like Sanjeev Karpe (Director, KONBAC), Anupam Badola (Deputy CSO, Dalmia Cement), Rajeev Pratap Singh (AGM, Business Development, Rashmi Group), and Sharda Pratap Singh (Subject Matter Expert, Hindalco Industries) shared their expertise on incorporating bamboo into industrial processes.

The second panel, moderated by Mehraj Dube, emphasized innovative financing for bamboo enterprises. Participants included Dr. R.K. Singh (CGM, SIDBI), Ritesh Sinha (Zonal Head

and Vertical Head, Projects, HDFC CSR), Sanjay Sharma (Director, SPMN), and Dr. Ajithsen Selvadhas (Microcredit and Enterprise Development Expert), who highlighted financing models to support growth in the bamboo sector.

The third discussion, moderated by Krunal Negandhi (Director, Jans Bamboo Products Pvt. Ltd.), explored the role of civil society and policy frameworks in bamboo development. Experts such as Dr. Prabhat Kumar (Mission Director, National Bamboo Mission), Dr. Ajay Thakur (Scientist, FRI), Neju George (CEO, Industries), and Anuj Srivastava (Lead-Strategic Partnership, HCL Foundation) shared valuable perspectives on leveraging grassroots involvement and robust policies.

The conference served as a collaborative platform for CSR leaders, researchers, buyers, and artisans, aiming to create a regional strategy for achieving net zero goals through bamboo-based innovations. It underscored the urgency of cross-sectoral partnerships to unlock the full potential of bamboo for sustainable development in the SAARC region.

For additional information, visit FMC's website [www.fmc.org.in](http://www.fmc.org.in).

