

PRESS RELEASE

Sustaina 2
“With each seed we sing.”

CEEW and artists Thukral & Tagra unveil second edition of Sustaina India art exhibition on communities as seeds for climate action

This edition of Sustaina India, which highlights the importance of community-led initiatives, will run from 1 to 16 February 2025 at STIR Art Gallery, New Delhi.

Featuring projects by Sustaina Fellows Shubhi Sachan - Material Library of India, Poludas Nagendra Satish - Kora Design Collaborative, and Saraswathi Malluvalasa - Arogya Millet Sisters
The exhibition will also feature artworks and installations by invited artists such as Chander Haat, Edible Issues, Sheshadev Sagria, and Climate Recipes - Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Edition.

Curated by Thukral & Tagra + Srinivas Aditya Mopidevi
Organised by Milan George Jacob, Mihir Shah, Vidusshi Pathak, Shruthi Pillai
(Council on Energy, Environment and Water)

New Delhi, 1 February 2025: Following the resounding success of its inaugural edition, Sustaina India — a first-of-its-kind platform where science meets art to inspire collective climate action — returns with its second chapter, from 1-16 February 2025 at STIR Art Gallery, New Delhi. A collaborative initiative by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), one of Asia’s leading sustainability think tanks, and renowned artist duo Thukral & Tagra, Sustaina India 2025 will **focus on the importance of community-level and community-led initiatives for sustainable livelihoods and climate action.**

The core section of the second edition will feature three Fellows whose work exemplifies the ethos of collective action and responsibility: Shubhi Sachan through material literacy, Saraswathi Malluvalasa through sustainable agriculture, and Poludas Nagendra Satish through re-weaving the cotton ecosystem. The exhibition will also include invited artists, such as Chander Haat, Edible Issues and others who will bring a diversity of conversations encompassing stories around water, food and women’s empowerment to mention a few. There will also be films, installations, drawings, performances, and panels as part of the second edition of Sustaina India.

This year, the theme “With each seed we sing” takes centre stage, reflecting the importance of community-led solutions to address climate challenges. It aims to reshape our perception of elements of daily life, such as food, clothing, and waste.

Sustaina India takes on the urgency of anchoring the conversations around climate through art. It embraces the power of creative practice to reflect on the world where extreme climate events such as cyclones, floods and wildfires have increased dramatically both in terms of frequency and intensity. With Fellows at the center of its enquiry each year Sustaina invites an extended selection of artists along with critically curated public programs and events. This year along with the core exhibition, we will be introducing “Sustaina Weekends” as a way to activate the space in multiple ways during the course of the exhibition.

[Research](#) by CEEW shows shifting climate patterns, with 55 per cent of Indian tehsils experiencing over a 10 per cent increase in monsoon rainfall, especially in drier regions like Rajasthan, Gujarat, and central Maharashtra. In contrast, 11 per cent of tehsils, including rain-fed areas in the Indo-Gangetic plain, saw a decline, highlighting a swapping trend in rainfall distribution. Communities will need to be at the forefront of policies and innovations to tackle climate change. Yet, there are also opportunities emerging that can lead to jobs, growth and sustainability, such as leveraging the [circular economy](#) to repurpose waste and promoting sustainable lifestyles and climate resilient agriculture, from textiles to millets. We must align our food systems with the changing climate and invest in adding climate-resilient seeds to our crop calendars. Community knowledge must be included in regenerating context-specific crop practices. Drawing on these intersections, the second edition of Sustaina India will feature three Fellows whose work exemplifies these principles:

Shubhi Sachan is founder of the Material Library of India and is based in Noida, Uttar Pradesh. The core ethos of Material Library of India is to develop what Sachan calls ‘material literacy’ across diverse demographics. Engaging with different kinds of waste, from post-industrial to agricultural, the Library’s work emphasises the complexity of materials that are all around us. They propose alternative uses for materials and introduce new and effective waste disposal methods. In her presentation at the second edition of Sustaina, Sachan extends her work around the idea of ‘material literacy’ with an interactive installation. She will also be undertaking a workshop as part of the exhibition’s programming.

M. Saraswathi, Secretary of SABALA (Society for Awareness and Betterment of Agricultural Livelihoods in Andhra Pradesh) and founder of the Arogya Millet Sisters Network, is based near Vizainagaram and has dedicated over two decades to empowering rural women through sustainable farming practices. She started her work when women were not widely considered farmers, and millets were not recognised as food by the local government. Under her leadership, SABALA rejuvenated millet cultivation across 1,500 acres in 50 villages, advocating for millet inclusion in public distribution systems to enhance nutrition and food security. Their 3000 farmers network includes 50 per cent from tribal communities and 20 per cent from Dalit communities. Saraswathi’s efforts have earned her multiple awards, including the Women Exemplar Award from the CII Foundation. At Sustaina, Saraswati will present the story of the Millet Sisters through installations with their homegrown millets, folk songs, and other interactive elements.

Poludas Nagendra Satish, founder of Kora Design Collaborative and based in Hyderabad, is a designer and advocate for sustainable practices with extensive experience in the textile and craft

sectors. A graduate of the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, Satish combines traditional craftsmanship with ecological design to address environmental and community challenges. His projects have earned recognition for empowering local artisans and promoting sustainable, culturally significant practices, such as Warangal Dhurries and other ecological crafts. At Sustaina this year, Satish will be presenting the journey of indigenous cotton through its materiality and surfaces. His installation brings to our attention the loss of traditional cotton quality and his work with farming communities to revive it.

Thukral & Tagra, co-curators of Sustaina India, said, “With climate crises becoming increasingly evident, Sustaina India emerges as a unique platform curated by experts from diverse fields, including CEEW and us as artists. In its second edition, the platform aims to foster a commune of practices that spotlight innovative and essential interventions for addressing the pressing challenges of our time. Through these efforts, Sustaina India aims to spotlight essential interventions addressing pressing global challenges and guide meaningful pathways to a sustainable future. The practices of all three fellows reflect a profound sensitivity to environmental change, focusing on identifying and addressing nuances often overlooked. Their thoughtful approaches pave the way for deeper conversations and impactful action.”

Mihir Shah, Director of Strategic Communications at CEEW, added, “2024 was the warmest year on record and the critical 1.5°C threshold has been breached for the first time. The accelerating climate crisis demands more than top-down solutions. Sustaina India 2025 recognises that effective climate action must be rooted in the communities themselves. By amplifying grassroots voices and celebrating a range of innovations, the second edition of Sustaina India aims to showcase a mosaic of climate solutions that are as diverse as the communities they serve.”

Srinivas Aditya Mopidevi, co-curator of the exhibition, added, “There is an urgent need to break down the jargon of sustainability and introduce the public to stories and processes that speak about its lived essence. This edition of Sustaina is a step in this direction where we bring an in-depth understanding of our food, clothing, and waste systems. We advocate for community-led and community-oriented action that sees every opportunity as a seed for change.”

This time, the audience will have more opportunities to engage with the discourse on climate change and sustainability through storytelling sessions, panel discussions, sharing circles, workshops, quizzes, and thematic days on the sidelines of the exhibition. Sustaina India will also explore partnerships to reach a wider audience, particularly through dedicated sessions and activities for school and college students.

Exhibition Details:

Sustaina India

Dates: 1-16 February 2025

Venue: STIR Art Gallery, New Delhi

Preview Timings: 1 February - 6 PM onwards

Exhibition continues 2-16 February - 11 AM - 6 PM

About Sustaina India

As scientific evidence about the alarming impacts of climate change keeps emerging, we face the need to reimagine habitable futures. Sustaina India stems from this urgency to catalyse pollinations across art, science, and policy-making through annual fellowships, exhibitions, and public programs. A first-of-its-kind initiative of Thukral and Tagra and the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, Sustaina India mobilises creators to integrate decentralised climate awareness and sustainability conversations into the cultural fabric of India and beyond.

About CEEW

The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) — a homegrown institution with headquarters in New Delhi — is among the world's leading climate think tanks. The Council is also often ranked among the world's best-managed and independent think tanks. It uses data, integrated analysis, and strategic outreach to explain — and change — the use, reuse, and misuse of resources. It prides itself on the independence of its high-quality research and strives to impact sustainable development at scale in India and the Global South. In over fourteen years of operation, CEEW has impacted over 400 million lives and engaged with over 20 state governments.

About Thukral and Tagra

Thukral and Tagra are a Delhi-based artist duo comprising Jiten Thukral (b. 1976, Jalandhar, Punjab) and Sumir Tagra (b. 1979, New Delhi). Driven by the artistic methodologies of painting, gaming, archiving, and publishing, their multifaceted studio practice reflects the scope of engagement in the cultural and political landscape of India and the world. While their early career work dealt with the intricacies of consumer culture globally, their recent interest in ecology and climate change is a revisiting of their family histories of migration and farming in the Indian state of Punjab. Through and beyond their studio practice, Thukral and Tagra create new formats of public engagement and attempt to expand the threshold of what art can do.

About Srinivas Aditya Mopidevi

Srinivas Aditya Mopidevi is an independent curator based in New Delhi. His curatorial work unpacks the relationship between art and the constitution of public memory. He is currently the Principal Investigator at the experimental arts lab Pollinator.io and a visiting professor at Ashoka University, Sonapat.

For media queries, please contact:

Longform, India

Kriti Bhargava - kriti.bhargava@longform.in | +91 9899787950

Thukral and Tagra

CEEW
THE COUNCIL

SUSTAINA²



with each seed
we sing.

Preview 2025

1 feb 5pm

Exhibition

2-16 feb 11am to 6pm

Venue

Stir Gallery
New Delhi

Curated by

Thukral and Tagra
+ Srinivas Aditya
Mopidevi

Featuring

Saraswathi Malluvalasa - Arogya Millet Sisters
Shubhi Sachan - Material Library of India
Poludas Nagendra Satish - Kora Design Collaborative

Organised by

Mihir Shah
Milan George Jacob
Vidusshi Pathak
Shruthi Pillai
(Council on Energy, Environment and Water)

Chander Haat
Edible Issues
Harjit Kaur - Pink E-Auto Champion
Climate Recipes II
Sheshadev Sagria
Shaz Syed

Performance

Chirag Thakkar

Poster - High Res: [Poster-1.jpg](#)

Thukral and Tagra

CEEW
THE COUNCIL

SUSTAINA²



Save
the Date

Preview

1 feb

Exhibition

2-16 feb 2025

Venue

Stir Gallery
New Delhi

Save the Date - High Res: [Save the date.jpg](#)