

## CEEW and artists Thukral & Tagra come together to inspire collective climate action through Sustaina India art exhibition

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Unveiling the intersection of science and art, the inaugural Sustaina India platform culminates in a public exhibition at Bikaner House, Delhi, from February 2-15, inspiring collective climate action.

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**New Delhi, 16 January 2024:** The first edition of Sustaina India — a first-of-its-kind platform where science meets art to inspire collective climate action — will culminate in a public exhibition from 2-15 February at Bikaner House, Delhi. Sustaina India was conceptualised by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), one of Asia’s leading sustainability think tanks, and internationally renowned artists Thukral & Tagra. The initiative mobilises creators to integrate climate awareness and sustainability into the cultural fabric of India and beyond through annual fellowships, exhibitions, and public programmes. Its vision is to catalyse the power of art to relay some of the pressing climate issues that are transforming the world as we speak.

The inaugural Sustaina India exhibition will showcase the work of several emerging and established artists, including three Sustaina India Fellows — Debasmita Ghosh, Manjot Kaur, and Rachna Toshniwal — for 2023-24. Curated by Jiten Thukral, Sumir Tagra and Srinivas Aditya Mopidevi, the exhibition will unpack how a detailed understanding of everyday materials can fundamentally realign our relationship with the planet. Through sensory installations, performances, artworks and recipes, Sustaina India invites viewers to keep their “eyes to the ground, heart to the horizon”.

According to [CEEW analysis](#), eight out of 10 Indians now live in districts vulnerable to extreme climate events such as cyclones, floods, and droughts. While communicators struggle to convey the importance of climate solutions and the scale of adversity, artists can be visualisers of collective climate action. At its core, the first edition of Sustaina India will feature the work of three emerging artists — Debasmita Ghosh, Manjot Kaur, and Rachna Toshniwal — supported through a fellowship programme. Ghosh will synthesise her action-oriented research about the change in the ways of life of the Kondh community in Odisha because of climate change. Kaur will present an immersive video installation on forests — the world’s largest natural carbon sinks — and fertility, capturing her forest visits in different parts of India and the world. Toshniwal will present tapestries and other elements woven with ocean waste that washed up on the shores of Alibag, Maharashtra, advocating for a new approach towards waste.

“We are in a time where the scale of climate change can only be addressed when multiple disciplines join forces with their methodologies and resources. Art can become an active conduit to relay diversity of knowledge on sustainable practices from science, indigenous wisdom and public policy. As creators, we firmly believe in channelling the sensorium of touch, smell, sound, and vision as paths to climate awareness and retention for current and future generations,” said Thukral & Tagra, co-curators of Sustaina India.

“As part of the conceptual and research dimensions of exhibition-making, we are also bringing in a range of sustainable material discoveries, including wooden panels made with crop residue, soy-based inks, and eco-friendly paint,” said Srinivas Aditya Mopidevi, co-curator of the exhibition.

Mihir Shah, Director of Strategic Communications at CEEW, said, “Today, we increasingly have data to better understand and act on climate change, the most pressing global challenge of our times. Yet, in a fragmented and tumultuous world, climate action still remains on the fringes of public discourse and has yet to find significance in daily lives. We are pleased to join hands with Thukral & Tagra to mainstream climate awareness through Sustaina India, where science and policy research can blend with different forms of art. With Sustaina India, we forge a dynamic action-oriented platform that emotionally connects and inspires artists, local communities and policymakers to scale up climate ambition and action.”

In addition to the three Fellows, the exhibition will also feature textile and fashion designer Gaurav Jai Gupta, who works at the intersections of textiles and carbon; visual artist, photographer and archivist Pallov Saikia, who speaks of archiving the land and life in Rahmaria, Assam, gradually taken away by the Brahmaputra; multidisciplinary artist Richi Bhatia, who stages interspecies conversation through performance; artist Shilpa Bhawane who speaks of the intimacy we can establish with the materials around us through drawing; and Climate Recipes by artist, curator, and researcher Srinivas Mangipudi and Srinivas Aditya Mopidevi, relaying recipes of adaptability from lived and acquired wisdom. Edible Archives will present conversations about sustainable, seasonal food, and sound artist and composer Bhaskar Rao will contribute a sonic layer to the exhibition.

The vision of Sustaina India is to consistently instil the idea that sustainability is not imported; it lies in the ground beneath us and all we need to do is reorient our vision.

**For media queries contact:** *Tulshe Agnihotri* – [tulshe.agnihotri@ceew.in](mailto:tulshe.agnihotri@ceew.in) | +91 9621119643 / +91 7905717812

**Exhibition Details:**

Sustaina India

Dates: 2-15 February 2024

Venue: CCA Bikaner House (first floor), New Delhi

Preview Timings: 2 February - 6 PM onwards

Exhibition continues 3-15 February - 11 AM - 6 PM