PR09 / Mapping the criticality of Energy and Water Sustainability: Evidences from the Global South in General and India in Particular

Topic : Practice

Chair : Pankaj Dabgotra (Panjab University)

Second Chair : Pragya Mahajan (Panjab University)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Title of the Panel: Mapping the criticality of Energy and Water Sustainability: Evidences from the Global South in General and India in Particular

Chair: Pankaj Dabgotra [1]

Co-Chair: Pragya Mahajan[2]

Track: Practice Track

Abstract

Mapping the criticality of Energy and Water Sustainability: Evidences from the Global South in General and India in Particular

Background and Significance

The unsustainable sources of energy and use of water systems adversely impact the environment and widely regarded as the major cause behind the phenomenon of emissions induced climate change. The climate change has resulted in floods, heat fires, rising sea levels, melting glaciers, water scarcity and declining biodiversity. Ensuring availability, accessibility and affordability of sustainable water and energy systems are of critical significance for the Global South. How can policy processes integrate the issue of energy and water sustainability to drive policy change and effective implementation of sustainability programmes? This is a crucial question that this panel seeks to address in the Global South.

In recent decades, the Global South has witnessed a surge in policy reforms aimed at addressing energy and water sustainability challenges, improving governance, and fostering sustainable growth. Since most sustainability policies are aimed at addressing community-level sustainability challenges, the voices of the vulnerable communities that are affected by these problems are hardly represented in the policy processes. This disconnect between policy formulation and grassroots realities is reflected in poorly implemented policies that hardly address the needs of most members in the communities.

Research Questions

1.What are the structural and contextual factors that hinder or facilitate the energy access and water sustainability across Global South?

2. How can participatory approaches be institutionalized within existing governance frameworks to ensure sustainable access to energy and water?

3. What role do various actors such as civil society organisations, local leaders, and researchers play in bridging the gaps institutional visions and grounded realties regarding water and energy?

4. How can digital technologies and innovative platforms enhance sustainable use of energy and water for future generations?

Context

The panel chairs are particularly interested in empirical papers that provide grounded insights into how local practices, processes and people’s efforts are integrated to ensure energy and water sustainability. They are also interested in methodological papers that propose innovative tools or approaches for capturing and analysing local perspectives in national and local policies that enhance sustainable use of energy and water. Priorities will be given to studies that draw on fieldwork, participatory research, case studies, or evaluations of policy interventions that demonstrate real-world best dynamics related to energy and water. However, the panel also welcomes theoretical papers that critically engage with concepts such as water governance,

water sustainability, energy accessibility and affordability, especially if they offer new frameworks or challenge dominant paradigms. Contributions that consider what works, why, and under what conditions, and that can potentially help to build a robust evidence base for sustainable water and energy use in diverse contexts are welcomed.

Papers Expected

Empirical papers that are based on fieldwork, case studies, or evaluations of policies, frameworks and efforts related to energy and water access.

Theoretical papers that offer new frameworks or challenge dominant models of sustainability.

Methodological papers that propose innovative approaches or tools for capturing and analysing the local perspectives related to water and energy use.

The panel will seek empirical paper presentations, followed by moderated discussions to draw out comparative insights.

[1] Assistant Professor, Government Degree College Ramnagar, Udhampur (Jammu & Kashmir), 182122, Email: Pankajdabgotra03@gmail.com
[2] Research Scholar, Department of Public Administration, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 160014, Email: Pragyamahajan20@gmail.com

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