# NR05 / Policy making for India’s evolving energy transition landscape

**Topic :** Research

**Chair :** Dwarkeshwar Dutt (Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi)

**Second Chair :** Sanoj Sanoj (Jawaharlal Nehru University)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

As the threat of climate change assumes catastrophic proportions, sustainable energy transition becomes an urgent undertaking. This is particularly true for emerging economies like India where energy related emissions have risen significantly and are likely to continue to do so unless mitigated by policy and governance interventions. India’s energy transition landscape undergone substantial shifts and as transitions unfold, creating novel issues, policy and governance architecture must adapt to address these. In the context of India’s evolving energy transition landscape, the following themes stand out:

**Theme 1. Policy and governance design for India’s evolving renewable energy (RE) landscape:** In the last two decades, deployment of technologies like solar has increased by leaps and bounds while new technologies like green hydrogen and compressed biogas have been introduced in India’s RE portfolio. This technology shift has given rise to new issues for policy makers such as focusing from deployment to manufacturing in case of solar and promoting innovation for emerging technologies like green hydrogen. In this evolving context, following questions become important:

i. What new issues have gained salience for technology development and deployment in India’s energy transition and what policy instruments are needed to address these?

ii. How are policy goals, problem definitions, and policy narratives are shifting with India’s evolving energy transition?

iii. What is the role of power and politics in this shift and what are the implications for India’s energy transition?

**Theme 2. Policy for a more just transition:** Several studies in the recent years have pointed out issues pertaining to inclusivity and justice in India’s RE deployment which makes it critical to:

i. Explore ways in which policy design can effectively translate the values of justice, equity, and inclusivity on the ground.

ii. Examine the role of different actors like state, intermediaries, street-level bureaucracy etc. in producing just (or unjust) outcomes.

iii. Critically examine the need and applicability of moving beyond restricted and overly legal conceptualization of justice towards more holistic ones.

**Theme 3. Exploring the uniqueness of Global South context for policy making:** Many scholars have expressed dissatisfaction with the applicability of Western policy theories to emerging economies’ context and have argued for policy studies discipline to be more context specific. Considering the uniqueness of India’s context, it would be pertinent to explore the following questions:

i. What are the main conflicts and challenges in aligning India’s developmental and climate mitigation objectives and how policies can align these two?

ii. Taking empirical case studies from India (or broader Global South), how can we rethink prevalent policy theories such as Multiple Streams Framework (MSF), Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF), policy feedback etc.?

iii. What are the key challenges and opportunities in promoting Global South-South policy and governance lessons?

**Chairs:**

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## CALL FOR PAPERS

We invite theoretical and empirical contributions from scholars, policy practitioners, civil-society actors and other interested groups for the panel ‘Policy making for India’s evolving energy transition landscape’ at 6th India Public Policy Network Conference – ‘Public Policy Praxis in the Global South: Building Coherence and Capacity for Future Challenges’ at the National Law School of India University (NLSIU), Bengaluru from June 1 to 4, 2026.

The aim of the panel is to advance the understanding of policy and governance issues in India’s energy transition and therefore we encourage submissions that move beyond mere descriptive accounts to offer rigorous, evidence-based arguments or novel theoretical framings that can guide policy design, practice and contribute to the literature.

We are especially interested in contributions that bridge theory and practice through, but not limiting to, comparative case studies, historical analysis, policy analysis, mixed-methods framework, process-tracing etc. and yield transferable lessons for the Global South.

The panel seeks contributions on the following themes:

**Theme 1: India’s evolving renewable energy landscape:** This theme explores how policy priorities are shifting from basic deployment to issues of domestic manufacturing, technological innovation, supply-chain governance, and sectoral coordination. We particularly welcome studies that examine how changing narratives, institutional restructuring, and political interests shape policy choices in India’s energy transition.

**Theme 2: Policy design for a just and inclusive transition:** the theme seeks contributions that unpack how justice, equity, and inclusivity are interpreted, translated, and contested and the role of policy in these processes. This includes work on distributional impacts of RE projects, the behaviour of intermediaries and frontline bureaucracies, local participation, land and livelihood concerns, and frameworks that broaden justice beyond narrow legal notions.

**Theme 3: Rethinking policy theory for the Global South:** Papers that critically interrogate the limits of dominant Western policy theories when applied to India and similar contexts. We seek studies that develop alternative conceptualisations grounded in empirical realities such as developmental pressures, informality, institutional hybridity etc. and contributions that explore how Global South–South learning can generate new theoretical and policy insights for policy studies.

We look forward to scholarship that challenges prevailing assumptions and offers actionable insights for policy in India and comparable contexts.