

Charter Document

**Food and Land
Use Coalition
India Action
Coalition
for Responsible
Sourcing & Trade
of Commodities
(FOLU India-CREST)**





About the Document

Established in 2017, the Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) is a community of organizations and individuals committed to the urgent need to transform the ways we produce and consume food and use our land for people, nature, and climate. We support science-based solutions and help build a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities to unlock collective and ambitious action. The FOLU India Country Platform is spearheaded by a core group of four organizations: The Council for Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), Indian Institute of Management – Ahmedabad (IIM -A), The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and Revitalizing Rainfed Agriculture Network (RRA-N); with World Resource Institute India (WRI India) serving as the secretariat.

During Phase 2.0 of its operations in India, which started from January 2021 – FOLU has been expanding its collaboration through Action Coalitions, a coalition of experts and institutions working collectively on a specific agenda. This document sets out a charter for continued collaboration among four such organizations: The Centre for Responsible Business (CRB), IDH – The Sustainable Trade Initiative India, WWF India, and World Resource Institute India (WRI India). Under the FOLU umbrella, CREST will aim to work on responsible sourcing and trade of agricultural and forest commodities linked to India. This document provides the background, ambitions, aims and key activities that the Action Coalition will undertake.

Background

The global economy is shaped by international trade, treaties and negotiations that encompass policy and market ambitions. India has had a key part, presumably from the beginning, as a producer of multiple agricultural and forest linked commodities. As a crucial developing market, India continues to take centerstage in this narrative and over time – India has become one of the prominent producer and consumer countries in the international trade arena.

Expanding agriculture and unsustainable production and extraction practices, due to the increasing global demand for certain commodities continue to exacerbate the rate of deforestation and degradation of forest and other ecosystems across the world. Deforestation, excessive resource utilization (like water) and land degradation are examples of challenges related to environmental sustainability persisting in the value chains of various commodities. Furthermore, socio-economic concerns pertaining to labour rights, their working conditions, empowerment and welfare of labourers and their inclusion are other critical social sustainability issues associated with unsustainable production. Consideration for the interest of producers, small holder farmers and forest dependent communities, and climate smart agricultural practices are critical for holistic discussion on responsible global value chains.

Given its population India remains as one of the largest producer, exporter, importer, and market driving country and global value chains links it closely with drivers of domestic and offshore issues of environmental and social degradation. While deforestation, is not a major risk triggered by agriculture in India, some of the country's large volume imports – rubber, timber, oilseeds, and oil-bearing trees are recognized deforestation-linked commodities. Moreover, as a producer, Indian agriculture continues to be associated with resource depletion, biodiversity and ecosystem damages, declining soil health and land degradation, etc. From the proceedings of the Food, Agriculture and Commodity Trade (FACT) consultation it was evident that domestic practices and trade gains primacy over international markets. With this background, CREST – the Action Coalition is one of the FOLU India Country Platform initiatives adhering to the FOLU Global objectives to ensure the sustainability of the domestic and global value chains connected with the country – including both imports and exports.

Vision and Mission

The Vision of the Action Coalition is to advance efforts on responsible sourcing and sustainable production, leveraging India's pivotal position in global agricultural and forest commodities trade. The coalition will aim to work on one hand in building the demand and uptake of responsibly sourced commodities, on the other hand it will seek to enable and strengthen sustainable agricultural production and supply of responsibly sourced commodities to the domestic and international markets. The main objective of the coalition will remain to lead India's stewardship in global trade and to share learnings with exporter countries (countries export agricultural and forest related products to India) through international forums and to enable these countries to also follow a similar responsible sourcing vision.

The Action Coalition has its Mission with the following objectives to attain its vision –

- A. To build and strengthen India's position as a steward of responsible sourcing and trade – across agriculture and forestry linked value chains associated with deforestation in international cooperation forums.
- B. To support policymakers in promoting sustainability in global value chains through improved understanding of the linkages between conservation and global trade of agriculture and forest linked commodities.

Structure of the Action Coalition

The Action Coalition (CREST) at present includes Centre for Responsible Business (CRB), IDH – The Sustainable Trade Initiative India, WWF India, and World Resource Institute India (WRI India). Centre for Responsible Business will lead the action coalition for the next 3 years. Unless it has been decided otherwise, CREST will function under the FOLU umbrella and activities of CREST will be part of the FOLU workplan.

Next Steps

- ❖ The initial activities – launch of the coalition and preparation of work plan will be supported by FOLU India
- ❖ The launch will be carried out in October 2021
- ❖ Roles and responsibilities of partner organizations will be decided by October 2021
- ❖ Work plan preparation will be completed concluded by December 2021
- ❖ The work plan will be used for fundraising with support from FOLU – PMU





Contact details:

FOLU India

Jayahari KM

FOLU India Country Co-ordinator
FOLU India Secretariat
World Resources Institute India
www.foodandlandusecoalition.org

WRI India, Delhi Office: LGF, AADI, 2 Balbir
Saxena Marg, Hauz Khas, New Delhi 110016
Direct: +91-11-4055 0776
Mobile: +91-9971799271
km.jayahari@wri.org

FOLU India CREST

RIJIT SENGUPTA

Chief Executive Officer
Center for Responsible Business
<https://c4rb.org/>

USO House, USO Road, 6 Special
Institutional Area, Off Shaheed Jeet
Singh Marg, New Delhi-110067
Office: +91 8171312019
M: +91-9829285928
E: rijit@c4rb.in