

EDITORIAL

Kirsten Jörgensen, Christian Wagner

As an emerging world power, India is becoming an important partner in critical areas of ecological sustainability. Its rapidly emerging economy and Germany's pioneering environmental economy offer different but mutually complementary perspectives.

This issue of the journal presents various papers on environmental governance in India that stem from student research projects. The MA and PhD students participating in them performed their research work within the context of a student and research exchange programme called "German-Indian Climate Change and Sustainability Dialogue" (GISCCD). During their research stays at Freie Universität Berlin and TERI University (New Delhi), students from both countries addressed a variety of topics related to the environment, climate and energy, studying problems, policies and their impacts. They studied the way in which policies promote and impede sustainable development.

The papers presented here address water governance and e-waste management. To some extent they touch on the potential for drawing cross-national lessons, an issue of paramount importance in the GISCCD, a programme that seeks to create a platform for exchanging views and information, linking knowledge and developing approaches at the interface of politics, business and academia.

The first paper, written by Dinter, Lloyd, Skinner and Strothmann, touches on the potential for drawing international lessons in the area of waste management and focuses on India, the EU and the USA. It provides some insights into the enormous problem of e-waste in India, which has become further aggravated through illegal imports from industrialized countries, including European member states and the USA. Furthermore, it reveals the present situation and political development of e-waste management and regulation in India. In comparing the regulatory e-waste frameworks, the student research group identifies various lessons and implications from e-waste management in the European Union and the United States, ones that may influence or predict both strengths and obstacles to effectiveness in Indian e-waste regulation.

The second and third papers deal with the enormous and urgent challenges of establishing sustainable water management in India's federal system. Ferdin, Görlitz and Schwörer address water stress in the Cauvery basin (South India) and argue that the current approaches to water management interrelate with allocation conflict,

constraining reforms leading to sustainable water-resource management. Based on interviews and an analysis of documents, their paper describes a lack of political and administrative cooperation between the centre, the states and local levels. They argue that weakly pronounced vertical and horizontal inter-sectoral cooperation, coupled with weak participative approaches, leads to inadequate conditions in water management and water use on the ground. They also reveal how policy change with a view to achieving sustainable water-resource management is further hindered due to highly politicized inter-state conflicts on water allocation and strong reluctance and non-compliance by the states.

The last paper also addresses the issue of Indian water management. Sarangi studies institutional change in urban water management occurring in the aftermath of the constitutional reforms of 1990. He shows how the innovative impulses expected from decentralization – and thus openings for private investment – are being lost in the tangle of administrative and political responsibilities inherent in India's complex water-management system.