

**PRESS RELEASE**

***“Sustainability has to come to the Center of Corporate strategy.”***

**Says Mr Sanjiv Puri, President Designate, Confederation of Indian Industry, and Chairman, Advisory Council, CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development and Chairman & Managing Director, ITC Limited**

**Two companies received Outstanding Accomplishment and five companies received Commendation for Significant Achievement in Corporate Excellence; six companies were recognized for Excellence and five companies received Commendation for Significant Achievement in Environment Management; four companies received Excellence and eight companies were awarded Commendation for Significant Achievement in Corporate Social Responsibility; and five companies won for Excellence in Biodiversity.**

**NEW DELHI, 19 March 2024:** **Mr Sanjiv Puri, President Designate, Confederation of Indian Industry, and Chairman, Advisory Council, CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development and Chairman & Managing Director, ITC Limited** recognized the winners for Excellence in Sustainable Business at a special presentation of 18TH CII-ITC Sustainability Awards in New Delhi on 19 March 2024.

Mr Puri said that according to the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) Global Risks Report 2024, climate change and nature loss are two of the greatest risks for the next ten years. “The world is on an actual countdown with the climate clock ticking fast and 1.5 degrees will be breached in less than 6 years and 8 months,” he said.

He highlighted that India has done more than its part and is the only G-20 country on track to achieve National Determined Commitments (NDCs). The Green Credit Programme (GCP), unveiled at COP28 by the Prime Minister aims to incentivize environmentally friendly actions by a wide range of actors including industry, individuals, village councils, and city authorities, among others and is expected to become an important tool in the fight against climate change.

He expressed that over and above the climate emergency, a lot of regulations have come into play that create trade barriers and impact competitiveness of Corporates. Enterprises have to deal with energy transition as well as accelerate adaptation efforts. Hence, Sustainability has to come to the centre of Corporate strategy and it is a case for survival and an existential crisis. It is very important for sustainability to be in the core of corporate strategy be it decarbonization, mobility, manufacturing process and green infrastructure.

He commended the CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development (CESD) on its thought leadership and talked about how the Centre is actively engaged with MSMEs and helping build capacity to deal with challenges. CESD is engaged with more than 400 supply chain partners and MSMEs in more than 10 clusters in different states to build awareness, train and collect data on various areas in the context of air quality management, emissions, climate change and ESG. The centre expects to take forward these cluster initiatives to more than 1000 MSMEs this year.

The uniquely credible Awards are layered around 16 aspects and 250 indicators that cover governance, ecology, biodiversity, and social dimensions of doing business. What makes these awards impactful is the integration of all facets of sustainability into business operations.

Congratulating the winners, Ms Seema Arora, Deputy Director General, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) expressed that the winners are a source of inspiration for many others. She added that these awards are a part of the Centre’s continued efforts to create awareness, promote policy and practices, and create capacity to mainstream sustainability practices. Not only do the Awards help reward exemplary enterprises for their pioneering efforts, but these recognitions also help create beacons of inspiration for others to follow.

This year, 68 applicants underwent a rigorous evaluation process that includes on-site assessment by a peer team of CII-certified sustainability assessors, who spent approximately 1,000 man-hours per application over a period of six months. The final shortlist of winning applicants was validated by a pre-eminent jury comprising leaders from government, civil society, and academia.

To get more information about the CII-ITC Sustainability Awards pls visit:

[Excellence in Sustainable Business (sustainabledevelopment.in)](https://sustainabledevelopment.in/brands/cii-itc-19th-sustainability-awards/)

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