

# POLICY *Matters*

## Featured Story



The Union Budget 2021 announced support for various initiatives to remedy India's worsening air quality; however, it also missed many opportunities to effectively clean the air we breathe, [writes](#) Dr Pratima Singh, Research Scientist, in this month's featured article.



### CSTEP Change-makers

*Our dependence on oil comes from transport and coal comes from power sector. If you look at oil from an energy security perspective, it is a big risk for India because, by 2040, our imports would have risen to 90% of our consumption and the total amount of money we are paying would be almost three times what we are paying today. One of the ways to reduce this dependence is to shift to electric vehicles along with renewable energy in the grid. This can help reduce oil imports, and a greener grid would help reduce GHG emissions overall.*

- Abhishek Nath, Sector Head, Energy & Power, in [CSTEP Soundbites: Quotes & Notes](#), on the India Energy Outlook 2021 published by the International Energy Agency (IEA)

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### Solutions

Climate change increases the strain on the agriculture sector, especially rainfed agriculture systems. Building resilience into the system requires a combination of flood and drought management strategies that can help the sector tackle climate risks and recover from losses. Innovations in current practices (e.g., crop insurance based on an objectively measurable weather variable such as rainfall, forecast-based financing for social protection, and public-private partnership in agroforestry) could make the existing mechanisms more robust and contribute to building long-term resilience in rainfed agriculture systems. In this [video](#), Dr Indu K Murthy, Principal Research Scientist of the Adaptation and Risk Analysis Team, discusses the findings of the study “Climate Change Risks to Rainfed Agriculture in Karnataka: Implications for Building Resilience” with Sreerekha Pillai, Chief Editor.





## Events

CSTEP is collaborating with Hygge Energy, a Canadian clean energy company, on the renewable energy and electric mobility segments.



We also signed an [MoU](#) with the Seshadripuram Institute of Commerce and Management to initiate a community newsletter named *Samvardhana* as part of our citizen-engagement efforts.



On the occasion of the National Science Day on February 28, we launched a LinkedIn blog series named CSTEP SPACE (Science & Policy Aligning with Citizen Engagement) to discuss the developments in science and technology and how they impact citizens. In the first [article](#) of the series, we deliberate on how India aims to enhance access to science and build a scientific temper by taking a people-centric approach in its draft Science, Technology and Innovation Policy, 2020.



Last month, we also launched a new podcast series: **Perspective Xchange**. It is an initiative to support interdisciplinarity in the research and policy streams by engaging with thought leaders on important issues. In our [first episode](#), Dr Jai Asundi, ED, discussed the National Research Foundation with business stalwarts and thought leaders Mr Kris Gopalakrishnan and T V Mohandas Pai.



In the [second episode](#), Dr Jai conversed with Mr S Ramadorai, former Vice-Chairman of Tata Consultancy Services, on the topic "AI4Good".

## Tipping the Scale

In February, Dr Indu Murthy—a resource person for the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC)—trained officials on conducting vulnerability assessment studies in a GIZ-supported initiative.



The [India Cooling Coalition](#) website was also launched in February. CSTEP is a member of the coalition, which tries to address India's rising cooling needs and their implications on energy and the environment.



CSTEP's study on PM2.5 levels during the COVID-19 lockdown was [published](#) in Elsevier. The study found that the significant reduction in PM2.5 levels was driven by the transport sector.



## In the News

CSTEP researchers engaged extensively with the Union Budget 2021, and mainstream news outlets published our thoughts on the implications of the budget on [green initiatives](#), the [green bond market](#), and [air pollution](#).



Dr Jai Asundi shared his thoughts on the *India Energy Outlook 2021* published by the IEA in an [article](#) in *Carbon Brief*. In another [article](#) published by the *Hindustan Times*, Priyavrat Bhati, Sector Head of Climate, Environment & Sustainability, cautions that until the supply of plastic is checked, production is likely to continue unabated.



*The Wire Science* published an [article](#) by researcher Nikhilesh Dharmala on how carbon capture, utilisation, and storage technology in heavy industries can enable India to achieve its climate as well as developmental goals.



In an [article](#) published in the *ETEnergyWorld*, Aniket Baregama, Research Engineer, and Abhishek Nath discuss key elements in the draft Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2020.

### On Our Minds

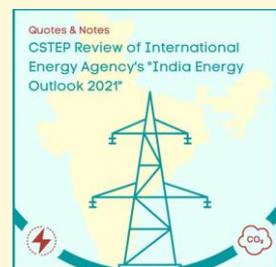
Researcher Arjun Shanker wrote about the budget's implications for agricultural credit in this blog [article](#).



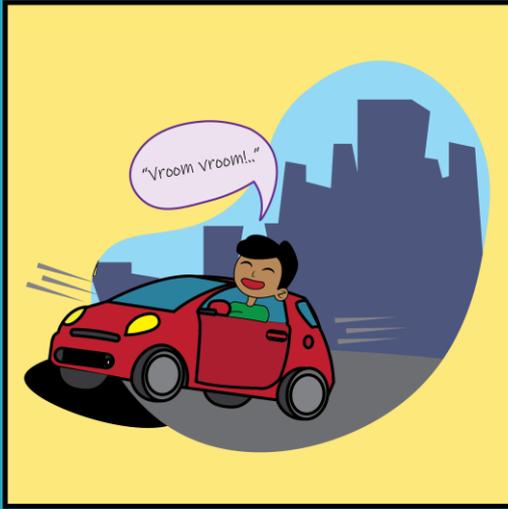
Also, do read our International Women's Day [special](#) on the need for more women in leadership positions.



In our latest [podcast](#) "CSTEP Soundbites: Quotes and Notes", Dr Jai Asundi and Abhishek Nath discuss the *India Energy Outlook 2021* published by the IEA.



## Tickle Tales



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