

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

Project SAFFAL (South Asia Finance Facility for Acceleration & Leverage)

Investor and Donor Summit

5th March 2026
Venue: Singapore
Registration: [Link](#)

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

A half-day, invitation-only convening in Singapore co-organized by the Massive Earth Foundation (MEF), UN Environment Programme and UN Women to accelerate gender-inclusive climate finance across South Asia. The event will bring together DFIs, donors, impact investors, corporates, technical partners, and women-led climate enterprises to co-design blended finance solutions (SAFFAL facility, \$6–10M target) to bridge the region’s financing and deployment gaps for women-led climate SMEs and startups.

OBJECTIVES

- **Advance Gender-Inclusive Climate Finance:** Engage donors and investors to co-design blended finance models that scale women-led climate enterprises.
- **Strengthen Regional Collaboration:** Build partnerships across India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka to accelerate gender-responsive climate innovation.
- **Mobilize Catalytic Capital:** Drive commitments toward operationalizing the \$6–10M blended finance facility for climate SMEs.
- **Create a Joint Action Agenda:** Align donors, investors, and partners around a coordinated regional funding roadmap.

AGENDA

Time	Agenda
2.00 PM – 2.30 PM	Registration
2.30 PM – 2.45 PM	<u>Welcome Address & Opening Remarks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parimita Mohanty, UNEP and Shailesh Vickram Singh, Founder and Director, Massive Earth Foundation <p>An introduction to Project SAFFAL’s vision to catalyze women-led climate enterprises across South Asia through innovative financing and ecosystem support.</p>
2.45 PM – 3.00 PM	<u>Keynote Address</u> <p>Highlighting the gender and climate finance landscape in South Asia and the urgent need to unlock capital for inclusive climate innovation.</p>
3.00 PM – 3.40 PM	<u>Panel Discussion: Why Women-Led Climate SMEs Are the Missing Link in South Asia’s Climate Transition</u>

Time	Agenda
	<p>Moderator: Representative from Massive Earth Foundation (MEF) or UN Women</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Representative from UNEP (global climate finance and policy perspective) 2. Bilateral donor agency leader (policy and public finance lens) 3. Regional SME finance expert (South Asia focus) 4. Woman-led climate SME founder (on-the-ground practitioner perspective) <p>This panel will examine why women-led climate SMEs, rather than early-stage startups or large-scale infrastructure projects, represent the most undercapitalized yet critical segment in South Asia's climate transition. The discussion will move beyond the moral and traditional argument for gender inclusion to build a clear investment rationale, highlighting how these enterprises sit at the intersection of climate impact, job creation, and economic resilience.</p>
3.40 PM – 4.20 PM	<p><u>Panel Discussion: From Grant to Scale – How Blended Finance Can Unlock US\$100M+ for Women-Led Climate Enterprises</u></p> <p>Moderator: Senior blended-finance practitioner</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development Finance Institution (DFI) or blended-finance specialist 2. Foundation or catalytic capital provider 3. Impact fund manager with climate and gender mandate 4. UNEP or multilateral risk expert <p>This panel will explore how strategically deployed concessional capital can move beyond standalone grants to mobilize large-scale private investment into women-led climate enterprises. Framed around donor priorities of leverage, additionality, and capital mobilization, the discussion will examine how first-loss capital, guarantees, and risk-sharing structures can unlock institutional and commercial capital at scale.</p>
4.20 PM – 4.40 PM	Tea Break
4.40 PM – 5.20 PM	<p><u>Panel Discussion: Constructing Climate-Tech Portfolios – Risk, Returns, and the Strategic Role of Fund of Funds</u></p> <p>Moderator: Senior Climate Finance Expert / Global Fund Strategist</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fund of Funds (Global or Regional) 2. Climate-focused Venture Capital / Growth Fund 3. Institutional Investor or LP with exposure to India 4. Emerging Market Investment Platform / Specialist Climate Fund <p>This panel will explore how Fund of Funds approach climate-tech investing, balancing risk-adjusted returns while gaining diversified exposure through specialist managers. The discussion will examine portfolio construction strategies, allocation to emerging markets—particularly India—and the role of thematic and specialist funds in scaling climate innovation.</p>
5.20 PM – 5.40 PM	<p><u>Presentation: The Pooling Gap – Challenges in Creating Effective Pooling Structures for Climate SMEs</u></p> <p>Presenter: Shailesh Vikram Singh, Founder & Director, Massive Earth Foundation</p> <p>Participants: All investors, DFIs, donors, commercial lenders</p>

Time	Agenda
	This session will examine the structural and operational challenges that limit the creation of effective pooling mechanisms for climate-focused SMEs in South Asia. While pooling is widely recognized as a solution to overcome small ticket sizes, high transaction costs, and perceived risk, its implementation for SMEs, particularly women-led enterprises, remains fragmented and underdeveloped.
5.40 PM – 6.40 PM	<p><u>Closed-Door Roundtable (Chatham House Rule): What Would It Take for You to Commit? Designing a Facility That Donors and Investors Will Actually Fund</u></p> <p>Format: Closed-door roundtable discussion under the Chatham House Rule</p> <p>Participants: All investors, DFIs, donors, commercial lenders</p> <p>Moving beyond concept validation and high-level alignment, the discussion will focus on the concrete conditions under which donors and investors would be willing to commit capital to a women-led climate SME facility. Participants will engage in a candid, off-the-record exchange on risk tolerance, ticket sizes, return expectations, governance requirements, and decision-making timelines. The conversation will surface non-negotiables, design trade-offs, and practical constraints from both public and private capital provider, inputs that are rarely captured in open forums. Rather than presenting a finalized structure, the session will invite participants to actively shape the facility by articulating what would make it fundable, scalable, and institutionally credible from their respective perspectives.</p>
6.40 PM – 7.00 PM	<p><u>Closing Remarks and Vote of Thanks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Representative • Mr. Shailesh Vickram Singh, Founder and Director, Massive Earth Foundation
7.00 PM Onwards	<u>Networking Dinner and Cocktails</u>

ABOUT MASSIVE EARTH FOUNDATION

Massive Earth Foundation (MEF) is a **Section 8**, nonprofit organization certified **under FCRA and registered under 12A and 80G**, committed to advancing climate innovation and sustainability across the Asia-Pacific region. For over a decade, MEF has been building a robust, innovation-driven ecosystem for climate-tech startups, enabling entrepreneurs to scale solutions that address some of the world's most pressing environmental challenges.

Our work spans a comprehensive range of ecosystem-building interventions, including:

1. Accelerator and incubation programs
2. Capacity-building and technical assistance initiatives
3. Entrepreneurship development and market access support
4. Mobilizing early-stage climate capital to bridge critical financing gaps

Over the years, MEF has collaborated with some of the world's most respected multilateral institutions and global corporations, including the United Nations, IFC, World Bank, Amazon, Petronas, and more, to design and deliver high-impact innovation and acceleration programs across emerging markets.

One of our flagship initiatives, the LowCarbon.Earth Program in partnership with UNEP, has supported more than 180 climate-tech startups. These enterprises have collectively raised over USD 350 million in

follow-on funding, underscoring MEF's pivotal role in nurturing scalable climate solutions and strengthening the regional climate-tech ecosystem.