

Shell launches New Lens Scenarios in India

2013-04-29

The New Lens Scenarios, which look at trends in the economy, politics and energy as far ahead as 2100, underscore the critical role that government policies could play in shaping the future.

Shell launched the New Lens Scenarios in India on Friday, 12th April at an event organised by FICCI (Federation of India Chambers of Commerce and Industry) in New Delhi. Mr. Arun Maira, Member, Planning Commission was the Chief Guest at the event. The event comprised of a panel session which included Mr. Jeremy Bentham, Head of the Scenarios team, Shell International, Mr. Suman Bery, Chief Economist, Shell International, Dr. A. Didar Singh, Secretary General, FICCI, Mr. Sidharth Birla, Sr. Vice President FICCI and Dr. Arunabha Ghosh, Chief Executive, Council on Environment Energy and Water.

The scenarios explore two possible ways the 21st century could unfold, with dramatically different implications for society and the world's energy system. One scenario sees cleaner-burning natural gas becoming the most important energy source globally by the 2030s and early action to limit carbon dioxide emissions. The other sees solar becoming the top source by about 2070, but with slower action to address the threat of climate change.

"The New Lens Scenarios have been prepared at a time of profound upheaval in global society. As a result, these are possibly the most ambitious scenarios that Shell has attempted in the 40 years that the scenarios have existed.

India is already central to many of the themes of these scenarios: the shift in the world's economic centre of gravity toward Asian and other emerging markets, the need to fashion a new global order to reflect these changes, the impact of connectivity on governance and the tension between legitimate growth aspirations and planetary boundaries," said Jeremy Bentham, Vice President, Global Business Environment, Shell International, who presented the scenarios at FICCI.

Shell has a 40-year history of using scenario planning to explore possible future landscapes and aid strategic decision-making. The latest publication continues a tradition of sharing summaries of the scenarios to contribute to the public debate about possible ways to tackle some of society's long-term challenges. The New Lens Scenarios, which look at trends in the economy, politics and energy as far ahead as 2100, underscore the critical role that government policies could play in shaping the future.

"India is predicted to be one of the world's largest economies, but the road ahead is fraught with challenges – where 80% of our energy is imported and many people still do not have access to electricity. I hope the scenario discussions will enrich our collective knowledge and bring about constructive ideas for inclusive growth" said Yasmine Hilton, Chairman Shell India.

With the world's population headed toward 9.5 billion by 2060 and the rapid growth of emerging economies lifting millions of people out of poverty for the first time, the scenarios project that world energy demand could double over the next 50 years.

Called Mountains and Oceans, Shell's scenarios explore two plausible future pathways for society. Each scenario dives into the implications for the pace of global economic development, the types of energy we use to power our lives and the growth in greenhouse gas emissions.

“The thinking on the New Lens Scenarios began crystallizing a year ago. Just as much as the thinking behind the scenarios, what has impressed me is the way in which the scenarios are used to provide a common language across Shell for thinking systematically about an uncertain future. India’s 12th Five-Year Plan has also adopted scenarios to stimulate a national dialogue on the choices facing this country,” said Suman Bery, Chief Economist, Shell International, who also presented the scenarios.

The scenarios look further into the future than many other outlooks and highlight some surprising possible developments. Both see global emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) dropping to near zero by 2100. One factor is increasing use of technology that takes CO₂ out of the atmosphere, for instance by burning biomass to produce electricity, and then storing emissions underground. Although the Oceans scenario sees a dramatic increase in solar power, it also envisions greater fossil fuel use and higher total CO₂ emissions over the century than the Mountains scenario, which will likely have more impact on the world’s climate.

To explore Mountains and Oceans in more detail, download [Shell’s New Lens Scenarios](#).