

## **Environmental Conflict and Social Dialogue in Pakistan**

Pakistan's diverse social structure raises the likelihood of environmental conflict, as resource allocation is closely tied to societal fault lines. Pakistan, being highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, is experiencing extreme climate-induced events. Environmental issues are now concentrated around water scarcity, food security, air pollution and extreme climate events.

Pakistan's social diversity lacks adequate inclusion and a sense of belonging, making broader social dialogue challenging. A key driver of environmental conflict lies in inefficient and unsustainable governance structures. Achieving sustainability requires integrating environmental, economic, and social factors, necessitating a renewed focus on equitable resource management to mitigate conflicts. One example is the water crisis, where transboundary disputes over water distribution have been addressed through frameworks like the Indus Waters Treaty with India and local water management programmes between the provinces. Social dialogue has also played a role in forest conservation efforts and initiatives to reduce industrial pollution. However, these processes often encounter obstacles such as political instability, weak enforcement, and limited public awareness. Greater participation and transparent decision-making are essential for fostering sustainable solutions to Pakistan's environmental challenges. The experts in this session will discuss the following key questions:

- Why is environmental conflict a significant social challenge?
- What is the political ecology of environmental conflict in Pakistan, and how does it relate to social segmentation?
- How does lack of inclusivity exacerbate environmental conflicts?
- How can restructured social dialogue around environmental issues foster social inclusion?

### **Panel Organisers**

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