

NEW PRODUCT CATEGORY OF GREEN ROOM AIR CONDITIONERS LAUNCHED ON GOVERNMENT E-MARKETPLACE (GEM) TO MARK THE WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY TODAY

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Conservation, Sustainable Development, and EIA

Today on the occasion of World Environment Day, a new product category of Green Room Air Conditioners was launched on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM). The Secretary, Department of Commerce, Shri Anup Wadhavan launched it. The launch event was organized in association with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Shri Anup Wadhavan said on the occasion that Public procurement spend in India is nearly 15-20% of its GDP. Introducing SPP to this huge quantum of government procurement will further complement the country's climate policy objectives. The addition of Green Room Air Conditioners on GeM is another example of GeM being a futuristic and technology driven platform, focusing on environmental, social and economic pillars of sustainable public procurement

Shri P K Singh, CEO, GeM, said, "We have Gross Merchandise Value of about 15 billion dollars, with a little under 2 million sellers, and 52,000 government agencies, as buyers, and that is why it not only becomes critical but also urgent for GeM to facilitate the use of sustainable and eco-friendly procurement practices."

He further added, "We recognize the potential GeM has in nudging our government buyers to choose green and sustainable products and services, and the many positive externalities this can cause by driving innovations and reforming supply chains. This innovation can provide financial savings for government buyers and will meet evolving environmental challenges by moving towards a circular economy. We have also recommended to the UNEP to examine the top three services which have been procured by government agencies and how they can be made more sustainable."

The GeM portal will enable and encourage all central and state government agencies to buy efficient and environment friendly green ACs, thereby paving a way for Sustainable Public Procurement in India. The purchase of Green RACs shall be a voluntary approach.

Last year, the GeM portal saw sales of over 44,000 air conditioners worth Rs 1.7 billion, and it continues to grow. Additionally, public procurement spend in India is estimated to be 15-20% of its GDP. Leveraging the procurement power and promoting sustainable public procurement that align with India's climate policies and priorities would play a key role in achieving India's Nationally Determined Contributions and its commitment towards relevant SDGs particularly SDG 12.7. Green Room Air Conditioner integration within the public procurement system is a catalyst for market transformation towards sustainable cooling.

The Government of India is taking proactive steps towards a circular and green economy. In March 2018, the Ministry of Finance constituted a Task Force on Sustainable Public Procurement. Additionally, the draft National Resource Efficiency Policy (2019) includes the agenda of Sustainable Public Procurement, that suggests establishing green procurement guidelines providing information on resource efficiency criteria to be used in the procurement processes for the prioritized products/service categories.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in collaboration with other partners is supporting the Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) initiative of the Government of India with initial focus on three prioritized product categories including paper, disinfectant and Green Room Air Conditioners.

Jigmet Takpa, Joint Secretary MoEFCC, stated, the launch of Green Room Air conditioners on the Government e-Marketplace is an appropriate celebration of World Environment Day as an urgent, substantive and transformative system to reverse the damage done to our ecosystem. SPP is a key element in attaining a wide range of goals in strategic spending and implementation as a policy instrument to support programmes in priority areas and formulating national sustainable development strategies.

Saurabh Kumar, Executive Vice Chairperson, EESL Group, said public procurement most of the times moves the market towards better efficiency. There is an enormous demand for air conditioners in government offices and departments and led by such demands, with awareness outreach campaigns, we as public policy proponents have a massive opportunity to transform the market. This is what has inspired EESL to start with a super-efficient AC programme, and we would be happy to partner with GeM to move this movement towards super efficiency.

Aaron Bishop, USAID Acting Deputy Mission Director, said, USAID is honored to support the Government of India's priorities and objectives in greening the supply chain. It is inspiring to see that GeM has taken a lead by integrating green room air conditioner criteria onto its platform. This pioneering effort will propel the market towards adopting and expanding these green and sustainable products and services.

Aul Bagai, UNEP Country Head, highlighted that UNEP aims to support the government in establishing business models and policies for accelerating sustainable consumption and production, including through resource-efficient and circular approaches and sustainable public procurement will be a key enabling tool in this direction.

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