



RIS
Research and Information System
for Developing Countries
विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली



FISD
Forum for Indian
Science Diplomacy

Roundtable Discussion and MoU Signing Ceremony

Science Diplomacy in the Global South: An India-Africa Perspective

3:30 PM - 05:30 PM | Wednesday, 6 May 2026

G. Parthasarathi Hall, RIS, New Delhi

Concept Note

Science diplomacy has gained prominence over the past two decades as we increasingly face interconnected and transnational challenges, and boundaries between science, technology, and international relations are getting blurred. While scientific cooperation across borders has existed for centuries, science diplomacy as a policy framework began to take shape in the early 21st century, particularly through the initiatives of the Royal Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which provided a three-dimensional understanding of science diplomacy. The theoretical understanding and case studies of science diplomacy largely remain Global-North centric. This growing recognition reflects the need to address complex transboundary challenges, including climate change, global health crises, food security and emerging technologies, which cannot be tackled by a single country. Science diplomacy has emerged as an important instrument of foreign policy, enabling collaboration, trust-building, and knowledge-sharing.

For the Global South, the emergence of science diplomacy presents both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, it provides access to global scientific networks, funding, and technological capabilities. On the other, it often operates within unequal global systems where research agendas, funding priorities, and technological standards are largely shaped by the Global North. With growing geopolitical tensions, techno-nationalism and technological sovereignty, it is important that the Global South participate in the global S&T agenda and norm-setting and become active shapers of science diplomacy agendas.

In the run-up to the forthcoming India–Africa Forum Summit, this roundtable seeks to examine the role of science diplomacy as a driver of development in the Global South, with a particular focus on India–Africa partnerships. It will explore modalities, opportunities, and strategic pathways to strengthen India-Africa cooperation in science, technology, and innovation (STI), while addressing common and global challenges. By bringing together diverse perspectives, the roundtable aims to foster a dialogue that positions science diplomacy as a forward-looking and collaborative agenda for the Global South, anchored in principles of equity, co-development, and mutual benefit.

Tentative Agenda

Time	Agenda
03:30 PM - 04:10 PM	<p><u>Introduction and Context Setting</u></p> <p>Context Setting: Dr. Amit Kumar, Assistant Professor, RIS</p> <p>Welcome Remarks: Professor Sachin Kumar Sharma, Director General, RIS</p> <p>Opening Remarks: Dr. Geeta Vani Rayasam, Director, CSIR-NIScPR</p> <p>Special Remarks: Shri Amit A. Shukla, Joint Secretary, Cyber Diplomacy Division and E-Governance & IT Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India*</p>
04:10 PM - 04:15 PM	<p>MoU Signing between RIS and CSIR-NIScPR</p> <p><i>Group Photo</i></p>
04:15 PM - 05:15 PM	<p><u>Roundtable Discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Rajan Sudhesh Ratna, Coordinator, Global South Centre of Excellence - DAKSHIN• Dr. Sanjeev K. Varshney, Science Consultant, RIS and Former Head (International Cooperation), Department of S&T, Government of India• Dr. Yogesh Suman, Chief Scientist, CSIR-NIScPR• Dr. Sarin N. S., Coordinator, Forum for Indian Traditional Medicine (FITM)• Dr. Monika Jaggi, Principal Scientist, CSIR-NiScPR• Dr. Charu Lata, Principal Scientist, CSIR-NIScPR <p><i>Open Discussion</i></p>
05:15PM - 05:20 PM	<p>Vote of Thanks: Dr. Sneha Sinha, Consultant, RIS</p>
05.20 PM onward	<p><i>High-Tea</i></p>