

## LS Digital Report Finds India's ESG Narrative Has Moved Beyond Green Claims to Measurable, Regulated Impact

*Study finds just 29% consumer trust in green claims, as regulation, BRSR mandates and measurable ESG metrics reshape brand accountability*

**India, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025:** LS Digital, India's leading Independent Digital Business Transformation (DBT) company, has released its new year-end report, *From Green Claims to Measurable Impact*, revealing how India's sustainability and ESG landscape is shifting decisively from brand-led storytelling to regulation-driven, measurable action.

The report highlights a decisive shift from aspirational, marketing-driven sustainability narratives to a regime defined by regulation, operational accountability, and measurable environmental performance.

The analysis is powered by LS Digital's proprietary Quilt methodology, an AI-led framework that applies machine learning across search, social, and public web data to uncover ESG themes, trends, and behavioural signals.

### A New Era of Accountability

The study identifies a major behavioural inflection point in the market. Only **29% of Indian consumers trust green marketing claims**, creating a trust deficit that is pushing brands towards hard metrics, verified disclosures, operational accountability rather than broad-based sustainability claims.

This shift is reinforced by a rapidly maturing regulatory framework. SEBI's BRSR mandate for the top 1,000 listed companies, alongside with anti-greenwashing penalties of up to **₹5 million**, has transformed sustainability reporting from a voluntary exercise into a mandatory, measurable business requirement.

With policy momentum rising across clean energy, waste management, packaging reform and circular economy initiatives, ESG compliance is institutionalised.

### The New Discourse Landscape

Using multi-platform discourse analysis, the report maps India's ESG conversation across three distinct arenas, reflecting different stages of awareness, action, and accountability.

#### 1. Social Media: Action-Oriented (Community First)

Grassroots participation dominates social platforms, with **digital activism (44%)**, **local events (37%)**, and **neighbourhood-led initiatives (19%)** driving real-world change.

#### 2. Search: Discovery and Learning Phase

Search behaviour signals a broad population still building foundational ESG knowledge. Traditional Indian moral storytelling accounts for **96% of sustainability-related online content**, offering a cultural pathway for brands to embed ESG narratives meaningfully.

#### 3. News & Blogs: Regulation and Verification

Coverage is heavily policy-led, with **42% focusing on new regulations** and 17% emphasising measurable metrics. BRSR updates, anti-greenwashing rules and government missions dominate formal discourse.

### **Government as Sustainability Architect**

The report highlights government policy as the backbone of India's sustainability shift. Frameworks like the Green India Mission and PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, alongside state-specific programmes, have moved ESG from voluntary commitments to structured implementation.

Policy-driven implementation discourse breaks down as follows:

- **55%** – National missions as implementation frameworks
- **33%** – Incentive-led sustainability programmes
- **9%** – Regulatory enforcement
- **3%** – Innovation initiatives

### **Operational Innovation: From Claims to Proof**

Indian corporates are increasingly investing in measurable operational outcome, including renewable integration, plastic reduction, waste reutilisation and circular economy models. These hard metrics are becoming the new competitive edge for brands seeking stakeholder confidence.

Parallely the report notes a widening capability gap. Large corporations possess sophisticated ESG systems, digital tools, and third-party assurance mechanisms. **However, MSMEs** which account for nearly 25% of India's industrial energy consumption, face challenges due to limited resources, lack of tailored ESG frameworks, and minimal reporting infrastructure.

Cross-sector partnerships such as corporate-government-NGO coalitions and collaborations with waste-picker communities are emerging as key solutions for inclusive ESG execution.

**Commenting on the findings, Prasad Shejale, Founder & CEO, LS Digital, said, "India's sustainability narrative has shifted from intent to evidence. The data clearly shows that measurable impact, verified disclosures, and operational accountability are now the strongest drivers of trust. Green marketing without proof no longer works. Brands that prioritise transparency, adopt digital tracking, and invest in long-term sustainable operations will gain disproportionate advantage, commercially, reputationally, and culturally."**

### **What Will Shape India's ESG Future**

The report concludes that the next phase of India's ESG journey will depend on **multi-stakeholder partnerships** that accelerate sector-wide impact, community engagement that sustains public mobilisation, and digital transparency tools that build trust at scale.

With India projected to generate **₹40 lakh crore annually** through sustainability-linked economic activity by 2050, the report positions the coming decade as pivotal for India's ESG leadership, shifting the focus from intent to execution at scale.

**For more details on the subject matter, please visit [How India Is Shifting Sustainability From Storytelling to Measurable Impact Blog](#)**

**About LS Digital:**

LS Digital is a leading independent Digital Business Transformation (DBT) company, integrating the expertise of specialist, innovative entities: LS Digital, Langoor, f1studioz, DataQuark and Social Panga. Our comprehensive suite of services encompasses business consulting, activation, and transformation through a robust DBT solution framework; Media, Creative & Communication, Data & Insights, Technology & Innovation, UI/UX and CX/EX. Leveraging digital as a catalyst, they enable brands to holistically develop businesses across various platforms, ensuring exceptional brand experiences in a digital-first world.

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