



National Conference
on
Safe Tea Production
Policy, Compliance & Sustainable Practices



In Partnership with FSSAI

28th November, 2025 | 10:00 – 14:00 hrs (IST)
Tamarind Hall, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

Sankala Foundation

www.sankala.org

Safe Tea Production Policy, Compliance & Sustainable Practices

The global tea market is increasingly prioritising safety, traceability, and climate-conscious production. As the world's second-largest producer and largest consumer of tea, India's tea industry is undergoing a significant shift in both policy and practice.

A major transition is the growing prominence of Small Tea Growers (STGs), who now account for nearly 52% of national production. This transformation has opened opportunities across the Northeast and Southern states but has also exposed structural challenges. Many growers have entered tea farming without formal agronomic training and often depend on informal or vendor-led advice. This situation has resulted in indiscriminate pesticide use, increasing the risk of residue non-compliance and pressure on soil and water resources.

Tea is among the most pesticide-dependent plantation crops in India. Its perennial nature and pest pressure have made chemical control the dominant strategy. However, excessive and unregulated application has raised growing concerns over pesticide residues in made tea. While the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has specified maximum residue limits (MRLs) for more than 35 pesticides, non-compliance persists due to limited awareness, dosage errors, and the use of obsolete molecules.

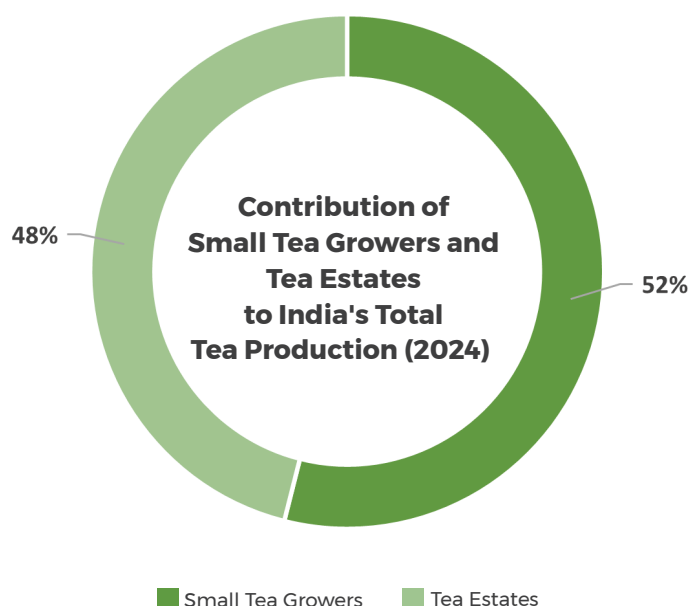
Regulatory oversight, monitoring and traceability mechanisms have been strengthened in recent years. Yet a large share of STGs remain outside institutional reach. To safeguard livelihoods and market credibility, there is a clear need to expand Integrated Pest Management (IPM), promote biocontrol solutions and strengthen farmer education on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP).

Empowering STGs through capacity-building, advisory systems, and IEC materials is essential to ensuring compliance, protecting export competitiveness, and securing a sustainable future for India's tea sector.

Purpose of the Conference

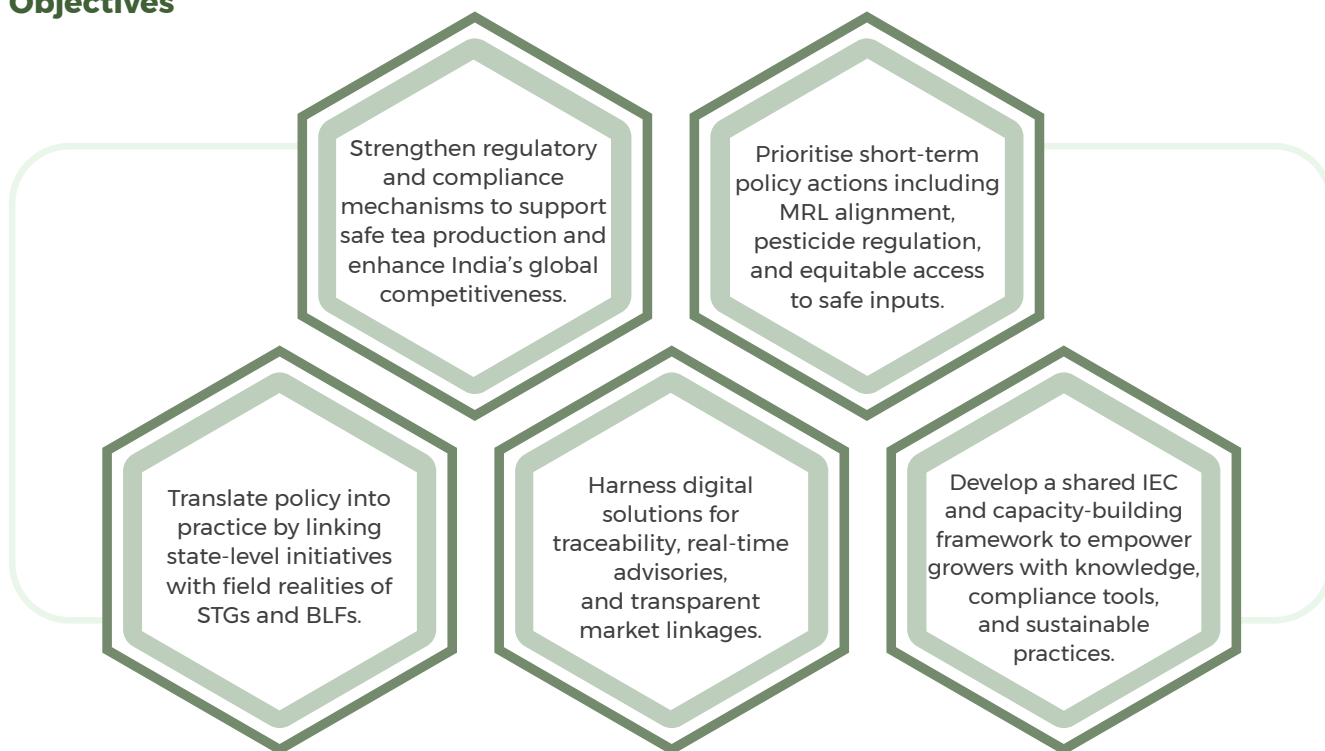
In light of these developments, a national conference, jointly organised by FSSAI and the Sankala Foundation, has been instituted to strengthen alignment between policy and practice through structured multistakeholder engagement.

It will convene policymakers, researchers, grower associations, and industry representatives to:



- Reflect on priority reforms in India's tea sector;
- Explore mechanisms to integrate policy and practice across state and grassroots levels;
- Build consensus on immediate policy actions and chart a roadmap for long-term sustainability; and
- Discuss institutional roles for bodies such as the Tea Board, TRA, CIB&RC, ICAR, Tea manufacturers, BLFs, and STG associations in ensuring compliance, safety, and resilience.

Objectives



Indicative Themes & Discussion

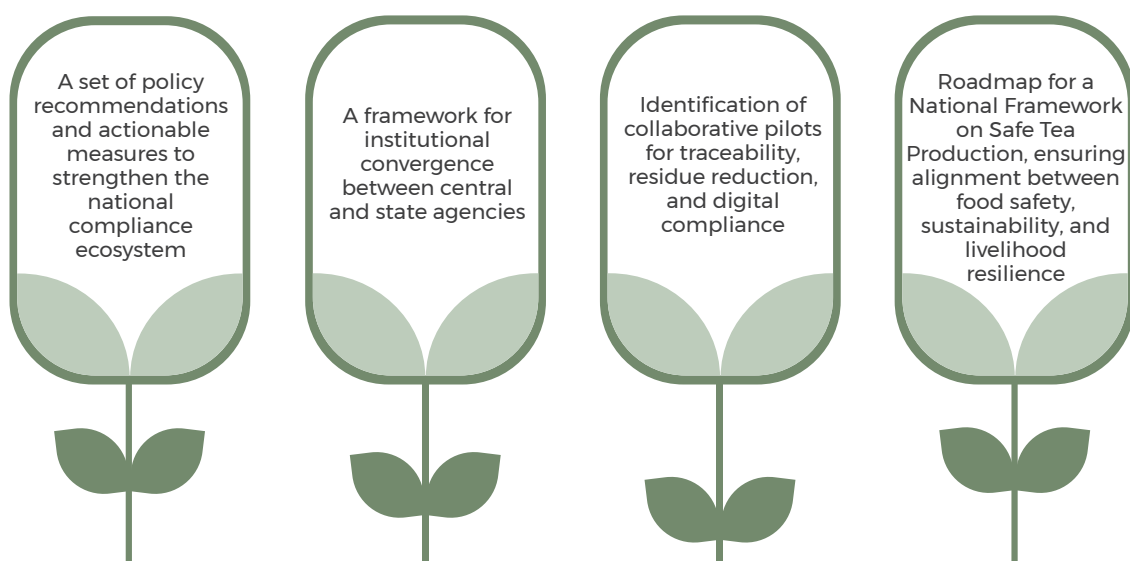
Regulatory Frameworks & Policies

India's tea industry operates under multiple regulatory frameworks involving the Tea Board of India, FSSAI, CIB&RC, and other agencies. While significant progress has been made in aligning national standards with international benchmarks and enforcing maximum residue limits (MRLs), several gaps persist, particularly in inter-agency coordination, testing infrastructure, and field-level dissemination. This session aims to discuss the current policy and compliance landscape, assess gaps, and identify opportunities for harmonisation between national standards and global benchmarks.

Bridging the Gaps: Strengthening the role of State and Regional Organisations

While regulatory structures exist, compliance often falters at the grassroots due to limited awareness, weak institutional linkages, and inadequate technical capacity among Small Tea Growers (STGs). Bridging this policy-to-practice divide requires strengthening state-led systems, empowering grower associations, and enhancing last-mile extension. This session proposes to translate national regulations into effective field implementation through state-led action, institutional support, and grower empowerment.

Expected Outcomes



About FSSAI

As India's apex food safety authority, the FSSAI ensures that tea produced and marketed in India meets the highest standards of safety, hygiene, and compliance. Through the enforcement of Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) and strengthening of testing and traceability systems, FSSAI has aligned national practices with global benchmarks, enhancing export competitiveness. Its initiatives such as FoSCoS (Food Safety and Compliance System) and Eat Right India extend regulatory outreach to Small Tea Growers, while fostering inter-agency coordination, capacity building, and a transparent, consumer-trust-based value chain.

About Sankala Foundation

Sankala Foundation is a non-profit organisation which focuses on strengthening the knowledge base and promoting dialogue among various stakeholders to foster initiatives that contribute to the sustainability of Planet Earth. The Sankala Centre for Climate and Sustainability (SCCS) was established by the foundation with the objective of promoting education, research, training, outreach, advice, and advocacy in the field of climate and sustainability.

Time	Programme
10.00 - 10.45 hrs	Inaugural Session
10.45 - 12.00 hrs	Session I: Regulatory Frameworks & Policies
12.00 - 12.20 hrs	Tea Break
12.20 - 13.30 hrs	Session II - Bridging the Gap: Strengthening the role of State and Regional Organisations
13.30 - 14.00 hrs	Closing Session: The Future Road Map
14.00 hrs	Lunch



Scan to know more