

# CSR TODAY

RNI NO. MAHENG/2013/48866 ■ VOLUME 13 ■ ISSUE 03 ■ OCTOBER 2025 ■ PRICE ₹100 ■ TOTAL PAGES: 52



## THE TANGLE OF BIODIVERSITY CREDITS

FUNDING IS NEEDED TO REVERSE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY LOSS. A CREDITS MARKET HAS BEEN TOUTED AS A SOLUTION, BUT ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS SAY 'DON'T BE FOOLED'.

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Study links world's top oil and gas firms to 200 'more intense' heatwaves

### CSR NEWS

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# CSR TODAY

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# Water cycle becoming erratic is major cause of concern



**Rajesh Tiwari**  
Publisher  
[rt@iccsr.org](mailto:rt@iccsr.org)

**In the past six years only about one-third of the global river catchment area had normal discharge conditions compared to the 1991-2020 average. This means that two thirds have too much or too little water – reflecting the increasingly erratic hydrological cycle.**

**T**he water cycle has become increasingly erratic and extreme – swinging between deluge and drought, according to a World Meteorological Organization (WMO) based on a comprehensive analysis of 2024.

This becomes a major cause of concern. The State of Global Water Resources report of the Geneva-headquartered WMO says only about one-third of the global river basins had “normal” conditions, while the rest were either above or below normal – the sixth consecutive year of clear imbalance.

Besides, 2024 was the third straight year with widespread glacier loss across all regions.

Many small-glacier regions have already reached or are about to pass the so-called peak water point - when a glacier’s melting reaches its maximum annual runoff, after which this decreases due to glacier shrinkage.

The Amazon Basin and other parts of South America, as well as southern Africa were gripped by severe drought in 2024, whilst there were wetter-than-normal conditions in central, western and eastern Africa, parts of Asia and Central Europe, it says.

“Water sustains our societies, powers our economies and anchors our ecosystems. And yet the world’s water resources are under growing pressure and – at the same time – more extreme water-related hazards are having an increasing impact on lives and livelihoods,” said WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo, in a press statement on Thursday.

An estimated 3.6 billion people face inadequate access to water at least a month per year and this is expected to increase to more than 5 billion by 2050, according to UN Water, and the world falling far short of Sustainable Development Goal 6 on water and sanitation.

“Water is one of the first frontlines where the climate crisis becomes visible whether through devastating floods or persistent droughts. The science is clear: unless we rapidly cut fossil fuel emissions, these extremes will intensify, threatening ecosystems, agriculture, and human health. Reducing our dependence on coal, oil, and gas is the only way to stabilize water resources for future generations.” Dr Davide Faranda, Directeur de recherche CNRS, IPSL, France, said reacting to the WMO report.

The year 2024 was the hottest year on record and began with an El Niño event which impacted major river basins. It contributed to droughts in northern South America and the Amazon Basin and southern Africa. It was wetter-than-average in Central and western Africa, the Lake Victoria basin in Africa, Kazakhstan and Southern Russia, Central Europe, Pakistan and Northern India, Southern Iran, and North-Eastern China.

In the past six years only about one-third of the global river catchment area had normal discharge conditions compared to the 1991-2020 average. This means that two thirds have too much or too little water – reflecting the increasingly erratic hydrological cycle.

There was much below-normal discharge across key river basins including the Amazon, São Francisco, Paraná, and Orinoco in South America, and the Zambezi, Limpopo, Okavango, Orange basins in southern Africa. Extensive flooding occurred in West African basins in Senegal, Niger, Lake Chad, Volta). There was above normal river discharge across Central Europe and parts of Asia, swelling major basins including the Danube, Ganges, Godavari, and Indus.

Nearly all out of selected 75 main lakes across the globe saw above or much above normal temperatures in July, affecting water quality. 

# Contents



## 38 | **Cover Story** The tangle of biodiversity credits



### CSR NEWS

**05** Young skater Durga Gunjal honoured with Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Award



### CSR ISSUE

**38** Study links world's top oil and gas firms to 200 'more intense' heatwaves



### CSR ANALYSIS

**43** EV makers are still far from green



### CSR DISCUSSION

**46** Philanthropy's role in defining moment for health stewardship in Asia – helping countries build self-reliance

**AND MORE...**

### REGULARS:

**03** Publisher's note | **05** CSR News | **28** CSR India United

## CSR TODAY

OCTOBER 2025 | VOL. 13 | ISSUE 03

**PRINTER AND PUBLISHER:** Rajesh Tiwari

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Printed, Published and Edited by Rajesh Tiwari on behalf of Indian Centre For Corporate Social Responsibility.

106, Nirman Kendra, Dr. E Moses Road, Mahalaxmi Estate, Mumai-400 001

**Editor:** Rajesh Tiwari

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# CSR NEWS

## Young skater Durga Gunjal honoured with Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Award



**E**ssar Foundation announced that Durga Gunjal, a 11-year-old skater from Lasalgaon, Nashik, has been awarded the Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Award for Excellence in Sports, following her international debut representing India at a prestigious tournament in Thailand.

Durga's journey began in humble circumstances at the Jay Janardan Swami Anath Budh Aashram. Demonstrating exceptional talent and resilience early on, she attracted the attention of her supporters. In 2021, Essar Foundation provided professional coaching, high-quality equipment, and mentorship to help further develop her athletic skills and mental strength.

With this support, Durga honed her abilities and progressed through



increasingly competitive levels, leading to notable achievements including gold medals at the Nashik District Skating Championship and the Mission Olympic Skating Meet, becoming the National Champion at the Olympic Nationals, and earning a bronze medal at the National Championship in Goa. In 2025, Durga showcased her talent on the international stage in Thailand, a milestone that led to her receiving the prestigious Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Award for Excellence in Sports

Dominic Dsouza, Chief Operating Officer, Essar Foundation said, "Durga's success reflects the Foundation's mission of creating opportunity through meaningful, long-term support. We are proud to have played a role in her journey and remain committed to empowering grassroots talent across India."

Essar Foundation continues to foster sustainable and inclusive development by providing long-term support, resources, and opportunities to individuals from diverse backgrounds. Durga Gunjal's story is a powerful example of how focused support can unlock true potential when combined with dedication and opportunity.

The Foundation remains committed to investing in education, healthcare, livelihoods, and sports — aiming to create more success stories that inspire hope, resilience, and progress across communities nationwide.



## ESDS Leads Tree Plantation Drive in Warwandi, Nashik; 10,000 Saplings Planted

**E**SDS Software Solution Limited led a tree plantation drive in Warwandi in Nashik, planting 10,000 saplings in a single day as part of the company's long-term aspiration to enable the planting of over one billion trees. The aspiration is value-led and reflects ESDS's belief that environmental responsibility should translate into visible, community-anchored action. The drive was inaugurated by Piyush Prakashchandra Somani, Promoter, Managing Director and Chairman, ESDS Software Solution Limited, together with Komal Somani, Whole-time Director & Chief Human Resource Officer, ESDS Software Solution Limited, by planting a sapling, setting a clear tone for participation and purpose. More than 200 ESDS employees joined local stakeholders to turn a monsoon morning into a shared act of care for the land.

The day's effort came to life through collaboration with public agencies and village-level institutions. The plantation was supported



by personnel from the Nashik Forest Division and facilitation from Warwandi's local administration. Participants included Assistant Conservator of Forest Santosh Sonawane; Range Forest Officer (Dindori) Sushant Patil; Round Forest Officer (Umrle) Ashok Kale; forest guards Yogesh Dalvi, Nilesh Bhoje, Batu Bagul and Gorakh Gangurde; and forest sevaks

Shantaram Shirsat, Ananda Mahale, Chandrabhan Jadhav, Hiramana Jadhav and Chandra Pimpalke.

Local governance support was extended by the Warwandi Gram Panchayat, including Vandana Sampat Dhule, Sarpanch, Rajshree Amol Jadhav, Deputy Sarpanch, Trambak Dagu Jadhav, Forest Committee President and Sharda Shinde, Gramsevak.

# Turning Waste into Energy: IREDA Commissions STP at India International Centre

Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) commissioned a 25,000 liters per day (25 KLD) Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at the India International Centre (IIC) Annexe, New Delhi, funded under its CSR initiative, as a step towards sustainable urban infrastructure.

The STP, inaugurated by Dr. Bijay Kumar Mohanty, Director (Finance), IREDA and Shyam Saran, President of IIC and former Foreign Secretary of India, will modernize IIC's facilities and ensure greener operations. The plant will generate electricity from sludge produced by biodegradable waste from toilets, bathrooms and kitchens. It is also designed to recycle wastewater for horticulture and industrial use, while reducing foul discharge.

Dr. Mohanty emphasized that sustainable practices such as these are vital for achieving India's climate goals and commended IIC for pioneering the re-utilization of sewage



waste for green energy. Senior officials from IREDA and IIC, including K.N. Shrivastava, Director of IIC, were present at the occasion.

In his message, Pradip Kumar Das, CMD, IREDA, said: "IREDA's CSR interventions are focused on

impactful projects like this STP, which integrate community welfare with green innovation. Such initiatives not only contribute to environmental sustainability but also set benchmarks for others to follow."





## Vedanta Partners with NDRF to Train Employees with Life Support

**V**edanta Limited in partnership with the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) under the aegis of Ministry of Home Affairs, has launched a Basic Life Support (BLS) training programme. Starting with a cohort of women in the first phase, the training will extend to all employees across the company.

The three-day programme, held at Hindustan Zinc's Rajpura Dariba Complex (RDC) campus in Udaipur was inaugurated by Ms. Priya Agarwal Hebbar, Chairperson of Hindustan Zinc Ltd. and Non-Executive Director, Vedanta Ltd. Designed to build lifesaving capabilities, the training equipped women leaders from Vedanta's businesses including Hindustan Zinc, Vedanta Aluminium, FACOR, ESL Steel Limited, Cairn Oil and Gas, Vedanta Power, and Sesa Goa with essential emergency response skills.

Expert trainers from the NDRF conducted sessions covering Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Automated External Defibrillator (AED) usage, bleeding and shock management, musculoskeletal injury care, and patient shifting protocols.

This initiative comes at a crucial time as India faces a worrying surge in cardiovascular emergencies. According to recent studies, incidents of heart attacks are on the rise, with many cases occurring among younger populations. In such emergencies, the availability of trained first responders equipped with CPR and AED skills can make a huge difference.

Speaking about the initiative, Priya Agarwal Hebbar, Chairperson of Hindustan Zinc Ltd. and Non-Executive Director, Vedanta Ltd., said, "At Vedanta, safety is not just a policy, it is who we are. Through this programme, we aim to equip all

our employees with life-saving skills that extend beyond the workplace into their homes and communities. Starting with women leaders, each participant becomes a multiplier of safety, building resilience within society." Through this partnership with NDRF, Vedanta is building in-house capability for life-saving interventions, strengthening not only its workplace safety culture but also empowering its employees to emerge as role models, capable of protecting lives during critical emergencies. Safety and well-being of employees and business partners are of paramount importance at Vedanta.

Vedanta has deployed a host of leading-edge technologies including Artificial Intelligence (AI)-led monitoring systems, drones, fatigue detection systems, smart helmets, and tele-remote operations, which are transforming industrial safety across its operations.

# CISF Extends MoU with Mpower for Mental Health Initiative for 3 Years

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) formally inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mpower a mental health social enterprise under Aditya Birla Education Trust (ABET) extending it for an additional three years. The extension follows the successful implementation of Project Mann, a pioneering mental health initiative jointly undertaken by CISF and Mpower, founded by Mrs. Neerja Birla.

The initial MoU for Project Mann was signed by CISF with Mpower in Nov 2024 for one year. During the last nearly one year over 75,000 CISF personnel and their families have benefited from the professional services. Suicide rates within CISF have declined below the national average in 2024 and 2025.

Services are presently being provided by 23 Mpower Counselors/ Clinical Psychologists across 13 CISF Sectors.

With the extension of the MoU, the number of counselors will be increased to 30, and services will be expanded to additional locations including Patna, Ahmedabad, Prayagraj, Bhopal/Indore, Jammu, Chandigarh, Jaipur, and Cochin.

The benefits of Project Mann have been widely acknowledged, including:

- Reducing stigma around mental health.
- Encouraging early help-seeking behavior.
- Supporting emotional resilience and coping strategies.
- Ensuring continuity of care even in remote or high-security locations.
- Helping reduce absenteeism, burnout, and long-term psychological issues.



**Smt. Sudha Senthil, Vice President, Sanrakshika (CISF Wives Welfare Association), and Ms. Parveen Shaikh, President, Mpower, during the signing of an MoU for an extension of Project Mann**

Speaking on the occasion, R.S. Bhatti, Director General, CISF, emphasized: “The well-being of our personnel is paramount to maintaining operational excellence. Through our continued partnership with ABET, we aim to ensure that our force remains mentally resilient, emotionally strong, and fully prepared for meeting the challenges of national security.”

Neerja Birla, Chairperson and Founder Mpower, Aditya Birla Education Trust, said: “At Mpower,

we believe that mental health is central to overall well-being. The partnership with CISF under Project Mann has been deeply impactful, and we are committed to expanding our services to ensure that every CISF personnel and their family has access to the care and support they need.”

The extension of this MoU reflects CISF’s and Mpower’s shared vision to foster a mentally healthy force, in alignment with the Government of India’s initiative “Together for Mental Health.”

# Dhanvesttor targets to educate 1 lakh women on financial literacy by FY2028

**D**hanvesttor, India's first women-only, SEBI-registered boutique wealth management platform, has announced its commitment to empowering women by educating and creating financial awareness for 1 lakh women by FY2028. This ambitious initiative underscores the company's mission to bring financial independence and confidence to women across the country, from young students to ultra-high-net-worth individuals (UHNIs).

Though still in its early stages, Dhanvesttor has emerged as a bold disruptor in India's wealth management landscape. Unlike legacy institutions that have traditionally overlooked women as primary decision-makers, Dhanvesttor was founded with a singular focus: to serve women investors, and to do so from the vantage point of a woman-led team that understands their aspirations and challenges. The platform has quickly become a trusted partner for financially independent women, with carefully cultivated portfolios guided by its proprietary FAITH strategy—a structured approach to investing that has consistently delivered outcomes aligned with clients' long-term goals.

Beyond wealth management, Dhanvesttor has placed financial literacy at the heart of its vision. The company has already hosted a series of curated workshops that have engaged women across diverse age groups and life stages. From introducing schoolgirls to the basics of savings and budgeting, to helping professionals and entrepreneurs understand the fundamentals of investing, Dhanvesttor has built

a strong foundation for its larger impact mission.

These efforts have spanned respected institutions and communities, including Belgharia School for Girls, Modern High School, FICCI FLO and YFLO Kolkata chapters, Lean IN Kolkata, Himadri Speciality Chemicals, and Bathwal Corporation. Each engagement has been designed to demystify finance, instill early confidence, and promote aspirational investing among women who might otherwise be underserved or overlooked in financial education.

With its new FY2028 milestone, Dhanvesttor now intends to transform these grassroots efforts into a nationwide movement. The goal of reaching one lakh women is not just about numbers—it is about building confidence, independence, and informed decision-making at scale. By

combining workshops, community activation programs, and its boutique wealth management expertise, Dhanvesttor aims to redefine how women in India engage with money and investment.

Commenting on the same, Anooshka Soham Bathwal, founder and CEO, said, "At Dhanvesttor, we have always believed that financial independence is the most powerful form of empowerment a woman can have. For far too long, women in India—even those with significant wealth—have either been excluded from financial conversations or made to believe that managing money is not their domain. We exist to change that narrative.

Our commitment to educating one lakh women on financial literacy by FY2028 is not just a number—it is a movement. Every workshop we conduct, every conversation we initiate, and every portfolio we curate is designed to build confidence, clarity, and courage among women to take charge of their financial futures. Whether it is a schoolgirl learning to save for the first time, a professional woman exploring investment strategies, or an ultra-HNI woman choosing to move away from legacy institutions in favor of a women-first platform, each story strengthens our belief that the future of wealth management must be more inclusive.

Dhanvesttor is not simply a boutique wealth manager; it is a platform built by women, for women, and with women. By 2028, we do not just aim to reach one lakh women—we aim to create a ripple effect that transforms how an entire generation views money, power, and independence."

**By combining workshops, community activation programs, and its boutique wealth management expertise, Dhanvesttor aims to redefine how women in India engage with money and investment.**

# New World Bank Program to Protect Indian Coastline, Provide More Jobs for 100,000 People in States of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors today approved a new program to support coastal communities in India by protecting and conserving ecosystems, reducing plastic pollution and providing more and diverse jobs for 100,000 people in the states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

India has a long-running coastline of more than 11,000 kilometers with one-third of the coastline vulnerable to erosion and extreme climate events. Around 250 million people depend on coastal areas for their homes and livelihoods in sectors like fisheries, transport, and tourism. The coastline also provides habitats for 18,000 known species of flora and fauna offering vital economic opportunities and sources of livelihood for coastal communities. However, marine ecosystems are at risk by the combined effect of coastal erosion, pollution, intensive fishing, degradation of mangrove forests and urban pressures.

The \$212.64 million Strengthening Coastal Resilience and the Economy (SHORE) Project is part of the umbrella \$850 million

SHORE Program which will address challenges faced by coastal communities in India. The Project will support Tamil Nadu and Karnataka's implement their coastal zone management plans by helping 100,000 people through enhanced knowledge, skill development and by leveraging funds for government agencies and local communities. It will also help 70,000 people, including women, receive training in sectors like sustainable tourism to gain new sources of income.

"India's Vision 2030 has recognized the potential of the blue economy to power its economic growth," said Paul Procee, the World Bank's Acting Country Director for India. "This Project will help states tap into private sector sources to mitigate the impacts of plastic pollution and to foster ecotourism in selected areas. For example, private sector intervention can help to strengthen plastic waste value chains and establish environment-friendly beaches while also creating economic opportunities for coastal communities." The Project will help to conserve

30,000 hectares of seascapes in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka through planting of mangroves, restoration of sand dunes in combination with green and grey infrastructure such as breakwaters where necessary. It will help in coral protection and species such as dugongs, turtles, and birds.

"In 2019, Tamil Nadu was the first state in India to ban single-use plastics. This Project will enhance measures in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka through public awareness campaigns on recycling and plastics leakage, as well as bridging the gap between urban local bodies and the private sector for solid waste management in cities. Reducing plastic pollution will benefit 120,000 people," said Dinesh Aryal, Chabungbam Singh, and Avanish Kant, the Task Team Leaders for the Program.

The \$212.64 million is part of the first phase of the SHORE Program loan from the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and has a final maturity of 23 years, including a grace period of 6.5 years.

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# Madras Dyslexia Association develops Remedial Kit for Children with difficulties in Maths

*Founded by IIT Madras Distinguished Alumnus Awardee Mr. D. Chandrashekar, MDA has been training teachers & special educators on teaching methodologies successfully used for past 34 years*

**M**adras Dyslexia Association (MDA), founded by an IIT Madras Distinguished Alumnus Award recipient, has developed a remedial toolkit for children with learning difficulties in mathematics. Called 'Count on Me', this comprehensive and engaging maths toolkit is already being used by 50 schools in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

While the kit was created to support students with developmental

dyscalculia and math learning difficulties, it has also proven to be a powerful learning resource for all students, making mathematics joyful, accessible, and deeply meaningful.

The Madras Dyslexia Association was founded by D. Chandrasekhar, who belongs to the 1970 batch of B.Tech (Metallurgical and Materials Engineering) at IIT Madras and is a first-generation entrepreneur.

He was presented with the Distinguished Alumnus Award by IIT Madras in 2009.

Highlighting the impact of this toolkit, Chandrashekar said, "Whether you are working with a student who finds numbers challenging or one who is curious and eager to explore, the 'Count on Me' took kit offers a unique blend of concrete learning tools, visual clarity, and interactive engagement. This toolkit is the result of collaborative development, combining research-based practices, classroom experiences, and a strong commitment to inclusive education. It is designed for every teacher who has ever asked: How can I help this student learn in a way that works for them?"



The 'Count on Me' toolkit includes:

### 1. Sixty-Four Graded, colour-coded booklets: These are

- Progressively structured, covering core operations—Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, and Division—as well as concepts such as fractions, decimals, and other key mathematical concepts.
- It is aligned with fun and child-friendly visuals to enhance engagement.
- It has been designed for repetition and reinforcement, so key concepts are revisited often for mastery.

Each operation is divided by digit complexity— from 1-digit to 4-digit problems—and further each digit is divided and colour-coded into Red, Yellow, Green, and Blue.

These colour-coded sets increase in complexity, building upon the skills acquired in the previous set. The first three colours focus on teaching, remediation,

reinforcement, and fostering independence. The final blue level assesses fluency and accuracy. Once a student successfully completes the blue set, they are ready to move on to the next.

### 2. Functional Evaluation Checklists

A teacher-friendly tool that:

- Breaks down each math problem into its component skills
- Helps educators and therapists identify learning strengths and gaps
- Enables individualised instruction and helps track progress over time

This structure empowers teachers to plan effective remediation,



reinforce key concepts, and address individual learning needs with precision.

### 3. Manipulatives and an instructional Booklet with Videos

At the heart of the kit is a thoughtfully curated set of math manipulatives, designed to transform abstract concepts into concrete and engaging experiences.

The accompanying instructional booklet includes:

- Clear images and a detailed breakdown of each material
- A QR code linking to video demonstrations on how to use the material for teaching and remediation
- Suggestions that encourage creative application beyond what's shown in the videos

These tools are ideal for classrooms, resource rooms, or home learning environments, supporting confident, hands-on instruction.

### 4. Teacher's e-manual

A digital resource that:

- Explains the educational philosophy behind the toolkit
- Highlights the formal structures of maths and the challenges faced by students with developmental dyscalculia and other learning difficulties
- Offers guidance on effective teaching strategies and intentional session planning

The e-manual serves both as a starting point and a long-term reference, making the toolkit simple to implement and adapt across different learning environments.

Those interested in availing the kit may contact:

- Ms. Latha Vasanth – +91 99403 89751
- Ms. Lakshmi Hariharan – +91 98404 88910
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# Bank of Baroda organizes Mega Camp in Bolangir, Odisha under Financial Inclusion Drive of the Department of Financial Services, Government of India

**B**ank of Baroda, one of India's leading public sector banks, organized Mega Camps in Patnagarh and Madhiapali Gram Panchayats in Bolangir district, Odisha today under the Saturation Campaign of the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance, Government of India. The campaign, running from July 1 to September 30, 2025, aims to ensure 100% coverage of financial inclusion and social security schemes at the Gram Panchayat (GP) and Urban Local Bodies (ULB) level across the country. The event across both the locations saw enthusiastic engagement from more than 600 villagers, highlighting the growing need for financial literacy and accessible banking services in rural areas.

In his keynote address, Dr. Sarada Prasan Mohanty, Regional Director, Reserve Bank of India emphasized the importance of financial inclusion and ensuring accessible banking services to every citizen, and said, "Awareness of schemes, timely enrollment, and vigilance against digital fraud are as vital as opening accounts. These initiatives can transform rural households into financially secure families." He personally interacted with the participants at both the camps. Commenting on the initiative, Dr.



**Bank of Baroda MD & CEO, Dr. Debadatta Chand, handing over cheques to SHG at the Mega Camp in Bolangir under the Financial Inclusion Drive**



**MD & CEO, Bank of Baroda - Dr. Debadatta Chand, handing over cheques at the Mega Camps held in Patnagarh and Madhiapali Gram Panchayats, Bolangir District, Odisha**

Debadatta Chand, MD & CEO, Bank of Baroda, said, "Financial inclusion ensures equitable development and empowers every section of society. Initiatives like these camps play a crucial role in ensuring that banking services, insurance, and social security schemes reach every eligible individual and household. The enthusiastic participation across diverse communities highlights the growing trust and confidence in formal banking channels. Our initiative

today in the Bolangir district reflects our commitment to take financial services to the last mile and empower communities in Odisha. Having a Zonal Office of the Bank at Bhubaneswar and 19 new branches opened in the state of Odisha during the last 12 months, the growth of Odisha is at the heart of Bank of Baroda's journey towards Viksit Bharat in partnership with all the stakeholders."

As a significant part of the programme, assistance on financial services were provided to the communities, including opening new accounts under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) for unbanked individuals, and enrollment in vital social security schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha

Bima Yojana (PMSBY), and Atal Pension Yojana (APY).

Additionally, re-KYC drives were conducted for eligible inactive savings accounts under PMJDY, supported by awareness sessions focused on preventing digital fraud. Specialized counters for soiled note exchange were set up for the convenience of the customers, along with Banking Correspondent (BC) Points. On this occasion credit facilities were also disbursed by way of handing over cheques to the borrowers.

# Diageo India signs MOU with the Tourism & Hospitality Skill Council to train students under its 'Learning for Life' programme

**D**iageo India (United Spirits Ltd.), among the country's leading alcohol companies, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council (THSC) to train 300 students under its 'Learning for Life' programme.

The MoU signing was presided over by Praveen Someshwar, MD & CEO, Diageo India, Rajan Bahadur, CEO, THSC, Navdeep Singh Mehram, Vice President - CSR & Sustainability, Diageo India and Vaibhav Verma, Vice President-Industry Engagement, THSC. This initiative reflects Diageo India's commitment to building a diverse, skilled, and future-ready workforce, in line with its Spirit of Progress ESG action plan.

The classroom-based training programme will be conducted at THSC-affiliated centres in Bengaluru by certified trainers and assessors. Designed as a short-term skilling initiative for unemployed and underprivileged youth, it is aligned with the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF). The curriculum covers technical training, communication, digital literacy, and soft skills to prepare candidates for roles in the hospitality, business, and service sectors, with the objective of enhancing employability and bridging industry skill gaps. Upon completion, participants will undergo assessment and certification by THSC, ensuring credibility and industry recognition. With its strong network of over 750 industry partners, THSC will also facilitate placements and apprenticeships, enabling candidates to secure meaningful employment across



**Praveen Someshwar, MD & CEO, Diageo India, and Rajan Bahadur, CEO, Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council, at the MoU signing ceremony**

hotels, restaurants, quick-service chains, and allied services.

Praveen Someshwar, MD & CEO, Diageo India said, "The hospitality sector is a vital engine of growth and opportunity. Through "Learning for Life" and with the Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council, we are empowering young talent with the skills and confidence to thrive, building not just careers, but a more inclusive India."

Rajan Bahadur, CEO Tourism & Hospitality Skill Council said, "We are proud to partner with Diageo India on the 'Learning for Life' initiative, which aligns closely with our mission to skill and empower youth for meaningful careers. The hospitality sector continues to be one of

the largest job creators, and this programme will provide participants with practical skills, exposure to industry standards, and a pathway to sustainable employment. At THSC, we believe such collaborations are critical to building a future-ready workforce and unlocking opportunities for India's young talent"

Launched in 2020 and positively impacting the lives of 6500+ students, Diageo India's 'Learning for Life' program aims to provide equal access to skills and resources, boosting employability, improving livelihoods, and supporting a thriving hospitality sector. Certified trainers ensure graduates are well-prepared for meaningful employment, bridging skill gaps and boosting workforce inclusion.



# Axis Bank Launches 'Pink Capital: The Spectrum of Queer Money' to Spotlight the Financial Ecosystem of LGBTQIA+ Consumers

Axis Bank, one of the largest private sector banks in India, launched 'Pink Capital: The Spectrum of Queer Money', a qualitative report that explores the financial lives of India's LGBTQIA+ community.

The report's findings reveal that queer consumers prioritize essential needs, with the largest share allocated to Systemic Access & Equality (34.2%), followed by Healthcare & Safety (20%), Financial Security & Future Stability (18.6), Emotional & Social Recognition (17.3%), and

Lifestyle & Culture (10%). These spending patterns reflect a community that prioritizes survival, dignity, and long-term stability. Notably, mental health services and elder care emerged as key focus areas.

Among other insights, the study found that queer consumers are increasingly drawn to brands that offer tangible, inclusive solutions, such as joint accounts, pension access, and healthcare benefits. While inclusive branding is appreciated, it is everyday inclusion that builds lasting trust and loyalty.

In terms of financial security and future stability, two extremes emerged as focal points. While the youth stressed on Banks and Educational institutions that can create student loans, scholarships, and queer-focused savings or retirement products, the older cohort felt the need for community housing models and queer-affirming retirement homes.

"Over the years, Axis Bank has serviced thousands of accounts opened under the honorific marker 'Mx' or by Transgender

Individuals—a testament to growing trust, deeper engagement with the community, and the rise of a distinct and increasingly visible customer segment,” said Munish Sharda, Executive Director, Axis Bank.

Building on this progress, Axis Bank is taking inclusive banking a step further by uncovering the economic realities and aspirations of the LGBTQIA+ community through this report.

“By making Pink Capital visible, we are not just doing the right thing, we are building the future of inclusive finance in India,” said Rajkamal

Vempati, Group Executive & Head of Human Resources, Axis Bank.

The report is part of Axis Bank’s broader ESG and DE&I agenda, which was deepened in 2021 with the launch of the #ComeAsYouAre Charter. This charter introduced inclusive policies and practices for employees and customers from the LGBTQIA+ community, such as joint savings and term deposits for same sex partners along with nomination facilities for partners and the usage of honorific Mx instead of Mr and Ms for customers of varied gender identities. The Bank continues to advocate for

inclusive access while respecting privacy, including not collecting data on same-sex partners.

“Pink Capital brings forward voices that have long been left out of financial conversations,” said Harish Iyer, SVP & Head - DE&I, Axis Bank.

The launch coincides with the 7th anniversary of the Supreme Court verdict on Section 377, a moment that reaffirmed dignity and authenticity for the LGBTQIA+ community. It was unveiled during Sparsh Week, Axis Bank’s flagship celebration of culture and customers, reaffirming the Bank’s commitment to service, inclusion, and customer-centricity.

## Maruti Suzuki signs Memorandum of Agreement with Transport Department, Government of Rajasthan, to automate 21 driving license test tracks under CSR initiative

In a significant step to enhance road safety in Rajasthan, Maruti Suzuki India Limited has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Transport Department, Government of Rajasthan, to automate 21 driving license test tracks. These tracks will be set up in 20 major cities in the state, namely at Alwar, Baran, Barmer, Bharatpur, Bikaner, Chittaurgarh, Churu, Dausa, Dholpur, Didwana, Dungarpur, Hanumangarh, Jaipur, Jhalawar, Jodhpur, Kota, Rajsamand, Bhilwara, Sikar and Udaipur.

AI-generated content may be incorrect. The MoA was signed in the august presence Chief Minister of Rajasthan Bhajan Lal Sharma and Deputy Chief Minister & Minister, Transport and Road Safety Dr. Prem Chand Bairwa.

The MoA was signed by Shuchi Tyagi, Secretary & Transport Commissioner, Government of Rajasthan, and Tarun Agarwal, Senior Vice President, Corporate Social Responsibility, Maruti Suzuki. The initiative is funded by Maruti Suzuki, as part of its CSR.

The ADTTs will serve Two-Wheeler (TW) and Light Motor Vehicle (LMV) driving license applicants. These ADTTs will be equipped with high-definition

cameras, RFID sensors, real-time analytics, and an integrated IT system to enable fully computerized, rule-based testing, in compliance with Central Motor Vehicle Rules (CMVR). The evaluation process is designed to be objective and eliminates human bias and error.

Applauding Maruti Suzuki’s road safety efforts, the CM said, “I commend Maruti Suzuki for their impactful contribution to road safety through Automated Driving Test Tracks across various states. Our association with Maruti

Suzuki to build 21 ADTTs across the state will make the driving license testing process comprehensive and transparent and contribute to safer roads. It fully aligns with our 10-year Road Safety Action Plan. I look forward to the positive changes this will bring to road safety in Rajasthan.”

Elaborating on the initiative, Rahul Bharti, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Affairs, Maruti Suzuki, said, “We are honoured to collaborate with the Government of Rajasthan to advance road safety with these 21 Automated Driving Test Tracks across the state. This is our small contribution to the state’s Road Safety Action Plan.”

▶ **21 Automated Driving Test Tracks (ADTTs) in 20 major cities of Rajasthan for driving license testing process**

▶ **Includes tracks for Two-Wheelers (TW) and Light Motor Vehicles (LMV)**

▶ **HD cameras, integrated IT systems, and video analytics to be deployed for objective, CMVR-compliant testing at ADTTs**



# Ryan International partners with Rotary Bangalore Orchards for Large-Scale Plantation Drive

In a landmark initiative to nurture environmental responsibility among India's youth, Ryan International Academy has partnered with the Rotary Club of Bangalore Orchards to roll out a large-scale plantation drive across school campuses in Bengaluru. The programme was inaugurated in the presence of renowned philanthropist and former Rotary Bangalore Orchards President Ravishankar Dakoju.

Under the 'Each One, Plant One' initiative, more than 900 fruit-bearing saplings were planted by Rotarians and Ryan students at Ryan International Banarghatta Road Campus. This large-scale initiative that was rolled out this week across campuses comes under the 12-point vision of Dr. A.F. Pinto, Chairman of Ryan Group of Institutions, based on the international theme: "Our Land. Our Future. We are #GenerationRestoration".



This theme emphasizes the crucial importance of afforestation and nature restoration efforts in halting climate change and land degradation.

Environmental stewardship has long been integral to Ryan's educational philosophy. The school integrates sustainability into daily learnings from encouraging students to plant saplings on their birthdays, to driving recycling and e-waste management projects. This plantation drive adds momentum to Ryan's commitment to create 10 lakh trees as part of its 50th-year celebrations.

The drive featured native and fruit-bearing species such as Mango, Jamun, Jackfruit, Guava, and Rose



Apple. All the 900 saplings were donated by Dakoju free of charge. The plantation drive witnessed participation from 8 Rotarians alongside the students.

Speaking at the occasion, Dakoju said: "Ryan International's commitment to planting 10 lakh trees in its 50th year is not just a milestone; it is a movement. By joining hands

with Rotary Bangalore Orchards, the school is setting a historic example for educational institutions across India to walk the path of sustainability. Together, we are not only combating climate change and global warming, but also gifting future generations' clean air,

greener spaces, and a healthier planet. I firmly believe the students themselves are our greatest teachers — with their pure, unselfish ideas they remind us that we have only one planet, and it is our duty to protect it. Ryan is not only educating children, but shaping better human beings and socially responsible leaders for tomorrow.

## Hartek Foundation lights up flood-hit Punjab with 500 solar Lights

As floodwaters continue to ravage large parts of Punjab, leaving villages in Ajanala, Fazilka, and Ramdas cut off from electricity and basic essentials, one of the state's homegrown organisations has stepped in with a powerful intervention.

Hartek Foundation, the CSR arm of the Hartek Group, has announced the donation of 500 solar-powered lights to households struggling in darkness after days of power outages. The distribution is being carried out in partnership with Global Sikhs, whose ground teams are already active in relief operations across the worst-affected districts.

"In a crisis like this, light is not just about visibility—it's about dignity, safety, and reassurance,"



said Harkirat Kaur, CEO, Hartek Foundation. "We want families to feel a sense of normalcy, even if the situation around them is uncertain."

For many villagers, the solar lights are the first source of light since the floods disrupted electricity connections. Solar Lights are particularly

crucial for women, children, and the elderly, who face the greatest risks when night falls in flooded areas.

Punjab has witnessed one of its worst spells of monsoon flooding in recent years, submerging crops, damaging homes, and displacing thousands. While government and civil society groups are working round the clock to provide food, medical aid, and shelter, the availability of light after sunset remains a less-

discussed but pressing challenge.

By stepping in with solar solutions, Hartek Foundation is not just addressing an immediate need but also reinforcing the role of clean energy in disaster relief. In these villages, a single lamp can mean the difference between fear and hope.



## Vedanta's TACO Commits Rs 30 Crores towards Wildlife Conservation Pan-India

Marking National Wildlife Day, Vedanta Limited (NSE: VEDL), India's leading critical minerals, energy transition metals, oil & gas, and technology conglomerate, emphasized its focus on India's wildlife and biodiversity through its commitment of Rs 30 crores over three years under The Animal Care Organisation (TACO).

The initiatives are strengthening the country's wildlife conservation efforts and infrastructure.

From tiger reserves in Rajasthan to elephant and rhino landscapes in Assam, the company has significantly enhanced its commitment towards wildlife conservation including the protection of endangered species and restoration of vital habitats. The initiatives reflect a future-forward strategy aimed at expanding conservation corridors, integrating technology in monitoring systems, and fostering long-term ecological stewardship.

TACO has channelled substantial resources into impactful biodiversity programs under its 'Mission

Vanraksha'. At Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan, TACO commissioned five solar-powered, double-storey anti-poaching camps (about 762 sq ft each) and deployed surveillance vehicles, enabling 24x7 patrolling within the reserve, greatly enhancing protection against poaching and habitat intrusion. At Kaziranga National Park, TACO is building a surveillance centre and staff dwellings to bolster protection for the iconic one-horned rhinos, elephants, and tigers within the UNESCO World Heritage site. These combined interventions underscore a holistic 'One Health' approach, where wildlife, humans, and ecosystems are safeguarded in unison.

Priya Agarwal Hebbar, Non-Executive Director, Vedanta Limited and Anchor of TACO, said: "What we preserve today shapes the strength and spirit of tomorrow's India. On this National Wildlife Day, we stand firm in our stewardship, nurturing the wild, honouring its intrinsic worth, and ensuring forests, wildlife, and communities flourish

together in harmony." Vedanta's conservation portfolio is further complemented by landmark initiatives across Rajasthan, Goa, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. In Udaipur, Vedanta-subsiary Hindustan Zinc has partnered with the Forest Department to rejuvenate nearly 400 hectares at the Baghdarrah Crocodile Conservation Reserve.

In Andhra Pradesh, Cairn Oil & Gas is stewarding 86 acres of mangroves, now home to over 150 bird species, Smooth-Coated Otters, and endangered fishing cats — serving as a vital ecological buffer against coastal erosion and climate risk. Vedanta Aluminium's Butterfly Park in Jharsuguda and Avian Arena Park in Lanjigarh have emerged as thriving sanctuaries for pollinators and migratory birds. In Goa, Sesa Goa's rejuvenation of the 203-hectare Sanquelim Mines with over 750,000 trees sequesters nearly 16,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually and supports 70 bird and 42 butterfly species, demonstrating a sustainable development model.

# Saatvik Green Energy Limited Empowers Itawa Bhopji Community with Clean Water, Safety, and Digital Education Initiatives



In a dedicated effort to strengthen rural infrastructure and empower local communities, Saatvik Green Energy Limited has inaugurated three impactful Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects at Itawa Bhopji Gram Panchayat and Rajkiya Senior Secondary School, Itawa Bhopji, Rajasthan.

The initiatives, designed to address critical community needs, include:

- **Access to Safe Drinking Water**
  - Installation of a community RO water unit at the Gram Panchayat office to provide clean and safe drinking water for all villagers.
- **Safety for Girl Students**

- Deployment of 27 CCTV cameras across the school campus to ensure a secure learning environment.

- **Digital and Inclusive Education**

- Establishment of two smart classrooms enabled with the Rajasthan State Board curriculum from 1st to 12th standard, promoting equitable access to modern education.

The projects were inaugurated by former MLA of Chomu, Mr. Ramlal Sharma. Both commended the initiatives for their long-term benefits to the community.

Neelesh Garg, Chairman and Managing Director, Saatvik Green

Energy Limited, said: “We believe that sustainable development begins with empowering people at the grassroots level. This initiative in Itawa Bhopji reflects our belief that every child deserves a safe environment and the tools to learn, and every family deserves access to safe water.”

Manik Garg, Managing Director, Saatvik Green Energy Limited, said: “True progress is measured by the positive change we bring to people’s everyday lives. These projects are a small step in ensuring that rural communities have the same access to safety, education, and clean water as urban areas. For us, CSR is a vital responsibility.”



# Hyundai Motor India & IIT Madras launch 'Hyundai Hope for Cancer'

## *Revolutionizing Paediatric Cancer Care in India through Genomic-led R&D*

**H**undai Motor India Foundation (HMIF), the CSR arm of Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL), in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras), launched 'Hyundai Hope for Cancer' - a pioneering initiative dedicated to transforming paediatric cancer care in India. As part of its multi-year commitment towards this cause, HMIF has allocated a social impact investment of INR 56 Crore towards this landmark project.

At the heart of this initiative is the Hyundai Centre for Cancer

Genomics, housed at IIT Madras' main campus in Chennai. The Centre, unveiled by Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Education, Government of India, features India's first community-based Cancer Tissue Biobank, enabling advanced genomic research in paediatric leukaemia and lymphoma.

Addressing guests at the launch event, Pradhan said, "The Hyundai Hope for Cancer initiative advances the goals of National Education Policy - 2020 by fostering deep industry-academia partnership, translational research, and talent development in frontier areas of healthcare and genomics. By building an Indian childhood cancer genomic database, strengthening early detection and screening, and expanding access for underserved communities, the

programme exemplifies "Sabka Prayas" in action and reaffirms our commitment to equitable, technology-enabled healthcare. I congratulate IIT Madras and Hyundai Motor India Foundation for this timely, outcomes-focused effort and call upon researchers, clinicians, and innovators across the country to collaborate through this platform to bring hope, precision care, and better survival outcomes to every child in need."

The Centre will focus on genomic sequencing to identify genetic mutations, laying the foundation for a national paediatric cancer genome database and personalized treatment protocols. It will also serve as a collaborative hub for clinicians, researchers, pharmaceutical scientists, and global partners, contributing to international efforts such as the



International Cancer Genome Consortium (ICGC) and WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).

Highlighting the significance of this project, Unsoo Kim, Managing Director - HMIL, said, "Guided by our global vision of 'Progress for Humanity', Hyundai Motor India is proud to collaborate with IIT Madras on this transformative initiative. 'Hyundai Hope for Cancer' is not just about building infrastructure - it's about healing, resilience, and hope. Every child deserves the chance to live a healthier, brighter tomorrow."

Looking forward to this collaboration, Prof. V. Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras, said, "We are delighted to partner with Hyundai Motor India for a project of such national importance. This research centre will catalyse breakthrough studies in paediatric oncology, resulting in improved diagnostics and targeted treatments. We thank Hyundai for trusting us to spearhead this mission."

With a total sum of Rs 56 crore committed towards this initiative, HMIF has also established a dedicated Rs 3 Crore Cancer Care Fund to ensure equitable access to treatment for economically disadvantaged patients. Over the next four years, the Centre will conduct 225+ cancer awareness and screening camps across Tamil Nadu, Haryana, and Maharashtra, reaching out to 1.27 Lakh individuals and vaccinating 5,000+ girl children against HPV.

## Hartek Foundation lights up flood-hit Punjab with 500 solar Lights

As floodwaters continue to ravage large parts of Punjab, leaving villages in Ajanala, Fazilka, and Ramdas cut off from electricity and basic essentials, one of the state's homegrown organisations has stepped in with a powerful intervention.

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"In a crisis like this, light is not just about visibility—it's about dignity, safety, and reassurance," said Harkirat Kaur, CEO, Hartek Foundation. "We want families to feel a sense of normalcy, even if the situation around them is uncertain."

For many villagers, the solar lights are the first source of light since the floods disrupted electricity connections. Solar Lights are particularly crucial for women, children, and the elderly, who face the greatest risks when night falls in flooded areas.

Punjab has witnessed one of its worst spells of monsoon flooding in recent years, submerging crops, damaging homes, and displacing thousands. While government and civil society groups are working round the clock to provide food, medical aid, and shelter, the availability of light after sunset remains a less-discussed but pressing challenge.

By stepping in with solar solutions, Hartek Foundation is not just addressing an immediate need but also reinforcing the role of clean energy in disaster relief. In these villages, a single lamp can mean the difference between fear and hope.

# Tata Motors strengthens CSR footprint, benefits 1.47 million lives in FY'25



**Integrated Village Development Programme** Holistic engagement for rural development



**Integrated Village Development Programme (IVDP)** is active in 16-gram panchayats across Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Uttar Pradesh



**Supported 8,000 waste-picker families** with interventions in health, safety, and livelihood skills



**Restoration of water bodies** benefitted 7000 farmers in rural Maharashtra



**Tata Motors restored 356 water bodies** in 10 districts of Maharashtra



**Enabled 35,263 people** to access pathways to employment and stable livelihoods

**T**ata Motors released its 11th Annual Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report, titled “Expanding Circles of Care: Deeper connections, lasting impact.” The report highlights the company’s strategic, community-led approach to inclusive development, grounded in the principle of convergence – where people, policy and purpose align to drive scalable and sustainable change. In FY25, Tata Motors’ CSR initiatives positively benefitted over 1.47 million people across the country, with 56% of beneficiaries belonging to the SC/ST communities.

In a year marked by climate adversity and socio-economic disparities, Tata Motors deepened its engagement with underserved communities—transitioning from programme implementation to systemic transformation. With a presence in 109 aspirational districts, the company’s CSR strategy reflects a shift

toward scalable, replicable models that align with national priorities and grassroot requirements.

Commenting on the CSR approach, Vinod Kulkarni, Head CSR at Tata Motors, said, “Expanding our circle of care means bringing those at the margins to the mainstream. From enabling dignified livelihoods to restoring ecosystems, we continue to co-create solutions that are rooted in equity and built for long-term impact. Anchored in our “more for less for more” philosophy, we focus on maximising impact efficiently and extend meaningful benefits to the most underserved by leveraging government schemes.”

## Key Highlights from the Annual CSR Report FY 24-25:

### Water Conservation at Scale

As 66% of rural Maharashtra faced drought, Tata Motors’ water stewardship programme restored 356

water bodies across 10 districts, creating 700 crore litres of additional water capacity. This benefitted 7,000 farmers and 2.9 lakh villagers, showcasing a scalable model built on government convergence, community ownership, and digital monitoring. In FY26, the company aims to rejuvenate 1,000 water bodies across 25+ districts.

### Rural Development in Underserved Regions

First introduced in 2018, the Integrated Village Development Programme (IVDP) is now active in 16-gram panchayats across Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Uttar Pradesh. In FY’25, IVDP expanded to Shravasti and Balrampur in Uttar Pradesh, two of India’s most aspirational districts as per Niti Ayog’s Multi Poverty Index.

Aligned with 13 Sustainable Development Goals, nine thematic areas at the gram panchayat level

and 48 government schemes, IVDP has positively impacted over 18,000 people in the tribal belt of the Palghar district in Maharashtra.

### Towards Dignified Livelihoods

In Pune, Tata Motors partnered with Kashtakari Panchayat to support 8,000 waste picker families, enrolling 1,814 women in health schemes and facilitating education and skilling for their children. Four youth joined Tata Motors under the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS).

In Maharashtra, the company collaborated with Nirmaan NGO to rescue 47 bonded labourers, and established the Kamgar Samman and Suvidha Kendra in Bhosari, serving

12,000+ migrant workers with legal aid and access to entitlements.

### Fostering Workplace Inclusion

In FY25, Tata Motors on-boarded 141 Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and 17 transgender individuals across its plants, supported by inclusive policies, sensitisation programmes, and structured training—setting a benchmark for workplace equity.

### Driving Academic Success

Under the ENABLE programme, 19,000+ students received coaching for competitive exams. Of these, 8,000 appeared for JEE Mains, with 28% qualifying. In Mumbai, remedial coaching in 69 BMC schools led to a 96% SSC pass rate, surpassing the city average.

### Combating Urban Malnutrition

Through Project Aarogyasampanna, 1,000+ children were screened in the slums of Trombay - Mumbai, resulting in a 90% decline in severe and moderate malnutrition. The initiative also empowered parents with nutritional education and established community health libraries.

### Record Volunteering Participation

Over 19,000 Tata Motors employees dedicated over 2 lakh hours towards social causes – conducting health awareness drives, championing environmental causes, supporting disaster management efforts amongst others. These actions reflect the company's deep-rooted culture of compassion and responsible citizenship.

## Adani Foundation at ACC Chaibasa empowers rural women to launch 'Brunch' meal service for 300 school children

Jharkhand, 18 August 2025: ACC, the cement and building materials company of the diversified Adani

Portfolio, in collaboration with the Adani Foundation, has empowered five women from the Seyan Maskal Self-Help Group (SHG) in Tonto Block of West Singhbhum district near ACC Chaibasa to launch a unique school meal initiative called 'Brunch.' Focused on bridging nutrition and education gaps, the initiative provides a wholesome mid-morning meal to 300 children at the ACC Middle School for just ₹25 per student.

The project began with essential support from the Adani Foundation, which provided kitchen equipment, raw materials, and operational



guidance. What started as a simple income-generation activity has grown into a sustainable, community-led enterprise that now generates ₹2.25 lakh in monthly income—transforming the lives of the women entrepreneurs involved.

Beyond financial independence for the SHG members, the initiative has had a powerful ripple effect—reducing post-lunch school dropouts, improving attendance, and driving up new admissions. Through such grassroots initiatives, ACC and the Adani Foundation continue to foster inclusive rural development by integrating livelihood creation with better educational outcomes.

# Amway India's Power of 5 Goes to School: Empowering Young Minds with Nutrition Literacy

India's nutrition challenge goes beyond food access; it's about awareness and education around healthy eating and healthy habits. Reaffirming its vision of helping people live better lives, Amway India, a leading company supporting health and wellbeing needs, in collaboration with Nourishing Schools Foundation, launched the School Nutrition Education Program under its flagship 'Power of 5 (Po5)' project.

The program partners with 12 Government and NGO-run schools across Delhi and Chennai. The initiative is expected to benefit more than 12,000 people, including 3,000 school-going children, in its first year. The launch event coincided with National Nutrition Week and aligned with the theme 'Eat Right for a Better Life', highlighting the importance of nutrition literacy and healthy habits from an early age.

Speaking on this, Rajneesh Chopra, Managing Director, Amway India, stated, "School-age is a decisive stage to shape lifelong habits, and nutrition is at the heart of that journey. According to the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS) every second adolescent faces poor nutrition, with widespread deficiencies in iron, vitamin A, and zinc. By investing in early, preventive action, we are not just teaching children about healthy diets; we are empowering them to become agents of change in their communities. This partnership with the Nourishing Schools Foundation is an extension of our commitment to help transform 5 million lives in India through an inclusive, community-driven approach. It reflects our

broader social impact philosophy, integrating health and wellbeing into everything we do, building need-based, evidence-led interventions, and working hand-in-hand with grassroots organisations, government, and global agencies."

The initiative brings together multiple stakeholders from corporate to Non-Profit organisations and the Delhi education department, to promote integrated approaches to improving nutrition education among school-going children. It reinforces Amway's mission to help build a healthier, well-nourished India. Through a combination of student-led showcases, thought-provoking discussions, and the unveiling of the School Nutrition Education Program Toolkit, the launch event underscored the role of schools as powerful platforms for driving behaviour change, building food literacy, and empowering children to become advocates for community health.

Amway's Po5 School Nutrition Education program is a 12-month intervention that aims to improve the health, nutrition, and learning outcomes of schoolchildren by integrating nutrition education into daily school activities. Central to the program is a specially designed nutrition toolkit featuring games, educational materials, and visual aids that make learning about nutrition interactive, engaging, and fun for children. It focuses on key areas: boosting nutrition awareness to encouraging healthy habits, training teachers, tracking progress, engaging volunteers, and empowering children to take charge of their wellbeing.

Aligned with the Government of India's vision for Viksit Bharat by 2047, Amway India believes that empowering children with nutrition literacy today will create a generation that can champion healthier communities tomorrow. The company envisions that these children, equipped with the right knowledge, will emerge as advocates for healthy living. This, in turn, will create a ripple effect of awareness across communities and generations.

Archana Sinha, Co-founder, Nourishing Schools Foundation, added: "Schools have an unparalleled ability to shape young minds and influence family and community behaviours. By equipping children with the right knowledge, skills, and resources, we can create a ripple effect of healthier choices that lasts a lifetime. This collaboration with Amway India is about combining expertise, resources, and vision to make nutrition education a core part of the learning experience for every child."

With a firm belief that good health is achieved through informed choices, Amway India has consistently championed empowering individuals to take charge of their wellbeing. From investing in school-based nutrition education to fostering community-driven health initiatives, the company integrates evidence-led strategies with grassroots partnerships to create lasting impact. By continually offering practical, need-based nutrition solutions, Amway reaffirms its unwavering dedication to improving the health and wellbeing of communities for a healthier India.



## CMD, IREDA Highlights Green Education and Skilling as Key to India's Renewable Goals

**P**radip Kumar Das, Chairman & Managing Director of Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA), stressed the urgent need for dedicated green skilling centers of excellence to prepare India's

workforce for the nearly 3 million green jobs expected by 2030.

Addressing the 7th International Conference on Sustainability Education (ICSE), organized by the Mobius Foundation at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, Das

underlined that India's clean energy transition hinges not only on technology and capital but also on a skilled workforce.

Highlighting IREDA's initiatives, Das noted that the organization has become a fully paperless institution and is actively collaborating with academic institutions such as IITs to build a knowledge bank that fosters innovation and green skilling.

He emphasized that realizing India's renewable energy targets and the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 will require both massive capital inflows and skilled human resources. IREDA has already financed over 27 GW of renewable energy projects, catalyzing an estimated 6,00,000 construction jobs and 50,000 long-term operations and maintenance jobs.

Calling for collective action, Das urged the government, industry, finance, academia, and civil society to work together to build a resilient and inclusive green economy.

Reaffirming IREDA's commitment, he said: "Our mission is not only to finance renewable energy but also to support the broader ecosystem of knowledge, skills, and community development. Through impactful CSR initiatives in health, education, and rural infrastructure, we ensure that India's clean energy transition uplifts society at large."



# CSR INDIA UNITED

## Yara India Signs MoU with Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar University for Farmer-Centric Radio Awareness Initiative 2.0

**Y**ara India, a subsidiary of Yara International and the world's leading crop nutrition company, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Agra, under the aegis of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, Government of India. The collaboration aims to launch a comprehensive farmer awareness program focused on the balanced use of fertilisers, crop nutrition management, soil health, and sustainable farming practices. Through this initiative,

Yara and the University seek to educate and empower the farming community via a series of dedicated radio broadcasts on the University's community radio station.

The twelve-month program, commencing in September 2025 and running through August 2026, will feature 180 episodes, each 30 minutes in length, broadcast on University Community Radio (UCR) 90.4 AGRA KI AWAZ. The content will include scientific talks, interviews, panel discussions, success stories of progressive farmers, and outreach segments,

all designed to provide valuable information on balanced fertilizer use and good agricultural practices. To ensure maximum reach, all broadcasts will be delivered in Hindi.

"On the occasion, Sanjiv Kanwar, Managing Director, Yara South Asia said "Beyond delivering quality products, we are investing in empowering farmers with critical knowledge through this awareness program. This initiative will directly contribute to enhanced productivity, improved livelihoods, and the long-term well-being of the farming community."

Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Agra, an esteemed educational institution known for its research and development in agriculture, will leverage its expertise to design and broadcast the radio content.

Prof. Ashu Rani, Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Agra, added, "This collaboration will allow us to reach a wider audience of farmers and provide them with the knowledge they need to optimize their agricultural practices and improve their livelihoods."

In addition to the radio broadcasts, the partnership will include a minimum of 10 outreach programs, allowing for direct engagement with farmers.





## Adani Foundation, Ambuja Cements revive Ammagari Pond in Nadikudi, enhancing water security and rural livelihoods

**A**mbuja Cements, the cement and building materials company of the diversified Adani Portfolio, along with the Adani Foundation has restored the Ammagari Pond in Nadikudi, Andhra Pradesh, to secure long-term water availability and strengthen rural livelihoods. Excavated nearly 50 years ago, the pond had lost its utility due to silt accumulation, bush overgrowth, and weakened bunds, leading to water scarcity for farmers, declining irrigation, and stress on livestock.

Through a focused intervention, the Adani Foundation undertook overgrowth removal, extensive desilting, and bund reinforcement to revive the traditional water resource. These efforts restored the pond's capacity and improved its ability to harvest rainwater and recharge groundwater. As a result, 23 lakh litres of water now percolate annually into surrounding borewells and wells, ensuring year-round availability for farming and household use.



The restoration has brought tangible improvements to agriculture and community well-being. Around 124 farmers across 12 hectares now irrigate their fields reliably, cultivating cotton, chilli, maize, and other crops with increased yields. Eight borewells have been recharged, reducing dependency on rainfall and costly private water sources. At the same time, 1,504 community members benefit from enhanced water access, while 248 cattle, 2,700 sheep,

and 1,600 goats now have reliable drinking water.

The rejuvenation of Ammagari Pond stands as a model for sustainable water resource management. By restoring a traditional water body, Ambuja Cements and the Adani Foundation have not only revived agricultural productivity but also reinforced water security, livestock health, and community resilience for communities around Nadikudi.

# Reckitt Joins Hands with PATH-CHRI to Launch Dettol Banega Swasth India - Maternal and Child Health Tech Accelerator

In a significant move to revolutionize maternal and child health in India, Reckitt, a leading global consumer health and hygiene company, has partnered with PATH, a global nonprofit organization, and Centre for Health Research and Innovation (CHRI), to launch the Dettol Banega Swasth India - Maternal and Child Health Tech Accelerator.

This initiative is a call to action for India's brightest innovators to reimagine healthcare for mothers and children, especially in underserved communities. With focus on early health and development interventions during the first 1000 days of life, the accelerator will serve as a platform to identify and support innovative solutions that empower mothers and caregivers, frontline workers, and health systems to deliver better outcomes from the very start of life. It also aims to strengthen the public health ecosystem across 500 aspirational blocks of India, ensuring that innovation truly benefits those who need it most.

As part of India's journey towards Viksit Bharat @ 2047, the Government of India has made remarkable progress in transforming the healthcare landscape with a clear vision of Universal Health Coverage and building a resilient, inclusive, tech-enabled health system. Schemes like Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY have reduced out-of-pocket healthcare expenses for families from 63% to 39%, while initiatives such as the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, eSanjeevani Telemedicine Service, Tele-MANAS, and U-WIN are leveraging technology to improve healthcare. Reaching

RECKITT AND PATH-CHRI LAUNCH  
DETTOL BANEGA SWASTH INDIA

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2.6 crore infants and 2.9 crore new mothers every year, the Universal Immunization Program ensures no eligible newborn or pregnant woman is left out. Complemented by Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana, doubling of medical colleges, and initiatives like MedTech Mitra, India is building a stronger grassroots health ecosystem. The focus remains on preventive healthcare, innovation, and public-private collaboration with a unified goal - every citizen has access to quality, affordable healthcare.

Aligned with this national vision, Reckitt is committed to strengthening healthcare through the Dettol

Banega Swasth India - Maternal and Child Health Tech Accelerator. Reckitt and PATH-CHRI will be investing in solutions that empower communities and improve health outcomes during the first 1,000 days of life, putting purpose into action through partnerships that drive lasting change where it matters most. Through this initiative, Reckitt and PATH-CHRI are inviting innovators from India with product-ready solutions (TRL 9). Shortlisted innovators will take center stage at a high-impact pitch event on 15th and 16th September, where they will showcase their solutions to an eminent jury panel comprising leaders from

across the health sector — including Padma Shri awardees in public health, policy experts, and grass-roots changemakers.

The top five winning innovations will be awarded on 2nd October, during the grand launch of Dettol Banega Swasth India Season 12, a platform that has become synonymous with health transformation in India. But the journey doesn't end there. These five solutions will be implemented in partnership with Plan India, with the goal to support mothers and caregivers during the first 1000 days, empower frontline health workers and improve maternal and child health outcomes, especially in marginalized and underserved communities.

Gaurav Jain, Executive Vice President - South Asia, Reckitt, said, "At Reckitt, our purpose is to protect, heal, and nurture in the relentless pursuit of a cleaner, healthier world that aligns closely with the Government of India's vision to ensure every citizen has access to quality and affordable healthcare. We believe that access to the highest standards of hygiene

should be a right, not a privilege. Through the Dettol Banega Swasth India - Maternal and Child Health Tech Accelerator, in partnership with PATH-CHRI, we aim to bridge the gap between innovation and impact. This initiative is about transforming bold ideas into scalable, real-world solutions that reach the last mile, strengthening systems, improving lives, and supporting India's journey toward Viksit Bharat @2047. Together, our success will continue to positively impact communities, building an ecosystem where health and hygiene are universally accessible."

Neeraj Jain, Director, Growth Operations - Asia, Middle East and Europe, PATH, "At PATH-CHRI, we believe that innovation and collaboration are the twin engines that drive public health impact. We are proud to partner with Reckitt for the Dettol Banega Swasth India – Maternal and Child Health Tech Accelerator, an important step toward reimagining how we deliver on the promise of the first 1000 days of life. This initiative aims to identify, nurture, and scale homegrown solutions that address

long-standing gaps in maternal and child health. By bridging innovators with public health systems, we are not only supporting bold ideas but also shaping a future where every child in India has an equal chance to survive and thrive."

The Dettol Banega Swasth India - Maternal and Child Health Tech Accelerator, presented by PATH-CHRI, will act as a catalytic platform—bringing together innovators, policymakers, and healthcare stakeholders. At the heart of this initiative lies the National Health Mission's RMNCH+A strategy — Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health — which provides a comprehensive, lifecycle approach to healthcare. It integrates services across reproductive health, maternal care, child development, adolescent wellbeing, nutrition, and hygiene, ensuring continuous care from adolescence through motherhood and childhood. By further connecting this framework with innovation, the initiative aims to bridge gaps and accelerate the nation's progress toward a healthier, more resilient Viksit Bharat.

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The Indian contingent was supported by the Essar Foundation, in partnership with the Scrabble Association of India (SAI) and Wordaholix.

Harvinderjit Bhatia, President, Scrabble Association of India, said: “Madhav’s victory is a historic milestone for Indian Scrabble and a proud moment for the entire community. Over the years, our young players have shown immense promise, and this world title validates India’s growing stature in global Scrabble. We thank Essar Foundation for supporting Team India at WYSC 2025 and helping create the platform for such achievements.”

An Essar Foundation spokesperson said: “We are immensely proud and thrilled by Team India’s historic achievement at WYSC 2025, especially Madhav Gopal Kamath’s extraordinary victory. At Essar Foundation, we believe sports, whether physical or intellectual, have the power to inspire, educate, and unite. Supporting these young Scrabble champions is central to our mission of nurturing talent and creating opportunities for the next generation to excel.”

Commenting on his victory, Madhav said “To be the first Indian to win a world Scrabble title is a dream come true. I’m grateful for the support of my family, coaches, and teammates, and I hope this inspires many more young players in India to take up the game and believe they can compete at the highest level.”

Earlier this year, Madhav became the youngest ever national champion by winning the 25th National Scrabble Championship in Mumbai, and he is currently ranked 8th in the world across all ages. Having come close at both the WYSC and the Asia Cup Youth Championship in recent years, this landmark triumph marks both his and India’s first global Scrabble crown.

Madhav started playing Scrabble when he was just six years old. His extraordinary aptitude and ingenuity on the board have propelled him into the ranks of the world’s top players, with the potential to break into the global top five before turning 15. His WYSC victory is expected to give a major boost to youth Scrabble in India and inspire a new generation of players to pursue the sport competitively.

As Scrabble continues to gain recognition as a sport in India, these achievements highlight the immense potential of the country’s competitive youth Scrabble circuit. The Scrabble Association of India expressed gratitude to Essar Foundation for its partnership, as well as to Assembly Travel for providing backpacks and Black Panther for designing the team jerseys.

## Adani Foundation at ACC Chaibasa enables rural youth to achieve success through sports and service

ACC, the cement and building materials company of the diversified Adani Portfolio, along with the Adani Foundation, is nurturing young tribal talent in Chaibasa, West Singhbhum, by combining sports with empowerment opportunities.

One such inspiring example is Manjhi Sundi, a 19-year-old from Cheriya Pahadi village in Jhinkpani Block, who has successfully transitioned from grassroots football to public service, emerging as a role model for tribal youth in the region. Manjhi’s journey began at the Adani Foundation Football Training Centre in Jhinkpani, where under the mentorship of Coach Jitendra Bari, he received structured training in football techniques, fitness, discipline, and leadership. The intervention provided him with the platform to refine his passion, gain confidence, and compete at higher levels. His dedication led to a significant milestone which was his selection into the Jharkhand Under-20 Men’s Football Team, where he represented the state in competitive matches.

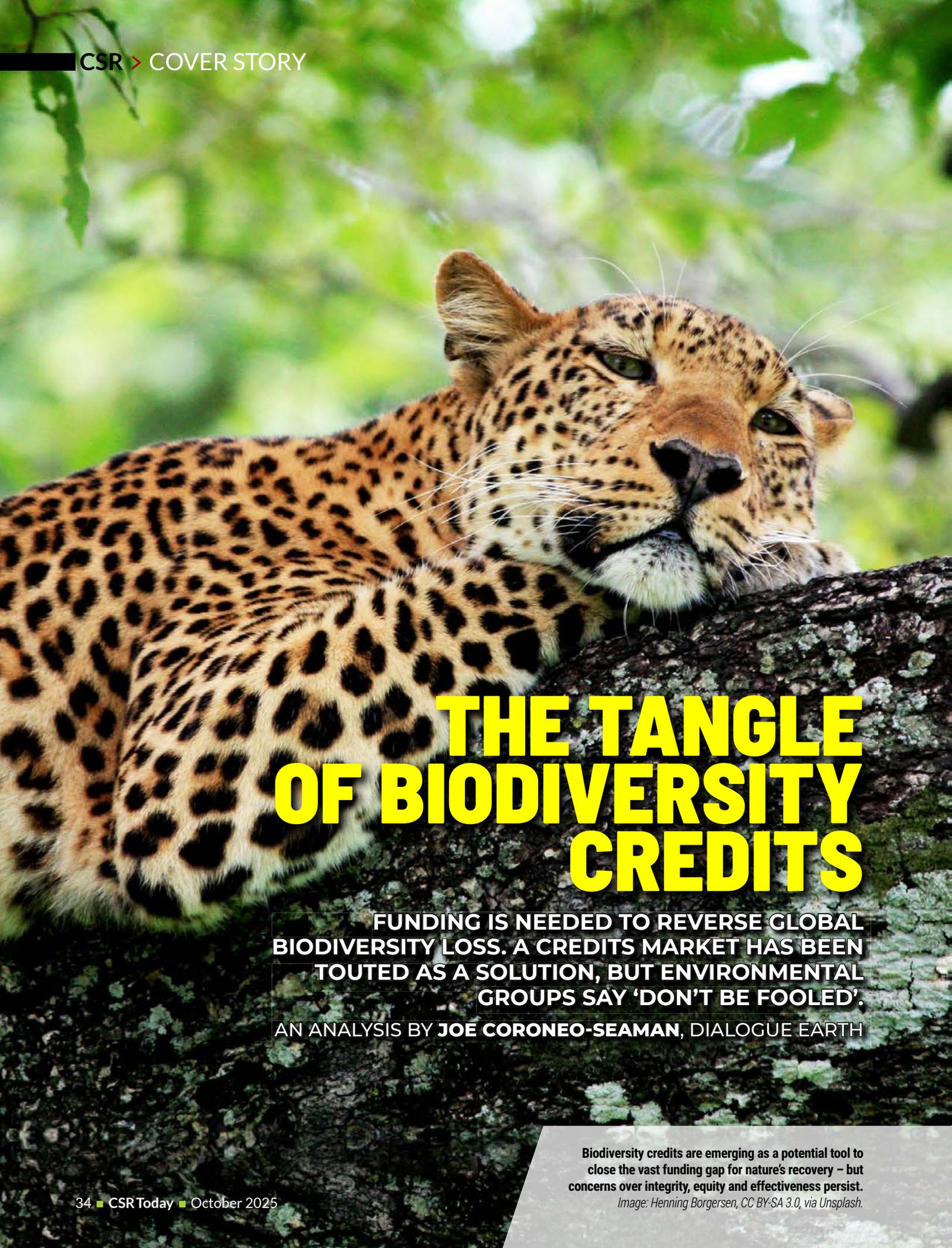
Beyond sports, Manjhi also cleared the Jharkhand State Home Guard Recruitment Examination and now serves as a Home Guard, ensuring public safety while securing financial stability for his family. His progress reflects not only his personal resilience but also the social impact of structured interventions. Today, he stands as a symbol of inspiration for many tribal youth, encouraging them to pursue both sports and education.

Through initiatives like the football training centre, ACC and the Adani Foundation continue to foster inclusive development in tribal regions by providing access to professional training, mentorship, and pathways for livelihood. Manjhi Sundi’s story exemplifies how opportunity, when coupled with determination, can transform young lives and strengthen entire communities.

▶ **Adani Foundation at ACC Chaibasa is empowering rural youth through structured football training at its Jhinkpani centre.**

▶ **The initiative helped Manjhi Sundi represent Jharkhand in Under-20 football and later secure a government role as Home Guard.**

▶ **His journey reflects personal growth, financial stability, and inspiration for other tribal youth in the community.**



# THE TANGLE OF BIODIVERSITY CREDITS

**FUNDING IS NEEDED TO REVERSE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY LOSS. A CREDITS MARKET HAS BEEN TOUTED AS A SOLUTION, BUT ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS SAY 'DON'T BE FOOLED'.**

**AN ANALYSIS BY JOE CORONEO-SEAMAN, DIALOGUE EARTH**

Biodiversity credits are emerging as a potential tool to close the vast funding gap for nature's recovery – but concerns over integrity, equity and effectiveness persist.

*Image: Henning Borgersen, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Unsplash.*

# P

roperly funding nature's recovery on a global scale will require a staggering amount of money. In 2021, The Nature Conservancy, an environmental non-profit, estimated that reversing the global decline of biodiversity would require between US\$722 billion and US\$967 billion per year by 2030.

The lion's share of that is expected to come from public funding: redirected government subsidies, taxes and direct investment. But a substantial amount will likely need to come from the private sector.

That's where biodiversity credits could come in.

These tradable certificates aim to direct money from individuals and companies toward activities that protect and restore nature.

The idea took off after COP15 – the 2022 United Nations nature summit in Montreal. As part of a historic agreement to reverse biodiversity loss, almost 200 countries pledged to collectively spend “at least US\$200 billion per year” by 2030 on efforts to conserve and restore nature worldwide.

The agreement, known as the Global Biodiversity Framework, proposed “innovative schemes” to help reach this funding target, including “biodiversity offsets and credits”.

This mention in a UN-level agreement sparked a wave of excitement. Since then, more than 50 organisations have set up nature credit schemes across the globe, including

influential companies in the carbon market, like Verra and South Pole.

At the same time, environmental groups have come out in force to oppose the credits. More than 250 civil society organisations have signed an open letter labelling them “false solutions”, citing the “serious failings” of the carbon market before them.

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

Imagine you look after one hectare of forest. If, after one year, you can demonstrate a measurable increase in biodiversity on the land, you could sell credits representing those gains.

For example, Drumadoon farm on the Isle of Arran, west Scotland, is the site of a recently launched credit project. A series of interventions are planned at the 260-hectare site, including native tree planting, which is forecast to produce 70,000 nature credits over 10 years.

A single project can involve many organisations. Drumadoon includes a landowner, a credit scheme company, a rewilding charity, a project developer, a local community group and a carbon-trading platform.

Credits are not to be confused with biodiversity offsets or habitat banks. Though similar, these are types of environmental regulation that have been around since the 1970s. Examples include England's biodiversity net gain and mitigation banks in the US. A company may be required to purchase offsets to compensate for any unavoidable ecological damage caused by a development, such as a mine or hydropower dam. The money pays for the restoration of a similar ecosystem elsewhere.

By contrast, biodiversity credits are part of an unregulated international market. Anyone can sell them and anyone can buy them – via online marketplaces, brokers or directly from the project developer.

Today, credits generally sell for anywhere between US\$2 and US\$415.

### PUTTING NATURE INTO NUMBERS

It is hoped that selling biodiversity outcomes as discrete units will be more appealing to large private investors, who want to be able to report quantifiable units of nature.

“If you can’t report in a quantitative way the returns of your investment, it’s pretty certain that money is going to stop flowing very soon,” says Edmund Pragnell, nature finance lead at CreditNature, a UK-based biodiversity credit scheme.

But what exactly counts as a discrete biodiversity unit?

Unlike with greenhouse gas emissions, which can be measured in tonnes, there is no single standardised metric that can account for nature’s complexity. Attempts to do so present a “monumental challenge”, according to a 2024 scientific review of biodiversity credit schemes. This hasn’t stopped credit-issuing companies, many of which have opted to design their own methodology.

Some issue credits based on biodiversity gains. In other words, the landowner must prove that over time, certain metrics of ecological health have gone up, or remained constant. PlanVivo, for example, issue one credit per 1 per cent of “biodiversity increase” per hectare, per year.

Other schemes reward management instead of outcomes. One jaguar credit from ERA represents the “stewardship” of one hectare of umbrella species habitat – in this case, Brazil’s Pantanal wetland – for a year.

“Because the market is voluntary, no one prevents you from interpreting nature differently,” says Simas Gradeckas, nature finance researcher and member of the International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits (IAPB) measurement working group.

“That makes it difficult for buyers to understand what they’re buying.”

### STUMBLING BLOCKS

Despite the excitement, business isn’t exactly booming.

The total value of credits sold as of September 2024 is estimated at between US\$325,000 and US\$1.87



**There’s a lot of hype... about this being the new thing that’s going to solve conservation. This is really just an iteration of something that’s been going on for a long time. This idea of paying for nature is not new. Biodiversity credits are not really that different from carbon credits.**

– HANNAH WAUCHOPE  
Lecturer, University of Edinburgh

million. For perspective, that’s 0.001 per cent of the US\$200 billion a year that countries have pledged to raise by 2030.

The maze of options is one factor holding back would-be buyers. “They shouldn’t need to go through fifty-plus biodiversity credit schemes to choose which one to support,” says Gredackas. “The due diligence required is just too heavy.”

Another is that the intended customers of nature credits – large corporations and financial institutions – see little return. So far, they are mainly used to support marketing and branding efforts, according to a 2024 survey of 16 nature credit companies by climate investment advisory firm Pollination.

“Most of them don’t see a direct commercial benefit yet,” says Gredackas.

One solution is integrating nature credits into existing products to create demand. Around 20 companies have started selling combined carbon and biodiversity credits, or selling both as a package. It’s a practice known as “bundling” or “stacking”.

CreditNature also allows limited secondary trading of credits in the hope it will stimulate interest by allowing them to be sold at a profit. “Investors don’t get out of bed unless they know they’re going to get their money back, and we need their money,” explains Pragnell.

### OFFSETS

One widely discussed potential use for biodiversity credits is as offsets, similar to the government schemes used in the UK and US but market based. This means organisations could purchase credits to compensate for destruction of nature that they deem unavoidable.

“That’s where we see the most interest from buyers,” says Hannah Simmons, CEO of ERA, a carbon and nature credit project developer in Brazil. It’s a hotly contested issue. Critics point to the well-documented problems with carbon offsets, whose claimed climate benefits are often found to have been exaggerated. Dialogue Earth recently reported on the sale of carbon credits from “phantom” rice cultivation projects that did not exist.

Challenges facing regulatory biodiversity offset schemes also offer a warning, says Hannah Wauchope, lecturer in ecology and conservation at the University of Edinburgh. Outcomes claimed by offset projects frequently aren’t borne out when follow-up investigations are carried out on the ground, explains Wauchope, who co-authored the aforementioned 2024 scientific review of credit schemes.

Trying to replicate this in an unregulated, international market where profit is the primary motive is “more risky”, she says. “There are much higher uncertainties and much more potential for abuse of the system.” Despite this, some influential groups back the idea.

The IAPB, a UK and France-backed initiative, lists “local compensation of biodiversity impacts”

as an acceptable use for credits in its Framework for High-Integrity Biodiversity Credit Markets, but specifies this must be local-to-local and like-for-like.

### HIGH INTEGRITY

The framework, launched at last year's COP16 nature summit in Colombia, was written by the IAPB, Biodiversity Credit Alliance (BCA) and the World Economic Forum. It is intended as a guide for the biodiversity credit market that sets out standards for how companies in the sector should operate. The rules focus on transparency and verification of outcomes; equity and fairness for people; and good governance.

a UK think-tank, has suggested integrating traditional and cultural knowledge into credit methodologies through collaboration with Indigenous peoples. It also proposed that companies donate a percentage of a project's revenue to communities or support Indigenous peoples to strengthen their land tenure rights.

### A STRATEGIC TOOL

Governments are showing an interest. In May 2024, Scotland commissioned CreditNature to develop a voluntary biodiversity credit mechanism for the country. In July this year, the European Commission published a 'Roadmap towards nature credits', in which it announced

biodiversity certificates" that are linked to the 23 UN targets agreed to in the Global Biodiversity Framework. Companies would buy credits from pre-approved projects as a voluntary "contribution" to the host country's biodiversity goals.

Canada-based think-tank IISD has suggested that countries negotiating debt-for-nature swaps could offer biodiversity credits to attract funding from private investors and philanthropists.

### NOT SO NEW?

Many environmental groups remain unconvinced. Greenpeace and Survival International are among the civil society organisations to have signed the public statement expressing their opposition.

WWF has refused to endorse voluntary biodiversity credits without clear safeguards against offsetting, secondary trading, abuse of Indigenous rights, and more. Friends of the Earth called the European Commission's nature credit plan released last month a "roadmap to greenwashing".

Campaign for Nature, the group behind the 30x30 campaign to protect 30 per cent of earth by 2030, has warned that "inflated" claims of the potential scale and rapid growth of credit markets discourage governments from increasing public spending.

"There's a lot of hype [...] about this being the new thing that's going to solve conservation. This is really just an iteration of something that's been going on for a long time. This idea of paying for nature is not new," says Wauchope, of the University of Edinburgh.

"Biodiversity credits are not really that different from carbon credits." 

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*(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/the-tangle-of-biodiversity-credits/>)*

**The International Institute for Environment and Development, a UK think-tank, has suggested integrating traditional and cultural knowledge into credit methodologies through collaboration with Indigenous peoples.**

It's part of a wider effort by advocates of biodiversity credits to learn from the mistakes of the carbon market, following accusations of land-grabbing and violating the rights of Indigenous peoples.

To this end, the BCA has set up a communities advisory panel made up of 40 members from Indigenous peoples and local communities worldwide. In 2024, the panel published recommendations for companies entering the market. For example, market actors should only proceed with projects if free, prior and informed consent is granted by Indigenous communities that might be affected.

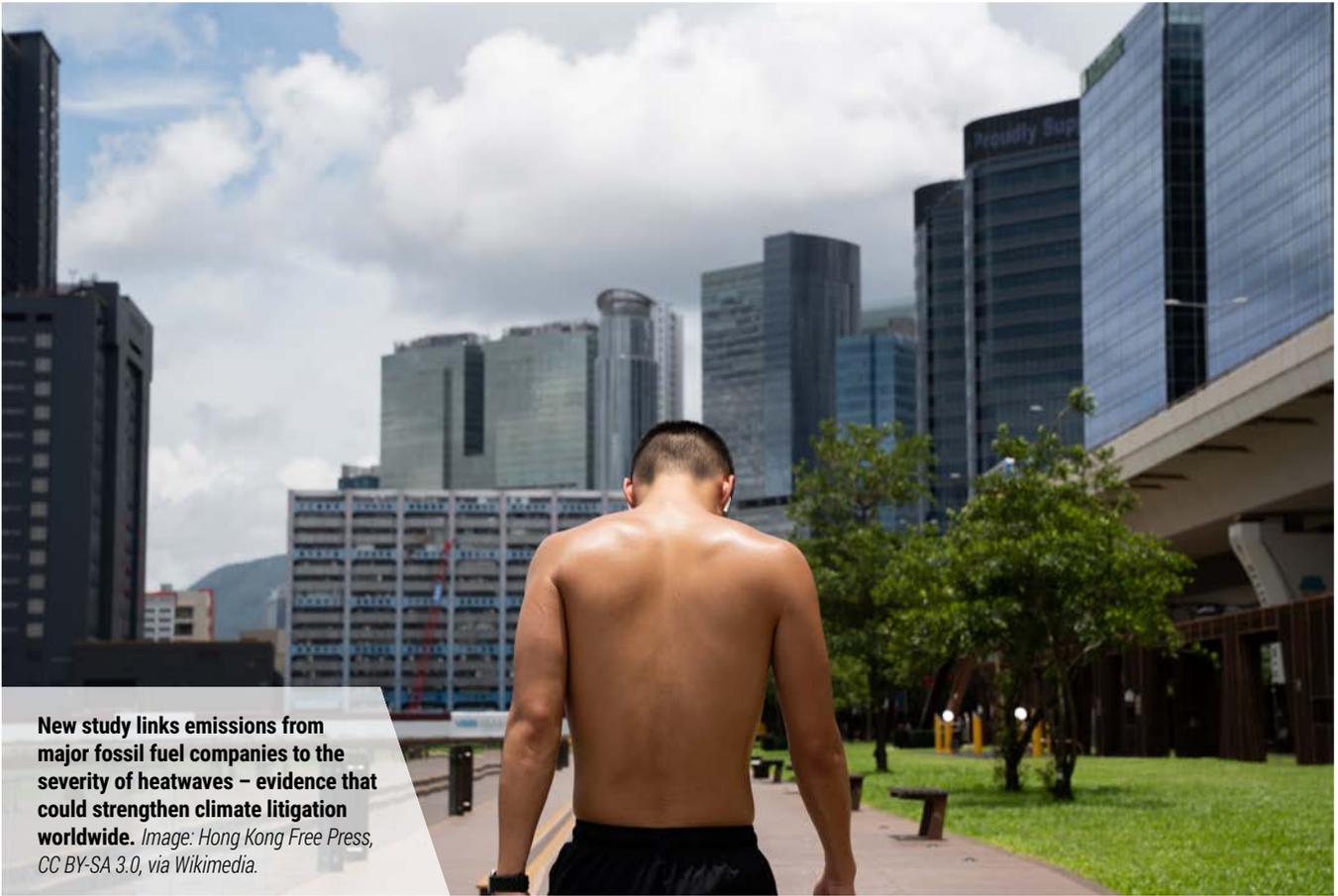
The International Institute for Environment and Development,

the creation of a new EU expert group and plans to launch pilot nature credit projects over the next two years.

Biodiversity credits are "a strategic tool in the nature finance toolbox," says Gredackas.

He adds that governments are taking "inspiration" from the metrics and methodologies used by private companies to develop their own statutory biodiversity offset schemes. "These are experimentation grounds for the compliance markets that are being spun up. You can't play around too much on the compliance side, because the stakes are too high."

The Nature Conservancy has proposed a hybrid approach. It says governments could issue "strategic



New study links emissions from major fossil fuel companies to the severity of heatwaves – evidence that could strengthen climate litigation worldwide. Image: Hong Kong Free Press, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia.

# STUDY LINKS WORLD'S TOP OIL AND GAS FIRMS TO 200 'MORE INTENSE' HEATWAVES

Global warming linked to the world's biggest oil and gas companies made all "major" 21st century heatwaves more intense and frequent, writes **Ayesha Tandon**, Carbon Brief

This is according to new research, published in Nature, which uses “extreme event attribution” to assess the impact of climate change on all 21st-century heatwaves that were classified as “major disasters”.

The authors find one-quarter of the 213 heatwaves would have been “virtually impossible” without human-caused global warming.

They add that the effect of climate change on heatwave frequency and intensity is becoming more pronounced as the planet warms.

The study estimates the emissions stemming from the operations and production of more than 100 “carbon majors”, such as Exxon-Mobil, BP, Saudi Aramco and Shell.

The fossil fuels produced by these companies account for 60 per cent of all human-caused CO2 emissions over 1850-2023, the study says.

The authors find that heatwaves recorded over 2000-23 were made, on average, 1.7°C hotter due to climate change, with half of this increase due to the emissions originating from carbon majors.

This study “could be used to support future climate lawsuits and aid diplomatic negotiation”, according to a scientist not involved in the research.

### Worsening heatwaves

As the planet warms, heatwaves are becoming more intense and frequent, driving economic losses, ecosystem damage and a rise in health-related deaths.

The EM-DAT database catalogues all “major disasters” that have been reported since the year 1900 – defined as events that cause at least 10 fatalities, affect at least 100 people, or result in the declaration of state of emergency or a call for

international assistance. Between 2000 and 2023, the database lists more than 200 heatwaves. These are shown on the map below, where darker pink indicates a greater number of heatwaves. Countries with no reported heatwaves are shown in grey.

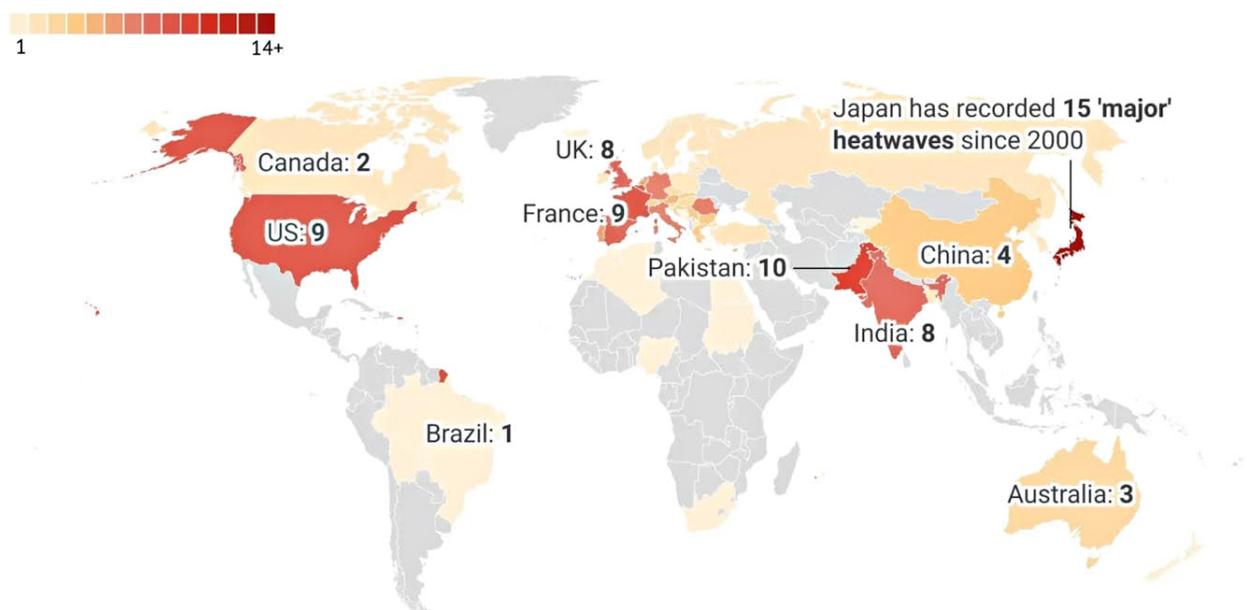
The study authors acknowledge that heatwave reporting is “highly uneven”, with only nine of the heatwaves reported in the database since the year 2000 in Africa, Latin America or the Caribbean. (This is largely because extreme heat events in these regions are not routinely monitored.)

They then carried an attribution analysis on each heatwave to identify whether it was made more likely or intense due to human-caused climate change.

The chart below shows how climate changes increased the intensity and frequency of the 78 heatwaves

## More than 200 'major' heatwaves have been recorded around the world in the 21st century

Heatwaves per country classified in the EM-DAT database as a "major disaster", 2000-23



Source: Quilcaille et al (2025)

CarbonBrief  
CLEAR ON CLIMATE

The map below shows the number of heatwaves per country recorded over 2000-23 on the EM-DAT database. Data: Quilcaille et al (2025).

assessed over 2000-09 (left), 54 heatwaves assessed over 2010-19 (middle) and 81 heatwaves assessed over 2020-23 (right).

The authors find that climate change increased the intensity and probability of all 213 heatwaves in the study. They add that the influence of climate change on heatwaves is strengthening over time.

In each panel, the bars show the percentage of heatwaves in that time period that were made 0.25-1.0°C (yellow), 1.0-2.0°C (orange) or 2.0-3.0°C (red) hotter due to climate change.

The position of bars indicate the change in likelihood of the heatwaves. This ranges from those made 1-10 times more likely due to climate change (left-most bar in each panel) to those made more than 11,000 times more likely (right-most bar in each panel).

Heatwaves recorded over 2000-09 were, on average, 20 times more likely due to climate change, according to the authors. Meanwhile, those recorded over 2010-19 were about 200 times more likely.

Similarly, 2000-09 heatwaves were 1.4°C hotter due to human-caused climate change on average, according to the study, while 2010-19 heatwaves were made 1.7°C hotter.

The study finds that human-caused climate change made 55 heatwaves at least 10,000 times more likely. According to the authors, this is “equivalent to saying that they would have been virtually impossible” without the influence of human activity.

### Carbon majors

To assess the contribution to heatwaves by oil and gas companies’ products, the authors use a database of carbon dioxide and methane emissions from 180 carbon majors over 1854-2023. This includes direct emissions from the companies, as well as the emissions released when the oil and gas they produced is used



**With more and more lawsuits aiming to hold high-emitting companies responsible for their contributions to climate change impacts or compel state and corporate actors to reduce their emissions and prevent rising climate harms, work like this provides the basis for well-informed judicial decision-making.**

**–DR RUPERT STUART-SMITH**  
Research Associate, University of Oxford Sustainable Law Programme

by others. The 180 carbon majors in the database represent 60 per cent of all human-caused CO2 emissions, including land use, over 1850-2023, according to the study. The paper adds that 14 companies, including ExxonMobil, BP, Saudi Aramco and Shell, are responsible for almost half of these emissions.

Using the Earth system model OSCAR, the authors estimate that global average surface temperatures increased by 1.3°C between the 1850-1900 average and the year 2023.

They find that 0.7°C of this increase was linked to the carbon majors, with 0.3°C due to the emissions of the 14 largest.

The chart below, taken from an accompanying Nature “news and views” article, shows the contribution of oil and gas companies’ products to increasing global

average surface temperatures over 1950-2023, compared to the 1850-1900 average.

Each colour indicates a carbon major, while grey indicates other sources of temperature increase, such as land-use change.

Heatwaves recorded over 2000-23 were, on average, 1.7°C hotter due to climate change, according to the study. The authors find that emissions originating from carbon majors and their products contributed about half of the increase in intensity of heatwaves seen since pre-industrial times.

The authors then break down the contribution of emissions from each carbon major on each heatwave in their analysis.

For example, they find that the emissions linked to Saudi Aramco made 51 heatwaves at least 10,000 times more likely. They add that on average, emissions tied to the company made the 213 heatwaves 0.04°C hotter.

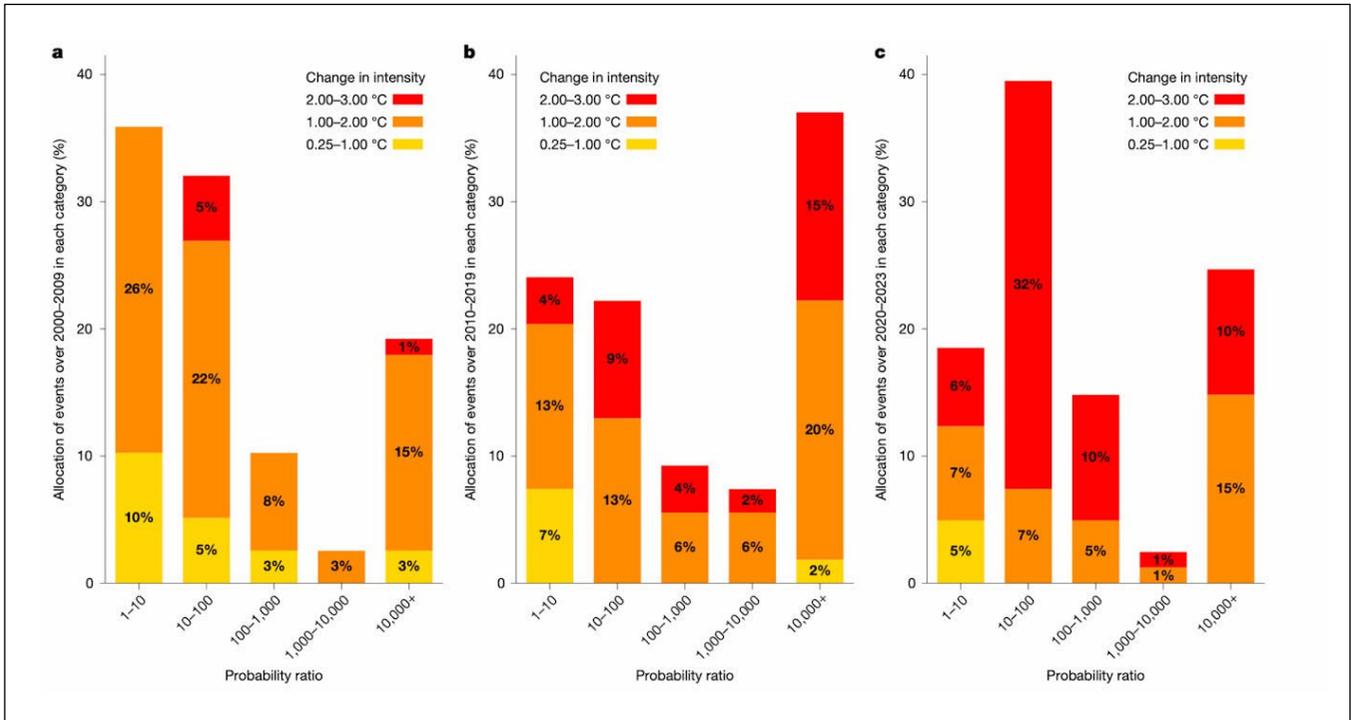
### Legal action

Attribution studies already play an important role in courts by providing evidence that helps judges to determine liability.

Dr Rupert Stuart-Smith is a research associate in climate science and the law at the University of Oxford’s Sustainable Law Programme. He was not involved in the study, but has published separate work showing that the emissions linked to each of the six largest corporate emitters cause one heat-related death in Zurich alone, every summer.

Stuart-Smith tells Carbon Brief that the new paper is a “high-quality analysis and a meaningful step forward for the field of climate change attribution”. He adds:

“With more and more lawsuits aiming to hold high-emitting companies responsible for their contributions to climate change impacts or compel state and corporate actors to



The extent to which climate changes increased the intensity and frequency of the 78 heatwaves assessed over 2000-09 (left), 54 heatwaves assessed over 2010-19 (middle) and 81 heatwaves assessed over 2020-23 (right). These are shown by colours and bar heights respectively. Source: Quilcaille et al (2025).

reduce their emissions and prevent rising climate harms, work like this provides the basis for well-informed judicial decision-making.”

Dr Yann Quilcaille is a researcher at ETH Zürich and lead author of the study. He stresses the importance of attribution research for court cases, telling Carbon Brief that he hopes his work “can be used by legal practitioners”.

However, he also says that his role as a scientist is not to assign

“responsibility” for climate change, but to “provide information to governments for decision making and to courts for litigation”.

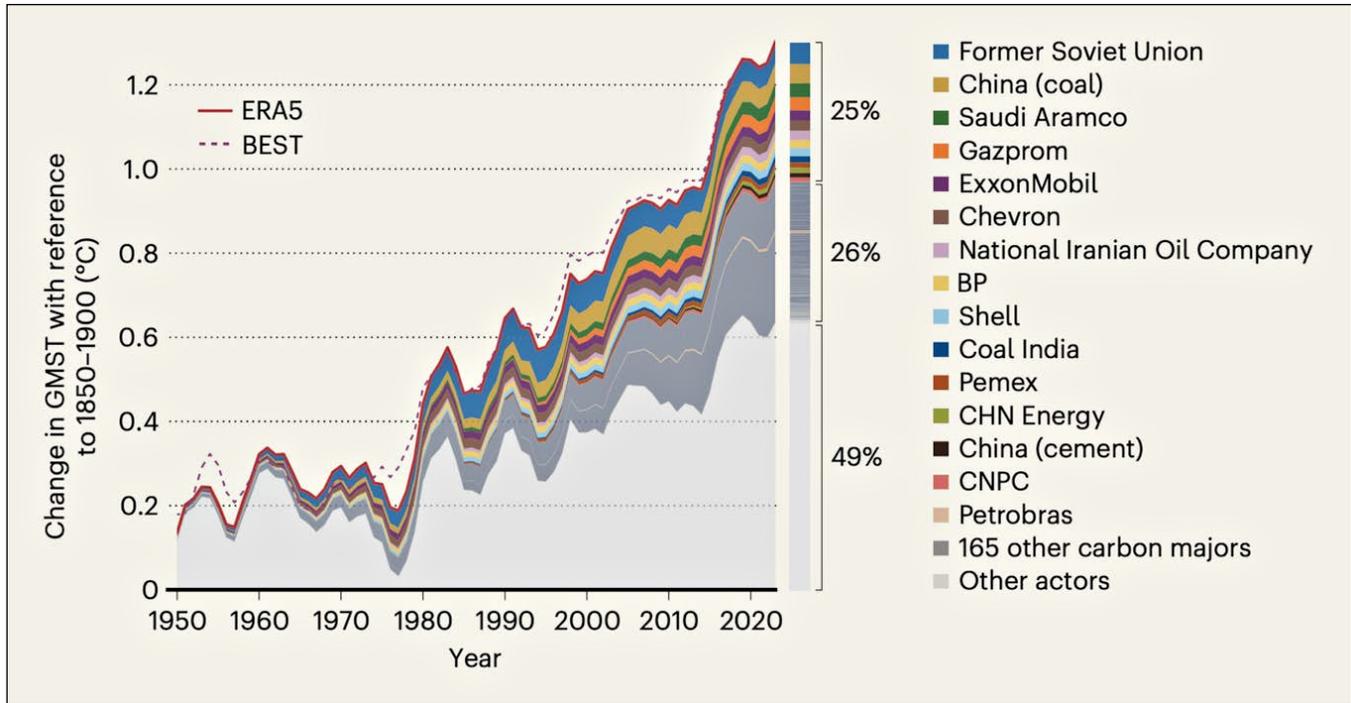
Earlier this year, Dr Christopher Callahan, the principal investigator of the IU Climate & Society Lab, published a study with Prof Justin Makin, an associate professor in the department of geography at the University of Dartmouth, which links trillions of dollars in economic losses to the extreme heat caused by emis-

sions tied to oil and gas companies. Mankin tells Carbon Brief that the new paper is “very closely” linked to his research.

Callahan says the new paper is “an important contribution to an emerging literature that illustrates how individual emitters can be linked to the change risk of extreme climate conditions and human impacts”.

He explains that “this kind of evidence will be important in court-

**Heatwaves recorded over 2000-23 were, on average, 1.7°C hotter due to climate change, according to the study. The authors find that emissions originating from carbon majors and their products contributed about half of the increase in intensity of heatwaves seen since pre-industrial times.**



**The contribution of oil and gas companies to increasing global average surface temperatures over 1950-2023, compared to the 1850-1900 average. Each colour indicates a company, while grey indicates other sources of temperature increase. Source: Haustein (2025).**

rooms – holding emitters legally accountable requires demonstrating a causal nexus between that emitter and a particularised harm suffered by a plaintiff”.

**Attribution**

The cutting-edge field of extreme weather attribution seeks to establish the role that human-caused warming played in these events. Attribution studies have been carried out on hundreds of heatwaves all around the world, as shown in Carbon Brief’s interactive map.

The new paper uses one of the earliest and most commonly used methods of attribution, called “probabilistic attribution”.

Specifically, it uses the method set out by the World Weather Attribution initiative for its “rapid attribution” analyses. The authors first chose a temperature “threshold” to define their heatwave.

They then used a global climate model to simulate two worlds – one mirroring the world as it was

during the heatwave and the other using the climate of 1850-1900. This second scenario is used to represent the climate in a world without human-caused climate change.

The authors run their models thousands of times in each scenario. As the world’s climate is inherently chaotic, each model “run” – individual simulations of how the climate progresses over many years – produces a slightly different progression of temperatures. This means that some runs simulate the heatwave, while others do not.

The authors count how many times the threshold temperature was in each model run. They then compared the likelihood of crossing the threshold temperature in the world with – and a world without – climate change. For example, they find that the 2021 Pacific north-west heatwave was made 3.1°C hotter due to human-caused climate change and more than 10,000 times more likely.

(A study by the WWA at the time of the heatwave found that

the heatwave was made 150 times more likely. The discrepancy is due to differences in the definition of the event, as well as its “very unlikely nature” according to the study authors.)

Dr Frederieke Otto is a professor at Imperial College London and founder of the WWA initiative. She tells Carbon Brief that the new study is “very similar to some other recent studies on impacts, based on the hazard attribution method used by WWA”, but says that “this is the most high-profile and wide-reaching one”.

**Otto adds:**

“I do hope that many more impact attribution studies will follow, based on our or other extreme event attribution studies. We need more research on this.”

*This story was published with permission from Carbon Brief.*

*(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/study-links-worlds-top-oil-and-gas-firms-to-200-more-intense-heatwaves/>)*



As emissions from car usage fall, the spotlight is shifting to supply chains – with steel and aluminium emerging as the new climate frontiers for automakers. Image: Hyundai Motor Group, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Unsplash. Image: Hong Kong Free Press, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia.

# EV MAKERS ARE STILL FAR FROM GREEN

Companies need to work to cut supply chain emissions, and so boost the greening of the steel and aluminium sectors, three experts - **Li Meng, Zhu Ziqi, Ding Shanshan** - explain in Dialogue Earth

**T**he large contribution made by vehicles to global greenhouse gas emissions must not be overlooked. Road transport accounts for about 12 per cent of emissions. But as vehicles become

powered by cleaner sources of energy, the emission hotspot in their lifecycles is shifting from the driving to the manufacturing stage.

It is estimated that by 2040 up to 85 per cent of vehicle emissions will arise from producing the raw

materials needed to make them. If the industry is to go green, it will not be enough to phase out internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles. Emissions must be cut throughout the value chain, including in raw materials production.

At the Institute of Public and Environmental Affairs (IPE), a non-profit environmental research organisation based in Beijing, we have surveyed the efforts of 51 Chinese and foreign carmakers to reduce emissions in their steel and aluminium supply chains.

its raw material supply chains. Stronger cooperation with steel and aluminium suppliers will help cut lifetime emissions.

We calculate that all-electric vehicles made by EV manufacturers have higher emissions from steel and aluminium than all-electrics

on supply chain emissions remains inadequate. Only 20 companies (39 per cent) had published supply chain emissions data, and only 13 (25 per cent) had published scope 3 emissions targets.

Twenty-six published actions taken on steel and aluminium emissions, but most of those were trials and of limited scope. It remains to be seen if those projects will be sustainable and they are not yet enough to encourage suppliers to speed up decarbonisation. Moreover, carmakers' disclosures tend to be qualitative or given in percentage terms. This makes it hard to quantify actual contributions to emissions reductions.

**Emissions arising from raw material production were a high proportion of total emissions in the production process for both ICE and all-electric vehicles. And most of the work to cut those emissions remains at a trial stage.**

Emissions arising from raw material production were a high proportion of total emissions in the production process for both ICE and all-electric vehicles. And most of the work to cut those emissions remains at a trial stage. Interestingly, makers of electric vehicles (EVs) are actually lagging behind their traditional competitors when it comes to transparency on supply chain emissions.

So, as the automotive industry becomes greener globally, what challenges does it face in China? And what opportunities?

### Cutting emissions from steel and aluminium

When making the body of a vehicle, steel and aluminium account for a large share of the emissions incurred – 45-65 per cent for an ICE car and 25-40 per cent for an EV.

We found the proportion of steel and aluminium emissions in overall emissions increases with the size of a car, driving up the overall carbon footprint. As the industry shifts towards electrification, it needs to focus on scope 3 emissions and particularly emissions from

made by traditional manufacturers.

Different types of manufacturers try to cut emissions from raw materials in different ways. Traditional manufacturers that make both EVs and ICEs tend to implement measures on both steel and aluminium.

But because the power system of an EV – that is, the electric motor, battery and control system – is heavy, EV makers are keen to save weight elsewhere in the car body. They use an aluminium-magnesium alloy, a mix of steel and aluminium, or an all-aluminium body. They therefore focus more on cutting emissions from aluminium, and could do more on steel.

### Vehicle supply chain emissions: Not enough info, not enough action

Last year, we evaluated the 51 companies that sell the most cars in China and are worth most on stock markets, both in China and abroad. Nineteen of these were foreign manufacturers.

Fifty had made commitments to mitigate climate change, and disclosed their actions on scope 1 and 2 emissions. However, action

### Too early to call electric vehicles green

It is true that EVs avoid considerable emissions during usage and have, in usual circumstances, smaller carbon footprints than ICE vehicles. However, our survey found that 10 firms making EVs primarily were actually doing less on supply chain emissions than traditional manufacturers.

We found less than half of EV manufacturers calculate and publish supply chain emissions and collect actual data from suppliers. Only two EV makers have set targets for cutting emissions in their steel and aluminium supply chains, and neither has said how much progress has been made.

EV makers also lagged slightly behind conventional vehicle makers when it came to disclosing action to cut emissions from battery manufacturing.

### Vehicle supply chain emissions: Challenges and opportunities

Manufacturers face various challenges as they try to cut emissions from steel and aluminium supply chains. First, it is hard to obtain actual emissions data from suppliers and “emission factors” are some-

times inaccurate, which hampers the measuring of emissions and progress on reductions.

Further, the companies lack expertise on how to cut emissions in their supply chain, particularly for steel and aluminium, and do not have targets or assessment mechanisms. Also, producing low-carbon or recycled steel or aluminium incurs too high a price premium.

These internal issues arise from external barriers. First, the main international raters of ESG (environmental, social and governance) performance are not yet able to effectively assess progress in carmaking supply chains. This reduces motivation. Second, supply chain stakeholders have not yet reached agreement on defining “low carbon” or “green” steel and

integration and low carbon innovation efforts, building low carbon principles into the entire process of product design, raw materials procurement, production, transportation, storage, use and recycling, and to accelerate the construction of a unified green-product certification and labelling system to promote the green and low carbon development of the entire supply chain”.

Various government bodies have issued policies encouraging steel and aluminium makers to take energy-saving and emissions-reduction measures. This year, the Ministry of Ecology and Environment has expanded China’s national carbon market to cover steel and aluminium makers.

This provides low-carbon transition routes and targets for the

For example, as of May 2025, an automobile industry carbon disclosure platform had collected emissions data for 8,000 passenger vehicle models, while a steel industry platform was making 200 environmental product declarations available. China’s expansion of renewable energy will also help the car industry to decarbonise.

As the country builds more cars than any other, China needs to be on top of low carbon trends in the industry, then use its influence over the value chain to put quantified green procurement requirements in place to promote emissions cuts.

EV makers in particular should focus on shifting from manufacturing green vehicles – reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and pollutants during usage of

**EV makers in particular should focus on shifting from manufacturing green vehicles – reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and pollutants during usage of their product – to a dual focus that includes “green manufacturing”. This will help to promote global climate action.**

aluminium, making procurement decisions harder.

In China, steel and aluminium recycling systems are not yet fully developed and recycled aluminium alloys are low-grade, with little supply of recycled material. And again, consumers are unwilling to pay a premium for green or low carbon products.

Nevertheless, the Chinese government has issued a number of policies extending emissions targets throughout the automobile value chain. For example, its Plan for Peak Carbon in the Industrial Sector proposes to:

“Support leading carmakers to play a leading role in supply chain

automobile supply chain, as well as policy support for action by the suppliers. For example, the inclusion of steel and aluminium makers on carbon markets makes their specific responsibilities clear. Carbon pricing mechanisms will push them to cut emissions, thus reducing those supply chain emissions.

Meanwhile, China is also working on carbon accounting and disclosure standards, as well as speeding up work on methods for calculating product carbon footprints and building a lifecycle assessment factor database. This will boost carbon-accounting capability at vehicle makers and their metals suppliers.

their product – to a dual focus that includes “green manufacturing”. This will help to promote global climate action.

And as the world’s largest car market, China’s consumers could pay attention to the lifecycle emissions of their cars and choose those with the lowest footprint. This would encourage manufacturers to make the transition and spur deeper decarbonisation in upstream suppliers. 

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*(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/ev-makers-are-still-far-from-green/>)*



Advances in areas such as improvement in maternal and child health have been offset by growing food insecurity and climate-related challenges. Image: Mauro Fabio Cilurso / Unsplash

# PHILANTHROPY'S ROLE IN DEFINING MOMENT FOR HEALTH STEWARDSHIP IN ASIA – HELPING COUNTRIES BUILD SELF-RELIANCE

Recent developments present challenges for global health diplomacy, but could provide an opportunity for a rethink of how philanthropy can complement government funding.

This could address urgent health needs across resource-constrained parts of Asia, compiles **Ng Wai Mun**

**A**sia Pacific has seen some of the fastest gains in health and human development in the past decades. Yet as traditional paths to development face global pressures, experts are increasingly emphasising the need for swift, coordinated efforts to safeguard long-term progress and mitigate setbacks.

New forms of partnerships – with deeper collaboration across governments, the private sector and philanthropy – are becoming more vital as resource constraints and systemic stresses emerge, said health and government leaders at this year’s Philanthropy Asia Summit.

Global health stewardship is now at a crossroads, with reductions on national development spending impacting health services and efforts to improve nutrition outcomes, said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO), at the annual summit convened by the Philanthropy Asia Alliance (PAA) to spotlight solutions and innovations across climate, education and health in the region. Recent developments – such as the United States’ withdrawal from the WHO in January – have presented challenges to global health diplomacy.

WHO is supporting developing countries in sustaining these services, but speaking to a room full of philanthropists and key decision-makers across various sectors, Ghebreyesus called for a rethink of the type of support that could help governments navigate challenges in the long term.

He said: “Many countries now recognise the need to transition away from dependency (on aid) to better self-reliance. I do agree the mindset of dependency needs to go away.”

Ghebreyesus sees philanthropists bridging the gaps that remain and supporting countries on the journey towards sustainable self-reliance.

He noted that in Asia, philanthropic capital has contributed to expanded access to health care, as well as efforts to combat antimicrobial resistance and diseases like dengue.

“At this most difficult time, I ask you to work with countries, not only to address their health issues, but to help build their capacities,” he said.

### Slow-burning crises

At the fifth and largest edition of its flagship summit this year, PAA, with the support of Temasek Trust and global members such as the Gates Foundation and Dalio Philan-

initiative is one of two new PAA Communities unveiled this year that will bring together partners to fund high-impact projects. It will first focus on Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam – Southeast Asia’s most populous countries – where important gains in healthcare have been made but further collaboration and investment are needed, said PAA.

The other new initiative is the Just Energy Transition Community, which will focus on closing energy transition gaps in the region, co-led with PAA members including Tara Climate Foundation and Bloom-



**Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO), urged governments to move away from dependency on aid to self-reliance, in his address at the Philanthropy Asia Summit 2025 in Singapore. Image: Philanthropy Asia Alliance**

thropies, shone a strong spotlight on the need to tackle health and nutrition challenges.

Alongside Gates Foundation, as well as other private foundations and non-profits such as the Hong Kong-based Institute of Philanthropy and Indonesian family-owned Tanoto Foundation, PAA launched an initiative to mobilise over US\$100 million in catalytic funding for projects that will improve health outcomes for people in the region by 2030.

Known as the Health for Human Potential (HHP) Community, the

berg Philanthropies. The two new Communities add to the first three Communities introduced in 2024 – covering blue oceans, sustainable land use as well as holistic and inclusive education.

Speaking at the summit, Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam, who is a distinguished patron of the alliance, said that philanthropy’s approach in Asia should be focused on piloting and scaling proven interventions.

Citing data from Gavi, the global vaccine alliance which has pio-



## In Conversation with Thought Leaders



**President Tharman Shanmugaratnam (centre) highlighted food and nutrition challenges as something that Asia-led philanthropy can tackle, during a fireside chat with American billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates (left). The discussion was moderated by Jennifer Lewis, head, Collaboration & Partnership at Temasek Trust (right). Image: Philanthropy Asia Alliance**

needed a public-private co-financing model, he noted how every US\$1 invested in vaccines is estimated to return US\$54 in benefits, and that the same could be replicated for improving health systems across Asia. “These refer to not just financial returns, but broader economic and social returns, which means healthier and more productive lives for everyone,” he said.

President Tharman also shared his experience visiting “aspirational districts” in India – an initiative by the Narendra Modi government to quickly and effectively transform more than 100 of the most underdeveloped districts across the vast country using data provided by the grassroots communities, with a focus on improving maternal and child health. He shared how the



**As the staple crop of Asia, rice is indispensable. President Tharman spotlighted how organisations like the Temasek Life Sciences Laboratory are working on decarbonising rice farming and improving rice yields, supported by philanthropic organisations such as the Gates Foundation and the Philanthropy Asia Alliance. Image: Temasek Life Sciences Laboratory**



**Health and development experts discussed the nutrition challenge at the Philanthropy Asia Summit 2025. From left: Dr Chua Mei Chien, senior consultant and head, department of neonatology, KK Women's and Children's Hospital; June Kunugi, regional director for East Asia and the Pacific, UNICEF; Wisuwat Songnuan, assistant professor, faculty of science, Mahidol University, Zhang Culin, director, Global Centre for Asian Women's Health, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore, with moderator Benedict Cheong, chief systems integration officer, Temasek Trust. Image: Philanthropy Asia Alliance**

initiative has given ownership and agency on the ground to the people in the village.

The need to revolutionise food and nutrition systems was identified by President Tharman as an opportunity for Asia-led philanthropy to work on. He said it is an issue that has been least noticed because it is a “slow-burning crisis”.

“We have reached the limits of traditional ways of producing food, both by ordinary smallholder farmers as well as in industrial agriculture – because it is too large a source of greenhouse gas emissions...We need a new green revolution.”

Many food-producing countries have been plagued by consistently declining and stagnating crop

productivity due to problems like land degradation and water scarcity. President Tharman said: “Soil health has deteriorated significantly. There’s been a step reduction in soil moisture over the last 20 years that now makes the land much more susceptible to droughts, much less able to be a sink for carbon, and much less able to grow plants with a reasonable yield. We have a real challenge in how we grow food in the future.”

### The nutrition challenge

In the past few years, scientists have cautioned that the current development model adopted by many countries is not sustainable, and the progress made in the last two

decades is at risk of being reversed. The Covid-19 pandemic triggered a further backsliding, and advances in areas such as improvement in maternal and child health have been offset by growing food insecurity and climate-related challenges.

Susan Brown, assistant secretary general at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), also noted how progress in some areas has slowed, and in some instances, seen a reverse. She also observed that global cooperation frameworks are under increasing strain, with traditional channels of aid and solidarity under pressure.

“A young girl born in a poor urban community in South Asia is still likely to be highly exposed to air

pollution...She is likely to be malnourished. She is likely to face poverty and debt. She might experience unprecedented crises in her lifetime – hurricanes, floods, droughts. These might displace her and her family, not once but multiple times,” she said, adding that UNDP is trying to help countries solve complex development puzzles and exploring ways to enhance impact through strategic partnerships.

“The challenges cannot be solved in isolation. We have to take the opportunity to build new forms of partnerships, and collaborate across government, the private sector and philanthropy.”

At the Philanthropy Asia Summit 2025, health and development experts discussed the persistent challenge of malnutrition across Asia, an issue further intensified by the impacts of climate change on crop quality and supply.

June Kunugi, regional director for East Asia and the Pacific at UNICEF, the UN agency responsible for providing humanitarian and development aid to children worldwide, said the first 1,000 days of a child’s life should be seen as a “window of opportunity” to ensure that they receive the nutrition they need.

However, she noted that the increasing frequency of climate shocks and disasters adds another layer of vulnerability that disproportionately affects the most vulnerable children.

“This could profoundly shape their ability to grow, learn and thrive, with lifelong consequences for themselves, their families and communities, and also for entire economies.

There has been progress. According to UN figures, at the turn of the century, one quarter of children in East Asia and the Pacific was chronically undernourished; today, the number is at one in seven – which means 20 million children are on a healthier and more productive path today.

In Indonesia, for example, child stunting has decreased by more than 15 per cent in just a decade. At the summit, the Indonesian leadership showcased its plans to continue to combat the form of malnutrition that hinders child growth.

The country’s coordinating minister for human development and cultural affairs Pratikno said the government regards stunting as a structural issue and is piloting a system of cooperation and food production to support more local community efforts.

Under President Prabowo Subianto’s leadership, Indonesia has also launched a free nationwide school meal programme.

### Spotlight on heat-health impacts

At the summit, the Climate & Health Funders’ Coalition, an alliance working closely with PAA to scale evidence-based investment and action on climate as a catalyst for better health outcomes, shared its insights on the impact of heat risks on health systems. The new coalition is fronted by philanthropic organisations and PAA members Wellcome Trust and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Dr Alan Dangour, director, climate and health at Wellcome Trust, explained how evidence-based research is often not available when questions are not asked. For example, not much is known about what happens to a pregnant woman or a young infant at high temperatures; little is shared about extreme heat’s impact on mental health.

He said the coalition aims to “fill the evidence” and support governments in driving action at the national level.

Outdoor workers are also particularly vulnerable during heat waves. In India, for example, salt farmers toil in scorching heat for as long as eight months every year. Some describe conditions where tempera-

tures rise to at least 48 degrees Celsius, said Deepali Khanna, head of Asia at The Rockefeller Foundation. “They work so hard for a paycheck and they cannot afford to wait for the weather to cool. Despite the well-known risk of falling ill with a heatstroke, they find that they have no choice,” she said.

The Rockefeller Foundation has been working with India’s largest union of informal workers to tackle challenges such as the country’s housing crisis and to improve agricultural yields, and will now also look into helping workers protect their livelihoods under extreme heat. The union has installed solar-powered airconditioned water coolers to help workers stay hydrated; it has also explored parametric insurance products that can provide women with payouts that would help them stay at home when the temperatures rise above a particular limit.

The foundation is also supporting and providing feedback to local governments to come up with heat action plans, in a bid to reduce heat-related deaths.

According to the Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change report, the global potential loss of income due to extreme heat reached a record-high of US\$835 billion in 2023.

Khanna said: “We need to recognise that this is not just a health crisis, but an economic and political one.”

“In a fractured, resource-constrained world, philanthropies must come together to back bold solutions and take big bets to help get the solutions in the hands of people who need them,” she said.

*Read the Philanthropy Asia Summit 2025 Insights report for more highlights from the conference discussions.*

*(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/philanthropys-role-in-defining-moment-for-health-stewardship-in-asia-helping-countries-build-self-reliance/>)*

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