



INDIA WATER FOUNDATION'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2026 EDITION

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Dear Readers,

Dr. Arvind Kumar
President
India Water Foundation

As we enter 2026, the global record of 2025 compels honest reflection. The past year was marked by an extraordinary density of international summits and declarations on climate action, water security, social protection, and sustainable development. Yet when geopolitical tension and economic pressure intensified, collective resolve weakened. Nationalism overtook multilateralism, and short-term domestic priorities eclipsed shared global responsibility.

This contradiction is visible in stark numbers. Global military spending surged to USD 2.7 trillion in 2025; thirteen times higher than total development assistance while over 200 million people required humanitarian aid and nearly 120 million were forcibly displaced. Climate finance followed a similar pattern: despite repeated commitments, adaptation and loss-and-damage financing remained grossly inadequate relative to the scale of climate-induced losses faced by developing countries.

The energy transition further exposed this credibility gap. Several advanced economies expanded fossil fuel production under the banner of energy security, even as they urged rapid decarbonisation elsewhere. In contrast, parts of the Global South demonstrated pragmatic leadership, investing decisively in renewable energy and nationally determined transition pathways. Multilateral institutions, meanwhile, struggled with funding shortfalls, political paralysis, and declining trust, raising fundamental questions about the future of global governance.

Yet 2025 also marked an inflection point. Developing countries asserted greater agency in shaping climate and development agendas, while several Least Developed Countries approached graduation an achievement accompanied by new vulnerabilities as concessional support recedes. The central question remains: is global development truly universal, or conditional on convenience?

The way forward demands credibility over ceremony—development that places people at the centre, climate action grounded in justice, and financial architectures based on obligation rather than charity.

This January 2026 issue of the India Water Foundation's Newsletter reflects this imperative. It brings together insights from high-level dialogues on the water-climate nexus in South Asia, perspectives on environmental law and governance, outcomes from COP30 engagements, and analyses of transboundary water cooperation, resilience, and sustainability. Together, these contributions underscore a simple truth: lasting development cannot be achieved through fragmentation or rhetoric alone, but through cooperation, equity, and people-centred action.

Furthermore, through global forums and focused engagements on water security, climate resilience, sustainable development, and inclusive governance, India Water Foundation remained actively engaged in shaping outcomes that matter. These moments reflect a shared commitment to integrated solutions for people, planet, and prosperity. As we move into 2026, this reflection reinforces our resolve to deepen partnerships and amplify impact.



Water and Climate Resilience in the HKH: Advancing SDGs and the 2030 Agenda through Science and Cooperation

 04 to 05 Dec 2025 | By invitation only

 Kathmandu, Nepal

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SUB-REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON WATER AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN THE HINDU KUSH HIMALAYAS: ADVANCING SDG 2030 AGENDA THROUGH SCIENCE AND COOPERATION

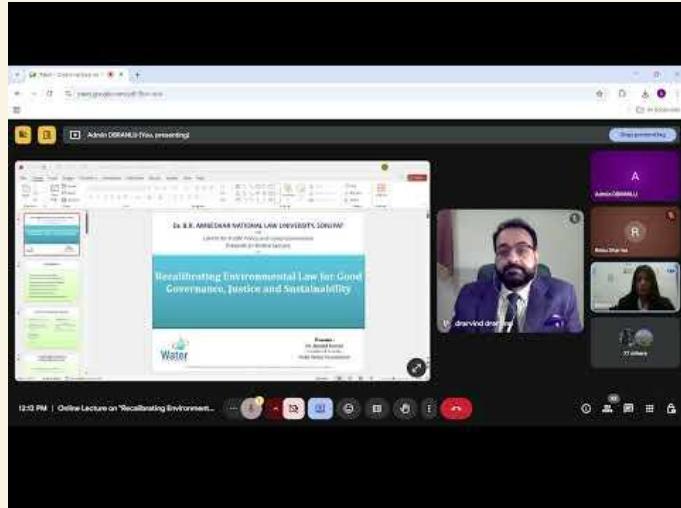
At the Roundtable on Water–Climate Nexus: National Perspectives, held on 5 December 2025 in Kathmandu, Nepal, as part of the HKH Water & Climate Resilience Workshop – Advancing the SDG 2030 Agenda through Science and Cooperation, Dr. Arvind Kumar, President, India Water Foundation, underscored the urgent need to overcome fragmented water governance in South Asia. He emphasized that water-related decision-making is often dispersed across multiple ministries with limited coordination among water, agriculture, energy, urban development, environment, and disaster management sectors. Dr. Kumar highlighted the importance of establishing robust national mechanisms that bring together line ministries, basin authorities, disaster and meteorological agencies, local governments, and finance ministries around shared risk assessments and coordinated investment plans to strengthen resilience and sustainability.

The roundtable was co-moderated by Ms. Mikiko Tanaka, Head of the ESCAP South and South-West Asia Office, and Professor Mahendra P. Lama of Jawaharlal Nehru University, and featured a special address by Ms. Rizwana Hasan, Honorable Advisor to the Interim Government of Bangladesh and Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The session convened senior policymakers and experts from across the region, including Dr. Kalyan Rudra (West Bengal Pollution Control Board, India), Dr. Debolina Kundu (National Institute for Urban Affairs, India), Mr. Sanjeeb Baral (Water and Energy Commission, Nepal), Mr. Pema Thinley (Office of the Prime Minister & Cabinet, Bhutan), and Dr. Md Abdul Hossen (Joint Rivers Commission, Bangladesh). Organized by UNESCAP in collaboration with ICIMOD, the UN Water Convention (UNECE), and IUCN, the roundtable generated practical, actionable insights to enhance water governance, improve climate resilience, and deepen intra- and inter-country cooperation—laying the foundation for sustainable and secure water futures across South Asia.



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RECALIBRATING ENVIRONMENT LAW FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE, JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABILITY



As part of the observance of Samvidhaan Diwas, the Centre for Public Policy and Good Governance (CPPGG), Dr. B.R. Ambedkar National Law University (DBRANLU), Sonepat, organised a special online lecture on 1 December 2025, delivered by Dr. Arvind Kumar, President & Founder, India Water Foundation. The lecture brought together students, scholars, and practitioners to reflect on the constitutional and governance dimensions of environmental protection in India.

Speaking on the theme "Recalibrating Environmental Law for Good Governance, Justice and Sustainability," Dr. Kumar presented a comprehensive and timely analysis of India's evolving environmental governance framework. He traced the constitutional foundations of environmental protection, examined the judiciary's pivotal role in advancing environmental rights, and highlighted the expanding scope of environmental laws, regulatory institutions, and enforcement mechanisms that shape contemporary governance.

Dr. Kumar further discussed key policy directions, including reforms in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), waste management rules, climate commitments, nature-based solutions, and the growing role of the National Green Tribunal. Emphasising the need for integrated, transparent, and future-ready governance, he underscored that environmental justice, sustainability, and climate resilience require not only strong legal frameworks, but also robust institutions, empowered citizens, and effective multi-sectoral collaboration.

This insightful lecture made a valuable contribution to the national dialogue on environmental law and good governance, reinforcing the importance of constitutional values in addressing present and future environmental challenges.

COP 30

BRASIL

AMAZÔNIA

BELÉM 2025

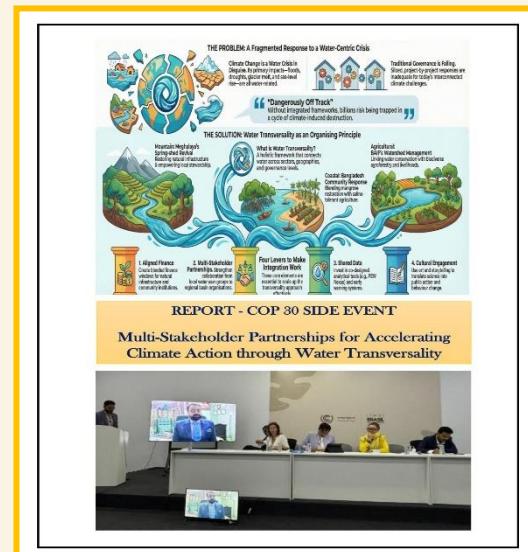
REPORT RELEASE: MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACCELERATING CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH WATER TRANSVERSALITY

The India Water Foundation is pleased to announce the release of the official report from its COP30 Side Event held in Belém, Brazil, in November 2025, on the margins of the 30th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP30). Convened as a blended session, the event was co-organised with key partners including the BAIF Development Research Foundation, ARTPORT_making waves, CPRD Bangladesh, and the Government of Meghalaya. The discussion focused on moving beyond climate rhetoric toward tangible, on-the-ground delivery and outcomes.

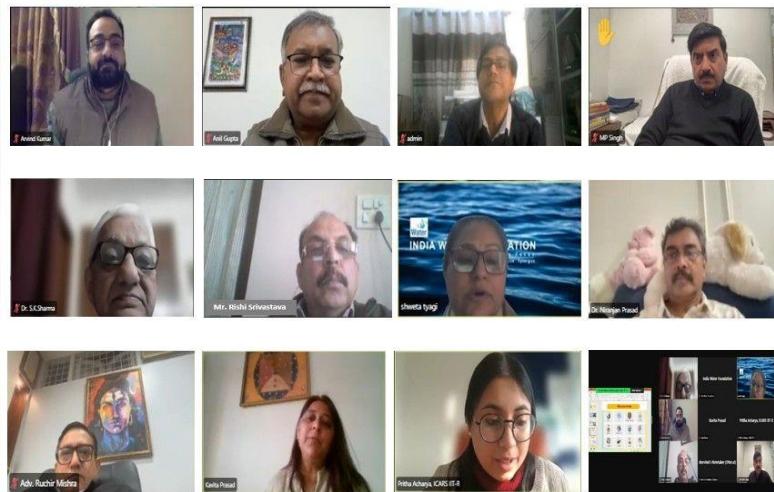
The deliberations reaffirmed that water is the primary medium through which climate change impacts are experienced. From heatwaves and floods to droughts and disruptions in food systems, climate shocks manifest largely through stressed water systems. The session emphasised that water must be recognised not merely as a sectoral issue, but as a critical development connector and a core indicator of economic resilience and sustainability.

The report advances Water Transversality as the unifying framework required to integrate climate mitigation and adaptation efforts with food and nutrition security, biodiversity conservation, and livelihood resilience—within and across national boundaries.

READ HERE



STRATEGIC PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY FOR THE WATER TRANSVERSALITY GLOBAL AWARDS AND CONCLAVE 2026



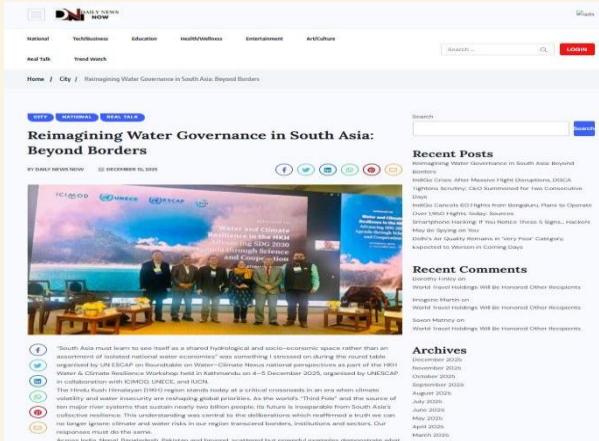
Preparations are gathering strong momentum for the Second Edition of the Water Transversality Global Awards and Conclave 2026, scheduled for 6–7 March 2026 in New Delhi. In this context, the India Water Foundation (IWF), together with its Knowledge Partners, convened a strategic planning meeting on 23 December 2025 to advance collaborative planning and programme development. The discussions focused on strengthening partnerships with state governments, industry leaders, academic institutions, and key government entities.

The meeting reviewed thematic tracks covering technological innovation, disaster risk management, and climate adaptation, and mapped a prospective list of national and international speakers. Key decisions included expanding collaborative partnerships, engaging additional global agencies and award nominees, and extending the abstract submission deadline to 20 January 2026 to encourage wider research and knowledge participation.

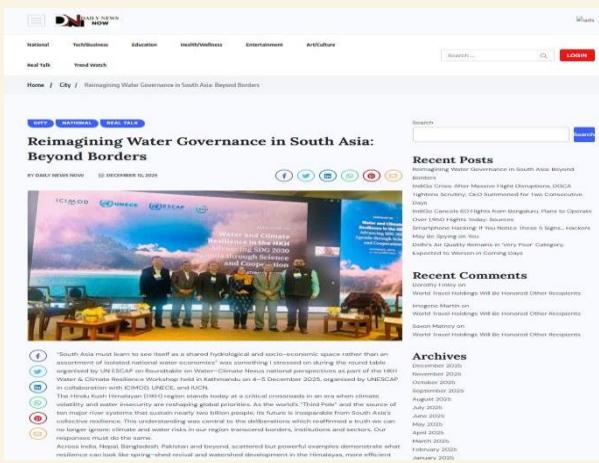
The meeting was attended by senior members and advisors of IWF and partner institutions, including Dr. Arvind Kumar, President, IWF; Ms. Shweta Tyagi, Chief Functionary, IWF; Mr. Rishi Srivastava (ICID); Prof. Anil Kumar Gupta, IIT Roorkee and Principal Advisor, IWF; Dr. S. K. Sharma, Principal Advisor, IWF; Dr. Niranjan Prasad, Principal Advisor (New and Renewable Energy), IWF; Mr. Mahendra Pal Singh, Chief Advisor, IWF; Prof. A. K. Keshari, IIT Delhi; Mr. Ruchir Mishra, Legal Advisor, IWF; and Ms. Kavita Prasad, Senior Consultant, IWF. The collective emphasis remained on deepening multi-stakeholder collaboration, fostering knowledge co-creation, and recognising leadership and innovation that advance sustainable water management and ecosystem stewardship at national and global scales.

FEATURED ARTICLES

“Reimagining Water Governance in South Asia: Beyond Borders”



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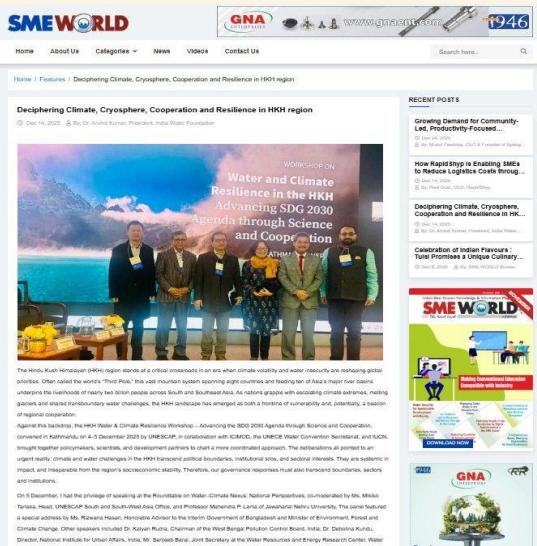
In his recent article, “Reimagining Water Governance in South Asia: Beyond Borders,” published in Daily News and News Scroll Now on 12 December 2025, Dr. Arvind Kumar, President, India Water Foundation, argues for viewing South Asia as a shared hydrological and socio-economic system rather than a collection of fragmented national water regimes. Drawing on insights from the UNESCAP Roundtable on the Water–Climate Nexus in Kathmandu, he underscores the urgency of transboundary cooperation in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region, where climate volatility, cryosphere loss, and water insecurity threaten nearly two billion people.

The article calls for a shift from siloed governance to basin-level planning supported by shared data systems, ecosystem-based approaches, and the integration of scientific and traditional knowledge. Emphasising inclusive resilience, Dr. Kumar highlights the critical role of women, youth, Indigenous communities, and local institutions. Looking ahead to APFSD 2026 and the 2026 UN Water Conference, the piece presents a concise and credible blueprint for equitable, ecosystem-based, and regionally cooperative river-basin resilience.

“Deciphering Climate, Cryosphere, Cooperation and Resilience in the HKH Region”

In his article “Deciphering Climate, Cryosphere, Cooperation and Resilience in the HKH Region,” published in SME WORLD Magazine on 14 December 2025, Dr. Arvind Kumar, President, India Water Foundation, argues that South Asia’s water security cannot be achieved through fragmented national approaches. Instead, he calls for recognising the region as an interconnected hydrological and socio-economic system defined by shared rivers, shared risks, and shared responsibilities.

Drawing on insights from the UNESCAP Roundtable on the Water–Climate Nexus in Kathmandu, the article examines how accelerating climate impacts in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region—including glacier retreat, extreme floods, and prolonged droughts—demand a transition toward transboundary cooperation, basin-scale planning, and collective risk management. Emphasising people-centred resilience, Dr. Kumar highlights the role of women, youth, Indigenous communities, and local institutions, and offers a practical, inclusive roadmap for river-basin resilience grounded in equity, ecological integrity, and regional solidarity as the region looks ahead to APFSD 2026 and the 2026 UN Water Conference.



>>Read the Full Article

“Doha Summit 2025: Grand Social Justice Blueprint Falls Short on Financing and Real Reform”

In his article “Doha Summit 2025: Grand Social Justice Blueprint Falls Short on Financing and Real Reform,” published in Lawstreet Journal on 4 December 2025, Dr. Arvind Kumar, President, India Water Foundation, offers a candid and critical assessment of the Doha Social Development Summit 2025. While acknowledging the Summit’s ambitious Political Declaration, he argues that it remains a strong normative

vision weakened by the absence of actionable financing mechanisms, binding commitments, and meaningful structural reform.

The article highlights the widening gap between global rhetoric and lived realities across the Global South, stressing the urgent need for non-repayable adaptation finance, genuine climate justice, strengthened social protection systems, and transformative reforms in global governance. Dr. Kumar positions the Doha Summit as a missed opportunity that nonetheless underscores what must change if international commitments to social justice are to translate into real, people-centred development outcomes.

The screenshot shows the homepage of Law Street Journal. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Top Stories', 'Supreme Court', 'High Courts', 'Political News', 'Legislative Corner', 'International', 'Videos', and 'More'. Below the navigation bar, a banner headline reads 'Doha Summit 2025: Grand Social Justice Blueprint Falls Short on Financing and Real Reform'. The main article features a photo of Dr. Arvind Kumar and the title 'DOHA SUMMIT 2025: GRAND SOCIAL JUSTICE BLUEPRINT FALLS SHORT ON FINANCING AND REAL REFORM'. Below the article, there is a sub-headline 'SECOND WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DOHA 2025'. To the right, there is a 'TRENDING NEWS' section with a sub-headline 'HIMACHAL HC UPHOLDS ₹55 CRORE MSME AWARD, SAYS EM-II FILING NOT MANDATORY' and a photo of a gavel.

[>>Read the Full Article](#)

In the article "Shared Waters, Shared Fate," published in The Millennium Post on 3 January 2026 (page 7), Dr. Arvind Kumar, President, India Water Foundation, examines the mounting water crises confronting South Asia through the lens of Himalayan glacier melt, declining aquifers, and fragile governance systems. He argues that these interconnected challenges can no longer be addressed through isolated national responses.

The article calls for a new regional water ethic rooted in basin-level cooperation, ecosystem restoration, and negotiated trust among riparian states. Emphasising shared responsibility and collective stewardship, Dr. Kumar presents a compelling case for cooperative water governance as the foundation for long-term resilience, regional stability, and sustainable development.

The screenshot shows an article from The Millennium Post. The top navigation bar includes 'millenniumpost', 'NEW DELHI | SATURDAY, 3 JANUARY, 2026', and 'Opinion mp | 7'. The article is titled 'Shared Waters, Shared Fate' and is categorized under 'Bharat Ki Soch'. It features a photo of Dr. Arvind Kumar and the sub-headline 'The Himalayan melt, collapsing aquifers and fragile governance demand a new regional water ethic grounded in basin cooperation, ecosystem restoration and negotiated trust'. The text discusses the impact of climate change on water resources in South Asia, the need for regional cooperation, and the role of traditional governance systems. The bottom of the page includes a 'The 2026 Playbook' section and a 'WHO SAID WHAT' box.

[>>Read the Full Article](#)

Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain 2025 Culmination



The National Water Mission hosted the culmination event of the 6th edition of the flagship water conservation campaign at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi. By this date, JSA: CTR had initiated 1.97 crore water-related works across the country, with particular focus on 148 water-scarce districts, 102 of which are categorized as over-exploited or critical. The initiative emphasizes community-driven water harvesting, artificial recharge structures, and watershed management through convergence of multiple government schemes.



National Initiative on Water Security

The Government of India launched the National Initiative on Water Security, amending Schedule I of MGNREGA to prioritize water conservation. The initiative mandates:

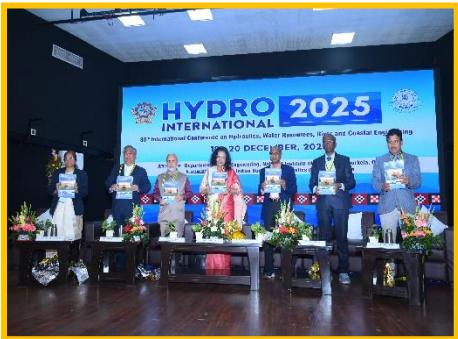
- Critical blocks: 65% of MGNREGA funds for water-related works
- Semi-critical blocks: 40% of funds for water conservation
- Safe blocks: 30% minimum for water activities



This represents a shift from reactive to preventive water management, targeting areas of greatest water need based on the Dynamic Ground Water Resources Assessment Report 2024.

HYDRO International 2025

The conference intends to provide a platform to water resources professionals, academicians and young researchers to discuss and share their ideas. The conference mainly aims at providing a forum for the dissemination of recent contributions from academicians, scientists, researchers, practitioners and consultants in the fields of hydraulics, hydrology, water resources and coastal engineering.



The Indian Society for Hydraulics (ISH) is a technical, educational, non-profiteering national organization, established in 1992 to serve as a common platform for engineers, scientists and technical personnel working in hydraulics and other allied fields.



Tracking progress on food and agriculture-related SDG indicators 2025

This report provides an analysis of regional and global figures and trends for the 22 SDG indicators under FAO's responsibility, thus fulfilling one of FAO's key roles as custodian agency. The world is at a moderate distance from achieving roughly half of the food and agriculture-related SDG indicators under FAO custodianship; one-quarter of the indicators are close to being achieved, whereas another quarter remains far or very far from being achieved. Meanwhile, progress since 2015 has deteriorated on over three-fifths of the indicators; one indicator has stagnated; whereas only the remaining one-third of indicators have registered an improvement or slight improvement.

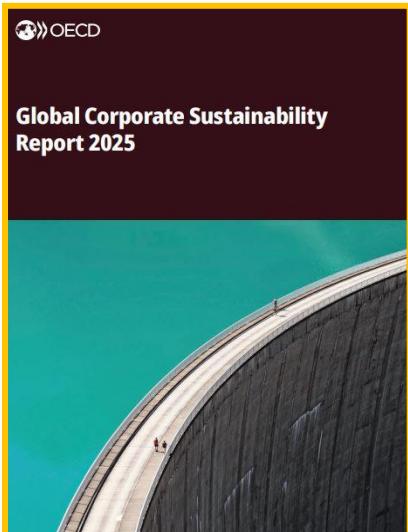


EVENT ALERT!



Join us for the **2nd Water Transversality Global Awards & Conclave 2026**, a two-day conference on “*ESG Transversality for Sustainable Water, Energy, Health and Environment Nexus.*” This landmark event will explore ESG integration, the Water-Energy-Health & Environment Nexus, global collaboration, and innovations driving carbon neutrality. Don’t miss this convergence of policy, industry, and sustainability leadership.

[Please click here for more information.](#)



Global Corporate Sustainability Report 2025

The OECD Global Corporate Sustainability Report 2025 provides insights on how companies are implementing the sustainability-related recommendations of the G20/OECD Principles of Corporate Governance. These recommendations cover disclosure, shareholder-company dialogue, board responsibilities, and stakeholder engagement.

This edition features an in-depth analysis of the energy sector, assessing emission reduction targets, executive compensation, and capital expenditures and investments in green research and development.

SUCCESS STORIES



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Floating Solar Panels? How They're Lighting up Homes & Saving Billions of Litres Across India

It's early morning at the Ramagundam reservoir in Telangana's Peddapalli district. The water is still, broken only by the occasional ripple of a passing bird. From the shore, you see something unusual — thousands of gleaming blue panels stretching far into the distance, quietly soaking up the sun.

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It's 3-4 Degrees Cooler Inside': This Gorgeous Sustainable Home is Surrounded by Mango Trees

Designed by Shriya Parasrampuria and Prashant Dupare of Blurring Boundaries, this home is surrounded by five mango trees. Built using upcycled tiles, marble, and locally sourced bricks, the house exemplifies sustainable living.

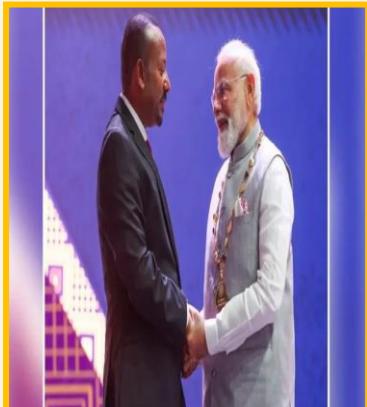
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FRIDAY BLOGS



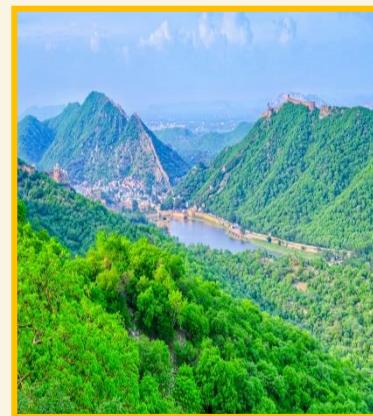
**Reimagining
Climate-Aligned
Industrialization
for Shared
Prosperity**

**Reweighting
progress to catch
up with reality:
UNEA-7**



**Reimagining
India–Africa
Relations in the
New World Order**

**Aravallis: From
Fragmented
Vision to
Ecological
Hotspot**



INVITATION TO JOIN DIRECT MEMBERSHIP

At the India Water Foundation (IWF), we're more than just a network—we're a movement. By becoming a member, you join hands with individuals, organizations, and institutions passionate about sustainability, environmental conservation, and driving meaningful change.

Why Join Us?

We're committed to creating opportunities for every member to make a real impact. Here's what we offer:

- Shape Policies with Us: Be part of advocacy efforts that influence sustainable development strategies.
- Learn and Grow Together: Attend our exclusive workshops and training programs, designed to keep you at the forefront of innovation.
- Connect with Change-makers: Collaborate with a global network of experts, innovators, and leaders.
- Make a Grassroots Impact: Help us drive community-led projects that promote resource efficiency and environmental resilience.
- Be Recognized for Your Efforts: Let us celebrate your contributions through awards, features, and event opportunities.

Who Can Join?

We welcome everyone who shares our vision, including: Companies, institutions, and organizations of all sizes, NGOs, government bodies, and Intergovernmental organizations

Individuals—from young professionals to retirees, who want to create positive change

Whether you're a policymaker, innovator, or community advocate, there's a place for you here!

JOIN NOW



**IWF Direct
Membership!**

We are stronger together



Learn more about joining
India Water Foundation
Membership by scanning
QR code below



INVITATION TO JOIN SOCIAL OUTREACH MEMBERSHIP

Our Special JalMitra Social Outreach Membership

The JalMitra outreach program encourages sustainable living practices by promoting sustainable conservation and restoration projects. The campaign fosters awareness and behavioural change at the grassroots level, enabling communities to adopt environmentally responsible lifestyles that reduce ecological footprints and contribute to national and global sustainability goals.

Anyone can join this collective effort and become a Jal Mitra free of cost.

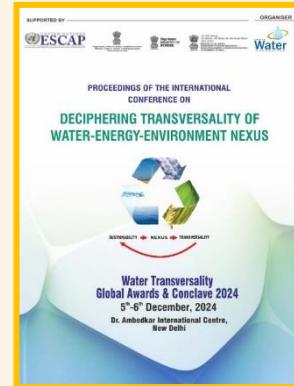
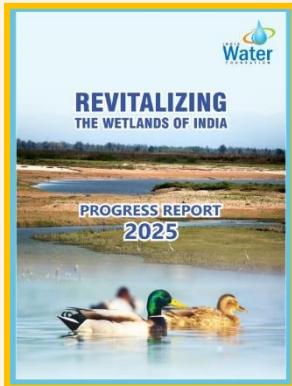
How to Join?

Take the first step today! Visit [Become an IWF Member](#) to apply and join this transformative movement. Together, let's shape a sustainable future!

<https://indiawaterfoundation.org/jal-mitra/>



KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS



LEARNCASTS

Global minimum tax: Understanding the Side- by-Side package

Webinar

Date

13 January 2026

Time

16:00-17:00

Location

Virtual

[Register here](#)



[Learn more and register](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **13–15 Jan: World Future Energy Summit 2026.** Leading global platform in Abu Dhabi bringing together energy leaders, policymakers, and sustainability executives to advance clean energy transitions, climate solutions, and large-scale sustainability initiatives, with strong linkages to water–energy–food nexus discussions.
<https://www.worldfutureenergysummit.com/en-gb.html>
- **14–15 Jan: Future Sustainability Summit 2026.** Convenes heads of state, ministers, CEOs, and innovators to discuss inclusive capitalism, food and water security, clean tech, and just transitions, offering a space for high-level water and climate dialogues.
<https://www.worldfutureenergysummit.com/en-gb.html>
- **19–23 Jan: World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2026.** The Davos gathering focuses on global risks, economic transformation, climate resilience and sustainability, with dedicated sessions on water security, nature-positive economies, and ESG-aligned infrastructure.
<https://www.weforum.org/meetings/world-economic-forum-annual-meeting-2026>
- **26–27 Jan: High-Level Preparatory Meeting for the 2026 UN Water Conference.** Hosted in Dakar, Senegal, this meeting advances preparations for the 2026 UN Water Conference and its six themes on accelerating SDG 6, cross-sectoral water action, and finance and governance for water and sanitation.
<https://www.unwater.org/news/2026-united-nations-water-conference-preparatory-meeting>
- **26–28 Jan: Cleantech Forum North America 2026.** A key climate-tech and sustainability innovation forum in San Diego spotlighting solutions in clean energy, water technologies, circularity, and industrial decarbonization, and fostering investment partnerships around scalable green and blue tech.
<https://cleantech.com/event/cleantech-forum-na/agenda/>
- **16–17 Jan: International Recycling Incubation Summit 2026.** It is a unique platform that brings together all key stakeholders—government, industry, startups, youth, NGOs, and researchers to promote inclusive dialogue to co-create solutions for sustainable waste management and circular economy.
<https://icwmr.teri.res.in/index.php/IRIS-2026/about>
- **27 – 30 Jan: India Energy Week 2026.** The event will spotlight India's growing leadership in balancing energy access with decarbonisation goals, highlighting strategic investment opportunities, breakthrough technologies and enabling global partnerships that are shaping the next era of energy progress.
<https://www.indiaenergyweek.com/>

IWF e-newsletter is a monthly compilation of news items on IWF-related issues in the domain of Water, Agriculture, Climate Change, SDGs, inclusive development and Water Resources Management that might be of interest to the IWF fraternity. The information contained in the NEWSLETTER does not purport to be exhaustive and is taken "as it is" from external sources and is freely available on the internet. No evaluation on the part of the IWF Office is being made in terms of the authenticity of the information that it may contain. IWF Office makes no guarantee, either express or implied, as to the accuracy of the information published. Your valuable feedback on the usefulness of the bulletin is solicited at <contact@indiawaterfoundation.org>.

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