



INDIA WATER FOUNDATION'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



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Dear Readers,

The early decades of the twenty-first century were expected to define an era of unprecedented technological progress, economic integration, and collaborative global governance. Instead, the world finds itself confronting an intensifying “triple planetary crisis” climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution now compounded by geopolitical instability and economic fragmentation. Recent assessments by the OECD warn that these interlinked crises are no longer isolated environmental concerns but systemic risks that increasingly threaten both ecological balance and global economic stability. As repeatedly emphasized by António Guterres, humanity’s long-term security will not be secured through military expansion, but through investments in sustainability, cooperation, and resilience.

Yet, even as the urgency of sustainable development becomes clearer, global attention and resources are being diverted by renewed geopolitical conflicts. The ongoing tensions in the Middle East, particularly involving Iran, have triggered one of the most significant disruptions in global energy markets in recent history. The strategic vulnerability of the Strait of Hormuz, through which nearly a third of global oil trade and a substantial share of liquefied natural gas flows, has once again come into sharp focus. According to the International Energy Agency, the scale of disruption represents an unprecedented shock, sending oil prices to multi-year highs and effectively acting as a sudden economic burden on energy-importing nations.

This disruption is not confined to energy markets alone. It cascades rapidly across global supply chains, intensifying inflationary pressures and exacerbating food insecurity. Rising fuel costs directly increase transportation, production, and storage expenses within the food system. In March 2026, the FAO reported a notable rise in its global food price index, marking consecutive monthly increases driven particularly by spikes in vegetable oils and sugar. At the same time, fertilizer markets have been severely affected. Financial institutions such as Bank of America have warned that supply shocks could impact up to 70 percent of global urea flows, further compounding agricultural vulnerabilities. The consequences are most acutely felt in low- and middle-income economies, where rising food and energy prices strain already fragile systems.

Beyond energy and food, an equally critical yet often underappreciated dimension of conflict is its impact on water security. In regions already characterized by water stress, infrastructure vulnerability becomes a major concern. Middle Eastern countries, heavily dependent on desalination, face heightened risks as conflict threatens critical facilities. Experts such as David Michel have warned that damage to desalination infrastructure could disrupt water access for millions, underscoring how modern conflicts increasingly intersect with essential resource systems. Water, energy, and security are no longer separate domains; they are tightly interwoven components of a fragile global equilibrium.

This recognition has been reinforced at the global policy level. On World Water Day 2026, the United Nations released the latest UN World Water Development Report 2026, emphasizing that water security is fundamentally a question of equity, rights, and inclusion. The report highlights that equitable access to water cannot be achieved in isolation; it is intrinsically linked to gender equality, public health, climate resilience, and sustainable development. This aligns closely with the concept of transversality an integrated approach that recognizes the interdependence of water, energy, health, and environmental systems.

At the same time, a more complex and somewhat paradoxical narrative is emerging within global economic discourse: the notion of “war economics.” While conflicts undeniably cause widespread destruction, some analysts argue that military expenditure and arms production are being leveraged as tools for economic stimulation. This concept, often associated with “military Keynesianism,” suggests that wartime spending can temporarily boost industrial output and employment. However, economists and policy thinkers caution against this illusion of growth. The long-term consequences rising debt burdens, distorted investment priorities, and post-conflict reconstruction costs far outweigh any short-term gains. Increasingly, voices across policy and academic circles question whether certain conflicts are being prolonged or strategically sustained within broader geopolitical and economic frameworks, raising difficult but necessary questions about the true drivers of modern warfare.

Against this complex global backdrop, the imperative for integrated, sustainability-driven approaches becomes even more evident. It is within this context that this edition of our newsletter situates itself. March 2026 has been a month of both challenge and constructive engagement. A key highlight is the 2nd Edition of the Water Transversality Global Awards and Conclave 2026, organized by the India Water Foundation on 6–7 March at the India International Centre. This flagship gathering brought together policymakers, experts, industry leaders, and civil society stakeholders to deliberate on the Water–Energy–Health–Environment nexus through an ESG framework.

The discussions at the conclave reflected a growing consensus: fragmented approaches are no longer viable in addressing today’s interconnected challenges. Instead, integrated, cross-sectoral strategies rooted in sustainability, equity, and resilience are essential. The event not only celebrated innovation and leadership through its awards but also reinforced the importance of collaboration in advancing global water security and sustainable development.

Ultimately, the developments of March 2026 underscore a fundamental reality. The crises confronting humanity environmental degradation, geopolitical conflict, economic instability, and resource scarcity are deeply interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Addressing them requires more than isolated interventions; it demands a systemic transformation in how nations allocate resources, design policies, and cooperate across borders.



WATER TRANSVERSALITY GLOBAL AWARDS AND CONCLAVE 2026

The India Water Foundation, in collaboration with the UNESCAP-SSWA office successfully convened the 2nd Edition of the Water Transversality Global Awards and Conclave 2026 on 6–7 March 2026 at India International Centre, New Delhi. The conclave served as a premier global platform to advance dialogue and action on integrated approaches to sustainability, particularly within the water–energy–health–environment nexus.

The event was supported by key Government of India institutions, including the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Ministry of Power, Ministry of Heavy Industries, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and NITI Aayog.

A wide spectrum of esteemed knowledge partners contributed to the intellectual depth of the conclave, including BBC Media Action, World Water Council, Global Water Partnership, UNOPS-India, International Union for Conservation of Nature, International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage, Wetlands International, Institute for studies in Industrial Development, ICARS, IIT-Roorkee

The conclave also witnessed strong participation from collaborative partners such as the Government of Uttar Pradesh, Meghalaya Basin Development Authority, Government of Meghalaya, and leading public and private sector entities including GNFC, Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum, GAIL India Limited, HPCL, AIESL, Delhi Metro, and Anondita Medicare Limited. Institutional partners like Sulabh International and SM Sehgal Foundation further strengthened the outreach and impact of the event.

International Conference

A central highlight of the conclave was the International Conference on “ESG Transversality for a Sustainable Water–Energy–Health–Environment Nexus.” The conference brought together policymakers, industry leaders, researchers, and civil society actors to deliberate on integrated pathways for sustainable development.

The conference was structured around five thematic pillars:

- Navigating Interdependencies of the Water–Energy–Health–Environment Nexus

This session explored the complex interlinkages between critical systems and emphasised the need for integrated governance frameworks to address climate-induced vulnerabilities and public health challenges. It underscored the importance of systems thinking in building resilience and ensuring sustainable outcomes.

- ESG-Aligned Finance and Governance to Combat Greenwashing

Focused on strengthening transparency and accountability, this session examined regulatory frameworks, disclosure standards, and financial instruments that ensure credibility in ESG practices. It highlighted the role of governance in driving authentic sustainability transitions.

- Cross-Sectoral Water Transversality for Accelerating Net Zero

This session underscored the necessity of cross-sectoral collaboration and integrated planning to achieve decarbonisation goals. It presented innovative governance models and multi-stakeholder approaches to accelerate net-zero transitions.

- Greening Industry and Fuelling Growth through ESG Partnerships

Discussions centred on how industries can leverage ESG frameworks to enhance competitiveness, drive innovation, and adopt circular economy practices, while fostering inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

- Global Cooperation for Planetary Health Diplomacy

The concluding session emphasised global solidarity, knowledge exchange, and policy coherence as essential drivers for addressing interconnected environmental and health challenges, advocating a unified vision for planetary well-being.

Water Transversality Global Awards

In addition to the conference, the conclave featured the Water Transversality Global Awards, recognising exemplary leadership, innovation, and impactful initiatives across sectors that embody the principles of transversality and sustainability. The awards celebrated contributions from governments, institutions, and individuals who are driving transformative change in water governance and allied sectors.

Opening Ministerial Plenary

Opening Ministerial Plenary set the tone for integrated, global action on the water–energy–health–environment nexus, with each speaker offering distinct but complementary perspectives: Dr. Arvind Kumar, President, India Water Foundation framed the conference around ESG transversality, emphasizing that water, energy, health, and environment are deeply interconnected systems requiring integrated governance, responsible finance, and cross-sectoral collaboration. He highlighted India’s ESG regulatory progress (including BRSR) and called for moving from dialogue to actionable, scalable solutions. Dr. Raj Bhushan Chaudhary, Hon’ble Minister of State, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India underscored that sustainability must be embedded in governance through ESG frameworks, community participation, and integrated policy design. He highlighted flagship initiatives like Jal Jeevan Mission and reaffirmed India’s commitment to inclusive, climate-resilient development aligned with Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

His Holiness Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, Spiritual Head, Isha Foundation stressed that planetary sustainability hinges on restoring soil health, advocating increased tree cover (minimum 40%), reduced meat consumption, and conscious lifestyles. He positioned soil regeneration as the foundation for water availability, air quality, and long-term ecological balance. Mr. Loïc Fauchon, President, World Water Council described water as the “bloodstream of development,” linking it to health, food, energy, and peace. He outlined a threefold global strategy preserve, reserve, serve and underscored India’s emerging leadership role in global water diplomacy and sustainable water governance.

Ms. Ulrike Kelm, Deputy Executive Director, IWRA highlighted that water connects ecosystems, economies, and societies, calling for breaking silos through science-policy-practice integration. She emphasized global cooperation, knowledge-sharing, and collective action to address interconnected climate and water challenges. Shri Yugal Kishore Joshi, Programme Director, NITI Aayog reflected on India’s shift from siloed policymaking to holistic, mission-driven approaches, citing initiatives like Swachh Bharat Mission and Jal Jeevan Mission as examples of transversality in practice. He stressed behavioral change, public participation, and policy integration as key to sustainable outcomes. Ms. Shweta Tyagi, Chief Functionary, India Water Foundation concluded by acknowledging global participation and partnerships, noting the importance of hybrid engagement and collaborative efforts in advancing the conference’s objectives.

Overall, the plenary reinforced that ESG-driven transversality, grounded in policy integration, ecological consciousness, and global cooperation, is essential to achieving sustainable and resilient development outcomes.



Special Address by Shri Harsh Malhotra, Minister of State, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

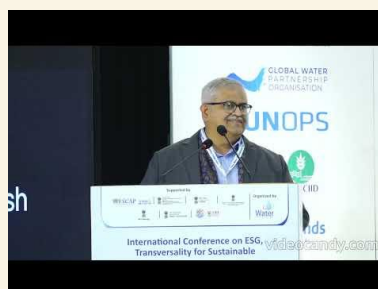
Delivering a compelling Special Address he strongly reaffirmed that true sustainability lies in integrating water, energy, health, and environment into one cohesive framework. Appreciating the efforts of India Water Foundation and Dr Arvind Kumar's leadership for convening a platform that addresses interconnected global challenges. Shri Harsh Malhotra, Minister of State, Ministry of Corporate Affairs and Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India emphasized that “whether it is environmental stress, water scarcity, energy insecurity, or public health emergencies, solutions cannot emerge unless these challenges are addressed together,” commending the conclave's transversal approach.



Plenary 1: ESG Aligned Finance & Governance to Combat Greenwashing

Plenary 1 on “ESG Aligned Finance & Governance to Combat Greenwashing” delivered a sharp call to move from rhetoric to real impact. Dr. Satya Tripathi, Secretary General, GASP, set the tone: “Changing finance is no good unless you can finance change.” Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Director, ISID, noted that “ESG reporting is nudging companies to change behavior,” with rising net-zero commitments. Ms. Bharti Birla, Enterprise Development Specialist, ILO, warned that “greenwashing can become social washing if workers and MSMEs are excluded.” From industry, Mr. Saumitra Srivastava, Director (Marketing), IOCL, emphasized: “Sustainability is not a wish list—it is a work-to-do list.” Mr. Pankaj Sharma, Senior Consultant, India Water Foundation & Director, Green Wattage, highlighted that “greenwashing is a capital allocation problem, not just communication.” Dr. Priyadarshi Das, Associate Professor, RIS, reinforced that “ESG must be a strategy, not a compliance burden.”

The session collectively reinforced a critical insight: water, energy, health, and environment are deeply interconnected systems, and ignoring this nexus risks fragmented policies and missed opportunities. The way forward is clear—ESG must evolve from storytelling to substance, from compliance to strategy, and from isolated efforts to integrated, measurable, and inclusive transformation.



Thematic session 1: ESG Aligned Finance & Governance to Combat Greenwashing

Panel Discussion 1 on “ESG Aligned Finance & Governance to Combat Greenwashing” highlighted that ESG reporting, though still in its early stages, is rapidly maturing and playing a critical role in shaping corporate behaviour. It was moderated by Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Director, ISID. Ms. Sarika Gosain, Partner & Leader – ESG & Sustainability, Pierag Consulting, emphasized that “ESG assurance today is where financial auditing was 30 years ago,” pointing to challenges like fragmented data, lack of ownership, and weak value chain

visibility, while stressing the need for integration of financial and non-financial data. Mr. Ranjeet Pandey, Chairman, ESG & Sustainability Board, ICSI, underlined that “decoding ESG at the organizational level is the first step,” highlighting the importance of policy alignment, stakeholder engagement, and transparent reporting to avoid greenwashing.

From a finance perspective, Mr. Sanmit Ahuja, Director, CETFI, delivered a reality check: “\$11.4 trillion is needed annually to address climate change, but climate is still not an investable asset class,” stressing the need for scale, market-making mechanisms, and stronger links to global capital pools like pension funds. Ms. Surabhi Gupta, Chief General Manager, SEBI, shared regulatory insights, noting that “standardization through BRSR and XBRL is improving transparency, but sector-specific frameworks and stronger assurance mechanisms are the next step.”

Adding a global dimension, Dr. Rajan Sudesh Ratna, Former Deputy Head, UNESCAP, highlighted that “ESG and SDGs are deeply interconnected, and solutions like crop residue management require integrated approaches combining policy, finance, and technology.”

The session concluded with a clear message: combating greenwashing requires robust data systems, accountable governance, innovative financing, and global collaboration only then can ESG move from compliance to real impact.



CEOs Leadership Dialogue

The CEOs Leadership Dialogue, moderated by Dr. Rajan Sudesh Ratna, Former Deputy Head, UNESCAP, brought forward insightful reflections on strategic resilience, leadership challenges, and the evolving role of ESG in business transformation. Mrs. Pratibha Pandya, Founder, Dian Foundation, emphasized that the real barrier to sustainability is a “scarcity mindset,” noting that meaningful change requires a deeper personal connection with resources like water and the environment. Mr. Amit Kumar, Chairman, AI Engineering Services Limited, highlighted that ESG should move beyond reporting to become an operational necessity, while pointing out challenges such as high costs of sustainable transitions and fragmented global reporting standards. Ms. Anjali Makhija, CEO & Trustee, S M Sehgal Foundation, stressed the importance of grassroots impact, particularly through women-led initiatives in water and climate-smart agriculture, underscoring that leadership-driven culture and community engagement are key to long-term sustainability. Mr. S.A. Verma, Executive Director – Environment, DMRC, showcased how visionary leadership enabled early adoption of sustainability practices, stating that “sustainability was not mandated—we chose to lead,” with initiatives like solar energy adoption and carbon credit monetization.

The session concluded with a strong consensus that ESG must evolve from compliance to core strategy, supported by standardized frameworks, behavioural change, and scalable green investments to drive meaningful and lasting impact.



Thematic Plenary 2: Navigating Interdependencies of Water Energy Health and Environment Nexus

The Thematic Plenary 2 on “Navigating Interdependencies of Water–Energy–Health–Environment Nexus” emphasized that sustainability challenges must be addressed through integrated, cross-sectoral approaches rather than in silos. Mr. Ravi Singh, Secretary General & CEO, WWF India, highlighted the need for landscape-level strategies, basin-based water management, and nature-based solutions, along with integrating the “One Health” approach. Mr. Casper Mayland, Counsellor, Environment, Political and Economic Section, Royal Danish Embassy in New Delhi, pointed to inefficiencies in water-energy systems, identifying energy-intensive water management and high losses as key “low-hanging fruits,” while advocating for efficiency, lifecycle planning, and public-private partnerships. Ms. Ulrike Kelm, Deputy Executive Director, International Water Resources Association, underscored the cascading impacts of water stress across energy, health, and environment, stressing global collaboration aligned with SDGs. Dr. Akash Srivastava, Additional Director, NCDC, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, highlighted India’s inter-ministerial coordination, data integration, and climate-health initiatives. Dr. Paras Pujari, Chief Scientist & Head, Water Resources Group, CSIR-NEERI, demonstrated through field research how inefficient groundwater use leads to significant water and energy losses, with scalable solutions like drip irrigation requiring stronger stakeholder convergence.

The key takeaway: the nexus is well understood what is needed now is actionable, data-driven integration across policy, science, and practice to deliver measurable impact.



Thematic session 2: Navigating Interdependencies of Water Energy Health and Environment Nexus

The Thematic Session 2 on “Navigating Interdependencies of Water–Energy–Health–Environment Nexus,” was moderated by Dr. Hitesh Vaidya, Chief Technical Advisor, India Water Foundation, emphasized that while climate risks, urban systems, and public health challenges are rapidly evolving, planning systems remain outdated and fragmented. Dr. Ritesh Kumar, Director, Wetlands International–South Asia, highlighted the critical role of ecosystems especially wetlands as natural infrastructure, stressing their integration into urban planning by recognizing their contribution to water security. Dr. Alok K. Sikka, Former Representative–India and Bangladesh, International Water Management Institute (IWMI), underscored the strong interlinkages between water, energy, and agriculture, noting that groundwater-dependent irrigation significantly drives energy consumption, and called for breaking sectoral silos through convergence, systems-based planning, and data-driven decision tools. Dr. Sutirtha Sahariah, Senior Vice President and Head of Communications, Sulabh International, brought a grassroots perspective, illustrating how fragmented planning directly impacts communities, particularly in sanitation, water access, and menstrual hygiene, and emphasized the role of data, AI, and community participation in bridging these gaps.

Concluding the session, the speakers collectively highlighted that the nexus is not merely conceptual but visible across ecosystems, agriculture, and communities, and that the way forward lies in coordinated, adaptive, and action-oriented strategies driven by joint planning, stakeholder collaboration, and community engagement.



Global Leaders Dialogue

The Global Leaders Dialogue, was moderated by Dr. Satya Tripathi, Secretary General, GASP brought together distinguished speakers who each highlighted critical dimensions of water, climate, and sustainability. Shri Anil Gupta, General Secretary, RSS, Delhi emphasized a civilizational perspective on ESG, underscoring the cultural ethos of environmental stewardship, social inclusivity, and governance rooted in traditional knowledge, while also sharing grassroots initiatives such as urban afforestation, revival of water bodies, and zero-waste colonies in Delhi. Dr. Eric Tardieu, Secretary General, INBO stressed the importance of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) at the basin level, calling for stronger private sector engagement, shared data systems, and long-term planning to address water as a critical business and sustainability risk. Mr. Alex Simalabwi, Executive Secretary, & CEO, Global Water Partnership highlighted the global scale of the water crisis, pointing to rising demand, investment gaps, and the need for nexus-based approaches that integrate water with energy, food, and ecosystems, while emphasizing the growing leadership of the Global South. Ms. Ulrike Kelm, Deputy Executive Secretary, IWRA focused on the risks of greenwashing, advocating for stronger regulatory frameworks, standardized reporting, and evidence-based sustainability claims to ensure credibility and real impact. Mr. Sunny Pandya, Chief Advisor -National Strategy & State Leadership, India Water Foundation and also the managing director Dian group of companies showcased practical, technology-driven solutions being implemented across India, demonstrating how innovations in water and wastewater management can significantly reduce energy use, improve efficiency, and deliver measurable sustainability outcomes. Dr. Ash Pachauri, Co-founder and Director, POP Movement brought a human-centric perspective, emphasizing climate justice, community-led action, and the urgent need to address interconnected challenges such as water scarcity, health risks, migration, and conflict through inclusive and youth-driven approaches.

Key takeaway: the dialogue reinforced that while the interlinkages between water, climate, and development are well understood, the priority now is implementation driven by integrated governance, credible frameworks, technological innovation, and inclusive partnerships to achieve scalable and lasting impact.



Inaugural Session and Leadership Recognition

At the inaugural session of the Second Water Transversality Global Awards & Conclave 2026, the Chef Guest Honorable Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Om Birla, and dignitaries including Dr. Satya Tripathi, Secretary General, Global Alliance for Sustainable Planet and Dr. Arvind Kumar, President India Water Foundation gathered to emphasize the importance of integrated sustainability across water, energy, health, and environment sectors. The event featured ceremonial lamp lighting, keynote addresses, a book and special cover release, and an extensive awards ceremony recognizing leaders and innovators in water and sustainability. In his address, Shri Om Birla stressed that sustainable and inclusive development cannot be

achieved through isolated sectoral efforts; instead, water, energy, environment, and public health must be addressed as an interconnected system. He highlighted that these challenges are global in nature and require collective international cooperation alongside strong public participation at all levels from local communities to national governance. He further underscored India's efforts in water conservation, clean energy, and climate action, emphasizing that behavioral change, sustainable lifestyles, and people's participation are critical to ensuring long-term environmental sustainability and effective policy outcomes.

Following the inauguration ceremony, the Water Transversality Global Awards felicitation honoured outstanding leadership and contributions across governance, policy, and sustainability domains. Among the prominent awardees, Shri Conrad K Sangma, Chief Minister of Meghalaya and Shri Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister of Maharashtra were recognised for their contributions to good governance. Shri Harsh Sanghavi, Deputy Chief Minister, Gujarat was conferred the Guardian of Youth Award for his leadership and engagement with youth-driven initiatives.

The conclave also conferred Lifetime Achievement Awards upon globally renowned experts for their enduring contributions to water governance and sustainability. These included Dr Rabi Mohtar, Governor- World Water Council Director, Water Security, Texas Water Resources Institute Texas A&M University; Dr Alain Meyssonier, President-Mediterranean Water Institute Governor- World Water Council; and Dr Eric Tardieu, Director General-International Office of Water Secretary General- International Network of Basin Organisations Vice President- World Water Council.

In addition, Leader's Awards were presented to distinguished public officials and practitioners, including Shri Amit Kumar Ghosh, Additional Chief Secretary, Health & Family Welfare, Government of Uttar Pradesh, and Shri Yugal Kishore Joshi, Programme Director at NITI Aayog, among others, recognising their impactful contributions to governance, public service, and sectoral innovation.

The inaugural session and awards ceremony together highlighted the significance of leadership, collaboration, and integrated thinking in addressing complex global challenges. By recognising excellence across sectors and geographies, the conclave reinforced its commitment to fostering transformative action and advancing the global sustainability agenda.



Fireside Chat

At the fireside chat during an International Conference on ESG Transversality for a sustainable water, energy, health and environment nexus under the aegis of Water Transversality Global Awards and Conclave 2026 organised by India Water Foundation moderated by Mr. Ronak Patel, Journalist and Editor, Asmita Tv, ABP Network, distinguished speakers shared insights on governance, sustainability, health, and youth engagement within the water–energy–environment nexus.

Shri Sampath kumar, CEO, Meghalaya Basin Development Authority, Government of Meghalaya highlighted Meghalaya's model of integrated environmental governance. He emphasized the role of the MBDA in building institutional capacity, fostering innovation, and linking water, environment, and livelihoods. Initiatives such as Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES), spring rejuvenation, and community-led interventions have strengthened water security while incentivizing forest conservation. The state's policies on water and climate emergency reflect a proactive, ecosystem-based development approach.

Shri Amit Ghosh, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Uttar Pradesh focused on strengthening health infrastructure and education in Uttar Pradesh. He noted the rapid expansion of medical colleges through public-private partnerships, increased healthcare capacity, and efforts to double emergency and trauma care

facilities. The state is integrating health awareness into school curricula and implementing large-scale vaccination drives, demonstrating a strong linkage between public health systems and education.

Dr Satya Tripathi, Secretary General, Global Alliance for Sustainable Planet underscored the transformative role of youth and community-led movements in sustainability. He cited Andhra Pradesh's large-scale natural farming initiative as a global model, showcasing how ecological practices can enhance farmer incomes, improve yields, and reduce emissions. He also highlighted the potential of carbon markets and stressed the importance of value-driven leadership and grassroots participation in achieving climate goals.

The discussion reinforced that sustainable development requires strong institutions, community participation, youth leadership, and integrated policy frameworks that align environmental conservation with economic and social priorities.



Thematic Plenary 3: Cross Sectoral Water Transversality for Accelerating Net Zero

The Thematic Plenary 3 on “Cross-Sectoral Water Transversality for Accelerating Net Zero” underscored that achieving climate goals requires actionable, ground-level integration of water, energy, and governance systems. Mr. Pradeep S. Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International, emphasized the urgent need to move beyond dialogue to implementation, highlighting grassroots interventions such as water harvesting, waste management, and community-led initiatives, while stressing that even small actions can collectively drive systemic impact.

Mr. Abhishek Gupta, Head – International Appliances, Rooftop Solar & PE & A, Energy Efficiency Services Limited, illustrated how large-scale, market-driven interventions from LED adoption (UJALA), rooftop solar (PM Surya Ghar), and smart meters to EV ecosystem development have transformed India's energy landscape, while also integrating water efficiency through energy audits and municipal pump optimization, demonstrating the viability of scalable, investment-grade models.

Dr. Nidhi Pundhir, Vice President – Global CSR; Director, HCL Foundation, highlighted the critical role of data-driven, measurable CSR frameworks, detailing how technology-enabled mapping and rejuvenation of water bodies, coupled with community-centric “commons” governance and PPPP (public-private-people partnerships), have enabled large-scale water conservation and ESG-linked outcomes.

Dr. Debajit Palit, Head – Centre for Climate Change & Energy Transition, Chintan Research Foundation, brought in the macro perspective, linking India's water stress and climate vulnerability with energy transitions, noting that decarbonization pathways such as renewable energy can significantly reduce water intensity, while integrated models like Gujarat's Jyotigram scheme demonstrate how aligning water and energy systems can yield both economic and sustainability gains.

The key takeaway: while successful models and technologies already exist, the real challenge lies in scaling them through robust governance, cross-sectoral convergence, and accountability to accelerate progress toward net zero.



Thematic Session 3: Cross Sectoral Water Transversality for Accelerating Net Zero

The Thematic Session 3 on “Cross-Sectoral Water Transversality for Accelerating Net Zero” highlighted that achieving net zero hinges on integrated, cross-sectoral approaches grounded in strong governance, innovation, and community participation. Mr. Pradeep S. Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International (Moderator), emphasized the need to address governance deficits and scale grassroots successes. Mr. M. P. Singh, Chief Advisor – India Water Foundation; Former Chief of Development Operations, JICA India, stressed rigorous project planning, decentralized decision-making, assured financing, and sustainability monitoring. Ms. Neha Gupta, Founder, IFBEC, underscored the urgent need for circularity and recycling infrastructure in the resource-intensive textile sector. Prof. Kshemendra K. Upadhyay, Professor and Chairperson, Centre for Sustainability & CSR, BIMTECH, highlighted the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder, community-driven models like “Apni Yojana.” Prof. Medha Bisht, Associate Professor, South Asian University, called for bridging local realities with global frameworks through systems thinking and knowledge leadership.

Key takeaway: accelerating net zero will require scaling proven models, strengthening governance, and aligning grassroots action with global sustainability frameworks for measurable impact.



Plenary session 4: Greening Industry, Fuelling Growth via ESG Partnerships for Sustainability

The Plenary Session 4 on “Greening Industry, Fuelling Growth via ESG Partnerships for Sustainability” underscored that sustainable industrial growth is no longer a trade-off but a strategic pathway driven by partnerships, innovation, and systems thinking. Shri Sampath Kumar, CEO, Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA), Government of Meghalaya (Chair), highlighted how leveraging natural and social capital, community-led governance, and global partnerships can deliver measurable outcomes, including carbon credit models and improved health indicators. Mr. Levente Kardos, Commercial and Economic Counsellor, Embassy of Hungary, New Delhi, emphasized ESG as a growth multiplier, showcasing Europe’s regulatory frameworks and India–Hungary collaboration opportunities in clean technologies, water management, and sustainable manufacturing. Mr. Pankaj Sharma, Senior Consultant, India Water Foundation, stressed the shift from ESG as compliance to ESG as a core business strategy, driven by resource efficiency, innovation, and collaborative industrial ecosystems. Prof. Rabi Mohtar, Governor, World Water Council; Director, Water Security, Texas Water Resources Institute, Texas A&M University, highlighted the nexus approach as a tool to manage interdependencies across water, energy, food, and health systems through integrated, data-driven interventions. Dr. Arvind Kumar, President, India Water Foundation, reinforced the need for cross-sectoral

synergy, combining finance, technology, policy, and community participation through both top-down and bottom-up approaches.

Key takeaway: greening industry requires integrated ESG partnerships, systems-based governance, and multi-stakeholder collaboration to drive resilient, competitive, and sustainable economic growth.



Thematic Session 4: Greening Industry, Fuelling growth via ESG Partnerships for Sustainability

The Thematic Session 4 on “Greening Industry, Fuelling Growth via ESG Partnerships for Sustainability” emphasized that transitioning ESG from a compliance obligation to a core driver of industrial competitiveness hinges on robust capacity building, system-driven governance, and cross-sectoral collaboration. Mr. M. P. Singh, Chief Advisor, India Water Foundation underscored that sustainable development requires institutionalized capacity building frameworks focused on technology, finance, and governance that are process-oriented rather than individual-dependent. Mr. Pankaj Sharma, Senior Consultant, India Water foundation (Moderator) highlighted the need to embed ESG into strategic decision-making, where partnerships across industry, policy, and technology ecosystems enable resource efficiency, innovation, and circular industrial models. Mr. Ved Prakash Prajapati, Executive Director, AIESL stressed the importance of organizational culture, accountability, and system-based approaches, illustrating how proactive, predictive frameworks and collaborative waste management solutions can enhance efficiency and reduce costs. Dr. Swati Verma, Assistant Professor, ISID emphasized the critical role of credible, transparent data and standardized ESG reporting (such as BRSR) as the foundation for meaningful collaboration and informed decision-making. Dr. Rishi Kumar, Vice President, IORA Ecological Solutions highlighted ESG as a risk-mitigation and innovation framework, pointing to opportunities in carbon markets, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience, enabled through multi-stakeholder partnerships spanning policy, finance, and community engagement.

The key takeaway: achieving sustainable industrial growth requires shifting from fragmented, compliance-driven ESG practices to integrated, data-driven, and collaboration-led systems that embed sustainability into the core architecture of business strategy and long-term value creation.



Plenary 5: Global Cooperation for Planetary Health Diplomacy

Plenary 5 on Global Cooperation for Planetary Health Diplomacy, was chaired by Mr. Amit Ghosh, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Uttar Pradesh, underscored the urgent need to strengthen global, cross-sectoral collaboration to address interconnected challenges across water, health, energy, and environment systems. Opening the discussion, Dr. Virender Sharma, member technical, Commission for Air Quality Management, Government of India emphasized that environmental health crises particularly air pollution

require a shift from fragmented governance to coordinated “airshed-based” approaches, combining real-time data, public health integration, and year-round mitigation with actionable, outcome-driven diplomacy. International perspectives enriched the dialogue, with Mr. Alain Meyssonier, President- Mediterranean Water Institute and Governor- World Water Council highlighting the Mediterranean as a model for integrated water resource management and transboundary cooperation rooted in ESG principles, while Ms Ulrike Kelm, Deputy Executive Director, IWRA stressed breaking institutional silos and strengthening science-policy interfaces for effective planetary governance. Representing UN-Habitat, Mr. Roi Chiti, Regional Coordinator & Representative, Pacific Island States, India, Sri Lanka, & Maldives drew attention to the global water-health crisis, urban inequities, and economic costs of inaction, positioning water access as both a human right and a driver of economic resilience. Complementing this, Ms. Sonja Koeppel, Secretary, Convention on the Protection on the and use of Trans Boundary Water Courses and International Lakes Environment Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe highlighted the critical role of transboundary water cooperation frameworks, such as the UN Water Convention, in fostering peace, climate adaptation, and sustainable resource governance.

The session concluded with a strong consensus that planetary health diplomacy must move beyond dialogue to implementation leveraging integrated policies, inclusive partnerships, data-driven decision-making, and global cooperation mechanisms to deliver equitable, scalable, and sustainable outcomes.



Thematic Session 5: Global Cooperation for Planetary Health Diplomacy

Thematic Session 5 on Global Cooperation for Planetary Health Diplomacy, was moderated by Ms. Varinder Gambhir, Country Director, BBC Media Action and focused on advancing integrated, implementation-driven global cooperation.

Mr. Vinod Mishra, Country Director, UNOPS emphasized the need to shift from “diplomacy of negotiation” to “diplomacy of delivery,” highlighting governance reform, resilient systems, and scalable solutions. Dr. Manoj Nesari, Advisor, Ministry of Ayush, Government of India underscored the lack of a binding global framework linking climate, biodiversity, and health, while advocating for the integration of traditional knowledge and community-based approaches. Ms. Sara Casillas Ramirez, Forestry Officer, FAO stressed the interconnectedness of ecosystems and public health, calling for aligned, cross-sectoral policies. Ms. Ambika Vishwanath, Co-founder, Kubernein Initiative highlighted persistent governance and knowledge silos, urging more integrated and adaptive global systems. Prof. Nidhi Nagabathla, Professor, UN University, Belgium called for a unified planetary health agenda supported by common metrics, science-policy interfaces, and community co-creation.

The session concluded that planetary health diplomacy must move from dialogue to action through integrated policies, aligned frameworks, and inclusive, data-driven collaboration to deliver scalable and sustainable outcomes.



Parallel Session 1: “Integrated Pathways: Operationalising the Water–Energy–Health–Environment Nexus for Resilient Futures”

The side event on “Integrated Pathways: Operationalising the Water–Energy–Health–Environment Nexus for Resilient Futures,” curated by the S M Sehgal Foundation—Institutional Partner brought together experts to deliberate on translating nexus thinking into actionable, community-centric solutions. Organised under the broader International Conference on ESG Transversality by the India Water Foundation, the session highlighted the urgency of integrated approaches to interconnected sustainability challenges.

Opening the session, Ms. Pooja O. Murada, Principal Lead (Outreach for Development), emphasized that climate change, resource scarcity, and environmental health risks are deeply interlinked and require coordinated, cross-sectoral responses. Moderated by Mr. Lalit Mohan Sharma, Advisor and water management expert, the discussion focused on moving the nexus approach from concept to practice. Mr. Depinder Kapur, Head – Climate Centre for Cities, National Institute of Urban Affairs, noted that infrastructure alone is insufficient without sustained behavioural change for long-term public health outcomes. Dr. Swayamprabha Das, Associate Vice President & Lead (Policy & Engagement), Development Alternatives, underscored the disproportionate impact of water and energy scarcity on women and girls, advocating for stronger grassroots representation in decision-making. Mr. Prabhjot Sodhi, Senior Programme Director, Centre for Environment Education, emphasized resource circularity and lifecycle thinking, while Mr. Chetan Aggarwal, Independent Forest and Environmental Services Analyst, highlighted the importance of biodiversity conservation through landscape-level planning and ecological zoning.

The session reinforced a shared message that resilient futures depend on integrating water, energy, health, and environmental priorities while strengthening community voices and inclusive governance mechanisms.



Parallel Session 2: “Streams of Change: Collaborative Action against Ecosystem Contamination”

At the 2nd Edition of the Water Transversality Global Awards and Conclave 2026, the side event titled “Streams of Change: Collaborative Action against Ecosystem Contamination,” jointly curated by India Water Foundation and India Water Partnership, brought together experts to discuss integrated solutions for resilience.

Moderated by Dr. Veena Khanduri, Country Director, India Water Partnership, and chaired by Dr. T. S. Bisht, Chief Technical Advisor – IWF, Retd. IPS, Former Director General of Police (DGP), Gujarat, the session emphasized moving beyond siloed governance toward a systems-based water–energy–health–environment nexus.

Dr. S. K. Sharma, Principal Advisor, IWF highlighted technology-driven and ecosystem-based water management, including MAR, ASR, watershed interventions, and wastewater reuse, underpinned by IWRM and climate-resilient planning. Dr. Devansh Parag Desai, Assistant Professor, Silver Oak University, Ahmedabad showcased a satellite-based ET estimation model (STIC-TI) enabling precise, data-driven agricultural water management. Ms. Monika Antil, Prime Minister Fellow, CSIR- CSIO, Chandigarh presented a cost-effective electrochemical method for arsenic detection, offering scalable solutions for water quality monitoring.

Mr. Deepak Jain, Founder, Vijayash Foundation underscored the importance of conscious leadership, advocating behavioural change and collective responsibility as the foundation of sustainable development.



The session collectively reinforced that addressing ecosystem contamination and achieving water resilience requires an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach combining technological innovation, policy convergence, ecological restoration, and behavioral change supported by collaborative action across sectors and scales.

Parallel Session 3: “From Bankruptcy to Water Resilience”

At the 2nd Edition of the Water Transversality Global Awards and Conclave 2026, a compelling side event titled “From Bankruptcy to Water Resilience”, curated by BBC Media Action as the Knowledge Partner, brought into sharp focus the lived realities and urgent implications of “water bankruptcy.” Moderated by Ms. Soma Katiyar, Executive Creative Director, BBC Media Action, the session moved beyond statistics to humanize the crisis through powerful imagery, narratives, and experiential reflections. Panelists including Ms. Manjusha Manchala Founder, Urban Forge Labs, Mr. Debaranjan Pujahari, Partner - Agri Practice Area, Sattva Consulting, and Mr. Swapnil Chaturvedi, Director – Programmes, WaterAid India examined water scarcity across urban systems, agriculture, and vulnerable communities. Discussions highlighted how excessive groundwater extraction, misaligned cropping patterns, and weak economic incentives are accelerating water depletion, while marginalized populations face the harshest consequences from drying springs to complete disruption of traditional water access systems.

The session underscored that water bankruptcy is not merely a future risk but a present-day lived reality shaped by behaviour, governance, and systemic inefficiencies. A key takeaway resonated strongly: building water resilience requires not just technological interventions, but a transformation in how societies perceive, value, and relate to water driven by storytelling, communication, and collective action.



Parallel Session 4: Towards Resilient Urban Futures: Opportunities for Freshwater Conservation in India through Nature/Ecosystem-based Solutions

At the side event titled “Towards Resilient Urban Futures: Opportunities for Freshwater Conservation in India through Nature/Ecosystem-based Solutions,” curated by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), a distinguished panel of experts came together to explore how nature-based solutions can transform urban water resilience in India.

Opening the session, Ms. Archana Chatterjee, Program Manager, IUCN set the context by underlining the urgency of integrating ecosystem-based approaches into urban planning to address mounting freshwater stress. Mr Jaidev Joshi further highlighted IUCN’s global and national efforts in advancing nature-positive urban development pathways.

Dr Mahreen Matto from (NIUA) emphasized the need for embedding water-sensitive urban design into policy frameworks, noting that cities must transition from extractive systems to regenerative ecosystems. Dr C. R. Babu, a leading voice in ecological restoration, stressed the importance of conserving urban biodiversity and restoring degraded ecosystems as foundational to long-term water security.

Bringing a programmatic perspective, Dr Uday Bhonde discussed how data-driven planning and institutional convergence are critical for scaling nature-based interventions across urban landscapes. Ms. Nidhi Batra from Agence Française de Développement (AFD) highlighted financing mechanisms and international collaboration as key enablers for mainstreaming blue-green infrastructure in Indian cities.

From a climate resilience standpoint, Dr Pushp Bajaj of CEEW underscored the need to align freshwater conservation strategies with broader climate adaptation goals, while Ms Yogita Lokhande from Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) emphasized capacity building, governance innovation, and community engagement as essential pillars for implementation.

The session collectively reinforced that resilient urban futures in India will hinge on integrating nature into infrastructure, restoring ecological systems such as wetlands and watersheds, and fostering cross-sectoral collaboration supported by robust policy, financing, and citizen participation frameworks.



Parallel Session 5: “Technological Innovations for Nexus Optimization”

The side event on “Technological Innovations for Nexus Optimization”, curated by ICID was moderated by Mr. Rishi Srivastava, Director, ICID, brought together leading experts to explore how advanced technologies are transforming the water–energy–food–climate nexus through data-driven decision-making and systems optimization.

Dr. Alok K. Sikka, Emeritus Scientist, IWMI, delivered a deeply insightful presentation on nexus optimization and integrated decision-support systems, highlighting the urgent need to move beyond siloed sectoral planning toward a systems-based approach. Following this, Dr. Chandan Kumar Thakur, Senior Vice President of Marketing, Vassar Labs, presented a compelling technology-led perspective on AI-driven innovations for water, agriculture, urban systems, and disaster resilience. Through real-world examples from multiple Indian states and international deployments, he showcased how AI, IoT, GIS, satellite intelligence, predictive analytics, and digital public infrastructure are being used to manage water systems from reservoirs to farms and cities.

The session underscored that the future of resilient development lies in technology-enabled nexus governance, where AI, modelling frameworks, digital twins, and predictive systems work together to ensure sustainable and climate-resilient management of critical natural resources.



Parallel Session 6: “Wetlands as Nexus Infrastructure: Integrating Water Energy Health and Environment for Resilient Futures”

At the side event on “Wetlands as Nexus Infrastructure: Integrating Water, Energy, Health and Environment for Resilient Futures,” curated by Wetlands International- South Asia was moderated by Mr. Ravi Prakash, Wetland Specialist, Wetlands International South Asia. The session highlighted how wetlands must no longer be viewed as isolated ecological spaces, but as central systems supporting the interconnected nexus of water security, energy efficiency, public health, biodiversity conservation and climate adaptation.

Ms. Archana Chatterjee, Program Manager, IUCN, stressed that one of the foremost governance challenges is the failure to integrate wetlands within river basin planning. She pointed out that wetlands are often viewed as separate from river systems, despite being integral to hydrological continuity and ecological health. Speaking from a river basin governance perspective, Mr. Suresh Babu, Director – River, Wetland and Water Policy, WWF, emphasized the urgent need for institutional mechanisms that transcend administrative boundaries and instead align with ecological and hydrological realities.

Adding a systems perspective, Dr. Gopal Kumar, Country Representative, IWMI, argued strongly for water circularity, positioning wetlands as central to decentralized wastewater reuse and treatment systems, particularly in rural India where drainage and waterlogging issues are becoming increasingly severe.

The deliberations offered valuable policy insights and practical pathways for integrating wetlands into basin planning, urban water management, rural development and conservation strategies marking an important step toward resilient and nature-positive futures.



Parallel Session 7: Water Transversality in Action- For Energy, Environment and Health Nexus

At the side event on Water Transversality in Action: For Energy, Environment and Health Nexus, organised jointly by India Water Foundation and India Water Partnership. The session brought together researchers, technologists, policy thinkers, and media professionals to explore integrated pathways for resilient futures. Moderated by Mr. Ashish Sharma, Junior Researcher, India Water Foundation, and chaired by Dr. Veena Khanduri, Country Director, India Water Partnership, the discussion underscored the urgent need to move beyond siloed governance and adopt a systems-based approach to the interconnected water, energy, health, and environment nexus.

Ms. Kavita Prasad, Senior Consultant, India Water Foundation, introduced HydroNet Delhi, an AI-driven framework designed to forecast floods, energy vulnerabilities, and health risks across the urban landscape, emphasizing explainable and ethically governed AI for climate resilience. Mr. Anoop Dongre and Mr. Gopal Prasad Patel from IIT-Delhi highlighted the deep interlinkages between groundwater depletion, irrigation stress, and energy demand, demonstrating how satellite-based soil moisture analytics, remote sensing, and GIS tools can support sustainable groundwater governance and agricultural water use.

Bringing an applied technology perspective, Ms. Hiranya Tallam, Business Development Lead, Real Tech GPS Systems, showcased IoT-enabled and solar-powered smart water infrastructure solutions that significantly reduced water losses, energy consumption, and public health risks in rural water supply systems. From the policy and diplomacy lens, Mr. Parth Bhatt emphasized planetary health diplomacy, systems thinking, and anticipatory governance as essential frameworks for addressing cascading climate, biodiversity, and water risks across sectors and borders. Concluding the deliberations, Ms. Shreya Pathak highlighted the critical role of public consciousness, environmental journalism, and grassroots community participation in translating policy intent into meaningful action.

The session offered valuable research insights, technological innovations, and policy pathways, reinforcing that sustainable futures depend on integrated, data-driven, and people-centric approaches to the water-energy-health-environment nexus.



Leadership Dialogue 2 and Valedictory Session

The Leadership Dialogue 2 and Valedictory Session of an International Conference on ESG Transversality for a sustainable water, energy, health and environment nexus under the aegis of Water Transversality Global Awards and Conclave 2026 brought together diverse perspectives, with each speaker offering concise, action-oriented insights: Dr. Arvind Kumar President, India Water Foundation emphasized that the conclave's outcomes must transition from dialogue to sustained action through stronger multi-stakeholder partnerships across government, academia, industry, and civil society, while leveraging ESG governance and transversality for integrated solutions.

Shri R. P. Singh, National Spokesperson, BJP highlighted the intrinsic linkage between air, water, and earth through cultural and spiritual ethos, stressing that sustainable living requires behavioural change such as water conservation, reduced wastage, improved urban planning, and adoption of responsible consumption practices.

Shri Rakesh Jain, Akhil Bharatiya Paryavaran Sah Sanyojak, RSS drew attention to ecological degradation driven by deforestation, water mismanagement, and plastic pollution, advocating large-scale afforestation, water conservation (including check dams), and elimination of polythene through community-led initiatives.

His Holiness Acharya Shri Lokesh Muni, Founder, Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti provided a philosophical perspective rooted in Jain principles, emphasizing limited consumption, ethical living, and alignment of human desires with ecological limits, while underlining that both environmental and “inner” (mental/social) pollution must be addressed.

Ms. Shweta Tyagi, Chief Functionary, India Water Foundation delivered the vote of thanks, highlighting the scale and impact of the conclave and reaffirming its role as a platform for collaboration, policy dialogue, and advancing the water-energy-health-environment nexus through partnerships.

Overall, the session synthesized policy, practical, and philosophical dimensions—calling for a shift from awareness to implementation, driven by collaboration, lifestyle change, and integrated governance.



Conclusion

The conclave reinforced a clear and urgent message: while the science, frameworks, and solutions for sustainable development are well established, the defining challenge of our time lies in execution at scale. Transversality must now move beyond a conceptual framework to become an operational reality anchored in integrated governance, credible finance, technological innovation, and inclusive participation.

The way forward demands a paradigm shift from fragmented interventions to systems thinking, from compliance to commitment, and from dialogue to decisive action. By fostering collaboration across sectors and geographies, and by placing people and ecosystems at the centre of development, the global community can build resilient, equitable, and sustainable futures.

WATER STEWARDSHIP & ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE AWARD TO INDIA WATER FOUNDATION AT BIO-TEX FASHION & CIRCULARITY AWARDS 2026

The India Water Foundation was honoured with the Water Stewardship & Environmental Resilience Award at the IFBEC Global BioTex Fashion & Circularity Summit 2026, held at The Leela Ambience, Gurugram. The recognition highlights IWF's leadership in promoting sustainable resource management and environmental responsibility across industries, including textiles. The award acknowledges its contributions to policy advocacy, climate action, and advancing circular production systems. This milestone reinforces IWF's role in driving integrated, future-ready approaches to environmental governance and sustainable development.



READ HERE



THE WORLD WATER DAY 2026 WORKSHOP, THEMED "WATER AND GENDER – WHERE WATER FLOWS, EQUALITY GROWS"

The World Water Day 2026 workshop, themed "Water and Gender – Where Water Flows, Equality Grows," Organised by UNOPS in collaboration with NITI Aayog, Government of India, during their Panel Discussion 2 on Sustainability, Resilience, Water Quality, and Operation & Maintenance, Dr. Arvind Kumar, President, India Water Foundation underscored the critical disconnect between well-defined policy frameworks and their implementation at the grassroots level in rural water management.

He noted that participatory mechanisms such as Village Action Plans are often bypassed due to pressure to achieve rapid coverage targets, resulting in limited community ownership and accountability. Dr. Kumar emphasised that without meaningful involvement of local communities in planning, decision-making, and monitoring, long-term sustainability of water systems remains at risk. His intervention highlighted the need to strengthen governance processes and prioritise inclusive participation to ensure enduring outcomes under the Jal Jeevan Mission.



World Water Day Conclave 2026

The Ministry of Jal Shakti organized the World Water Day Conclave 2026 on 23 March 2026 at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi, under the theme “Industry for Water”, reaffirming the Government of India’s commitment to sustainable water management, enhanced water-use efficiency, and a whole-of-society approach to water conservation.



The Conclave was attended by Union Minister of Jal Shakti Shri C. R. Paatil; Ministers of State for Jal Shakti Shri Raj Bhushan Choudhary and Shri V. Somanna; Secretary, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Shri V. L. Kantha Rao; Secretary, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Shri Ashok K. K. Meena; Chair, FICCI Water Mission & Past President, Shrimati Naina Lal Kidwai; Secretary, CSIR, Shrimati N. Kalaiselvi; President, Cosmos Group & Former President of ASSOCHAM, Shri Anil K. Aggarwal; and Additional Secretary & Mission Director, National Water Mission, Shrimati Archana Varma, among other senior officials, industry leaders, and stakeholders.

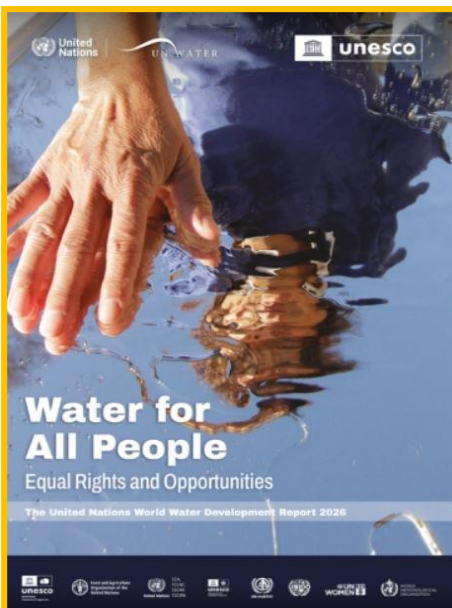


UN World Water Development Report 2026

Gender inequalities continue to undermine global water security, disproportionately affecting women and girls. While they are often responsible for collecting and managing household water, they remain underrepresented in water governance, leadership and technical roles.

The United Nations World Water Development Report 2026: Water for All People – Equal Rights and Opportunities highlights how unequal access to water and sanitation services impacts health, education, livelihoods and safety. Today, 2.1 billion people still lack safely managed drinking water, and women and girls spend an estimated 250 million hours every day collecting water.

The report examines how climate change, water scarcity and disasters are intensifying these inequalities and calls for stronger action to ensure equal rights, participation and opportunities in water management. By promoting inclusive water governance, gender-responsive policies and improved data, the report outlines practical steps to close gender gaps and advance progress towards sustainable water management and the SDGs.



SUCCESS STORIES



Inside the Revival of a Garbage-Choked Canal in Tamil Nadu With 20000 Mangrove Plants

Once choked with plastic and barely flowing, a 3-km canal in Tamil Nadu was cleared, restored and lined with mangroves — offering a model for how cities can bring dying waterways back to life.

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In Maharashtra, This Sarpanch Led Her Village to Net Zero Carbon Emissions With 90000 Trees & Solar Power

In Bela, Maharashtra, sarpanch Sharada Gaydhane worked with residents to introduce tree planting, solar use, LPG and waste segregation, gradually shaping a village-level shift in how climate action plays out.

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FRIDAY BLOGS



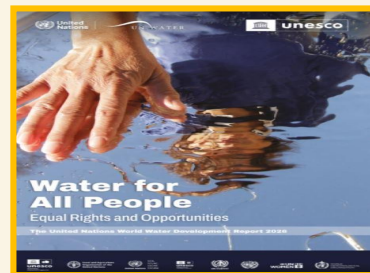
Heralding the Japan-Uttar Pradesh Era: Will it achieve Viksit UP through this Transformation?

Transversality: A Mantra for Integrated Solutions to Common Challenges and a Path to Sustainable Development



The World on the Brink!

Water Equity at a Crossroads: Momentum Gained or Miles to Go?



Reimagining the War-Economics in the Contemporary World



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
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INVITATION TO JOIN SOCIAL OUTREACH MEMBERSHIP

Our Special JalMitra Social Outreach Membership

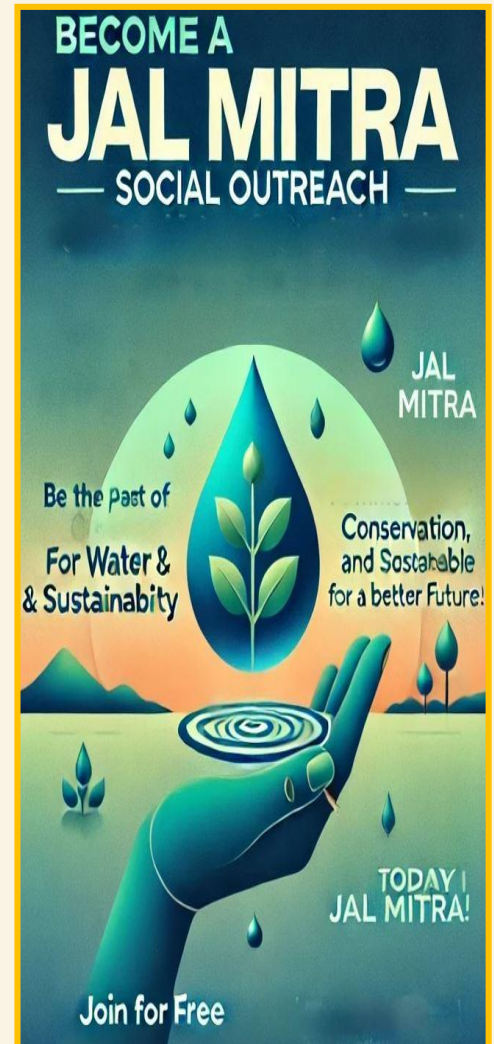
The JalMitra outreach program and encourages sustainable living practices by promoting sustainable conservation and restoration projects. The campaign fosters awareness and behavioural change at the grassroots level, enabling communities to adopt environmentally responsible lifestyles that reduce ecological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

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

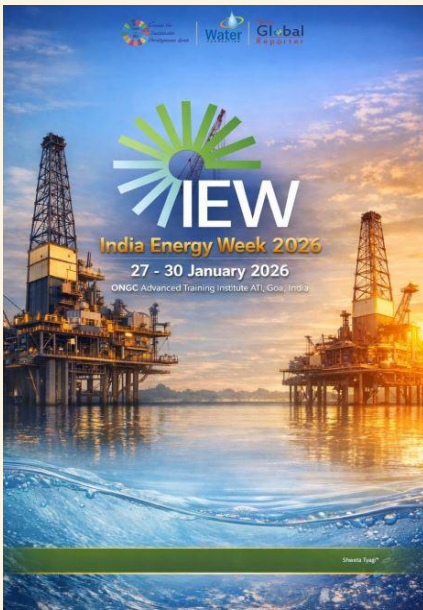
How to Join?

Take the first step today! Visit [Become an IWF Member](https://indiawaterfoundation.org/jal-mitra/) to apply and join this transformative movement. Together, let's shape a sustainable future!

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KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS



LEARNCAST

Accelerating industrial transformation: How countries can unlock investment

Green Talks LIVE

Virtual Webinar

Date: 27 April 2026 Time: 10:00 AM CEST

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Industry is responsible for up to 40% of the total global energy related carbon dioxide emissions, making its transformation essential. Beyond cutting emissions, industrial transformation can strengthen economic growth, create jobs, drive innovation and create new supply chains - while improving environmental quality and strengthening energy security. Yet, many near-zero emission technologies still face commercialisation and competitiveness barriers, slowing the level of investment needed for large-scale industry transformation.

To support countries in this transformation, the OECD has developed the “Framework for Industry’s net-zero transition” – a practical, step-by-step approach to identify financial solutions and enabling conditions needed to strengthen competitiveness and unlock investment in near-zero emission industrial pathways. What does it take to accelerate industrial transformation? What tools can help to unlock investment? What lessons can be drawn from countries’ experiences?

Join Green Talks LIVE on 27 April 2026 from 10:00-11:00 CEST to hear how the Framework implementation can support countries in their industrial transformation, and the tools required to overcome barriers to investments at scale.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **6–7 April: Advancing Energy Tech to Power a Digital & Sustainable India.** Schneider Electric Innovation Summit India 2026, Yashobhoomi, New Delhi <https://www.se.com/in/en/about-us/events/innovation-summit-india/#AboutInnovationSummitIndia>
- **7–9 April: Global Climate Action Summit 2026.** Held in Paris, France, this summit unites policymakers, NGOs, and corporate leaders to advance Paris Agreement goals, just transition frameworks, climate finance for developing nations, and youth-led innovation. <https://globalclimateactionsummit.org/>
- **14–16 April: Renewables Asia Summit 2026.** Taking place in Jakarta, Indonesia, it focuses on solar and wind scaling, battery storage breakthroughs, regional grid integration, and policy incentives for net-zero energy in Southeast Asia. <https://renewablesiasummit.com/>
- **16–18 March: World Water Tech Innovation Summit.** Hosted in London, UK, it convenes water sector experts on smart water management, climate-resilient infrastructure, wastewater reuse, and financing for SDG 6 in emerging markets. <https://worldwatertechinnovation.com/>
- **20–22 April: Earth Day Water Forum 2026.** Hosted in Washington, D.C., USA, the event convenes experts on groundwater protection, transboundary river management, water-energy nexus, and equitable access under SDG 6 amid climate pressures. <https://earthdaywaterforum.org/>
- **22–24 April: Sustainable Cities India Expo 2026.** In Bengaluru, India, this expo explores smart urban mobility, waste-to-energy systems, green public spaces, and municipal financing for climate-resilient infrastructure. <https://sustainablecitiesindia.com/>
- **28–30 April: Asia ESG Investment Forum 2026.** Organized in Tokyo, Japan, it addresses ESG integration in portfolios, biodiversity-linked bonds, regulatory harmonization, and impact measurement for sustainable growth across Asia. <https://asiaesginvestmentforum.com/>
- **30 March – 1 April: Green Fintech Summit 2026.** In Singapore, this forum highlights digital tools for sustainable finance, climate risk analytics, blockchain for carbon tracking, and impact investing in Asia-Pacific. <https://greenfintechsummit.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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