



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Dr. Arvind Kumar
President
India Water Foundation

Dear Readers,

The first half of 2026 has left little room for complacency. Across continents, the signs of a world under mounting stress have become increasingly impossible to ignore. From unprecedented heatwaves sweeping across Europe to the official return of El Niño, from intensifying geopolitical rivalries to persistent economic uncertainty, humanity finds itself confronting a convergence of crises that are no longer isolated events but deeply interconnected realities.

The record-breaking temperatures experienced across Europe this summer are not merely another seasonal anomaly. They are a stark reminder that climate change has entered a new phase where extreme weather is becoming the norm rather than the exception. Scientists continue to warn that while the emergence of a strong El Niño is expected to amplify heatwaves, droughts and intense rainfall in many parts of the world over the coming months, the underlying driver remains the long-term warming of our planet. Oceans have recorded unprecedented temperatures, ecosystems are under immense pressure, and communities are increasingly exposed to climate risks that transcend national borders.

Yet climate is only one dimension of today's global reality. Geopolitical tensions continue to reshape international relations, fragment supply chains, challenge multilateral cooperation, and redirect public resources toward security concerns at a time when investment in resilience has never been more critical. Conflicts and strategic competition have exposed the vulnerabilities of an interconnected global economy, reminding us that peace, development, and environmental sustainability cannot be pursued in isolation.

Economic uncertainty has become equally defining. Inflationary pressures, volatile commodity markets, rising adaptation costs, and increasing losses from climate-induced disasters are placing governments, businesses, and households under sustained strain. Increasingly, economists recognise that climate change is no longer simply an environmental issue—it has become a structural economic challenge affecting productivity, labour markets, food systems, energy security, insurance, infrastructure, and long-term growth.



Beyond the statistics lies an equally profound social transformation. Heat is altering patterns of work, public health systems are adapting to new risks, migration pressures continue to evolve, and inequalities are becoming more visible. Vulnerable communities remain disproportionately exposed despite contributing the least to the crises they face. At the same time, societies worldwide are grappling with declining trust, growing polarisation, and the challenge of sustaining inclusive governance in an increasingly uncertain world.

These developments reinforce a fundamental lesson: our greatest challenges are no longer sectoral. Water security cannot be separated from food security. Climate resilience cannot be detached from public health. Energy transitions influence economic stability. Biodiversity underpins livelihoods. Digital transformation affects governance. Every global challenge today intersects with another.

This interconnected reality demands a corresponding shift in our thinking. Incremental solutions are proving inadequate against systemic risks. The future belongs to integrated policies, cross-sector partnerships, evidence-based decision-making, and institutions capable of anticipating rather than merely reacting to crises. Resilience must become the organising principle of development—not only in infrastructure and ecosystems but also in governance, finance, and international cooperation.

At the India Water Foundation, we continue to advocate that water remains one of the most powerful entry points for achieving this transformation. Water connects every Sustainable Development Goal, every economic sector, every ecosystem, and every community. It is through a transversality approach—recognising and acting upon these interdependencies—that sustainable and climate-resilient development can truly be realised.

History often remembers periods not simply for the crises they endured but for the choices societies made in response. The challenges before us are undeniably complex, but they also present an opportunity to redefine development pathways through collaboration, innovation, and collective responsibility. The imperative today is not merely to recover from one crisis before confronting another; it is to build systems capable of withstanding many, simultaneously.

As this edition of our newsletter demonstrates, meaningful change is already emerging through partnerships, policy innovation, scientific cooperation, and community-led action. These examples remind us that while the challenges are global, resilience is built locally, strengthened nationally, and sustained through international solidarity.

The defining question of our time is no longer whether change is coming. It is whether our institutions, economies, and societies are prepared to change with it.

**HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Supported by

**ICIMOD**
International
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High Level Policy Dialogue
on
“Multi-stakeholder Partnerships to Accelerate SDG-6 via Water Transversality”

Official Virtual Side Event of High Level Political Forum 2026

Date: 7th July 2026, Time: 18:00 Hrs onwards (IST) (Virtual)

Organized
by
India Water Foundation



AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH DR. NIDHI PUNDHIR, VICE PRESIDENT, GLOBAL CSR; DIRECTOR, HEAD, HCL FOUNDATION BY DR. ARVIND KUMAR, EDITOR, FOCUS GLOBAL REPORTER

In this exclusive interview with Focus Global Reporter, Dr. Nidhi Pundhir, Senior Vice President – Global CSR, HCL Tech, and Director, HCL Foundation, shares valuable insights into the evolving role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in advancing sustainable development. Reflecting on HCL Foundation's journey of impacting over 8.5 million lives, she emphasizes that meaningful development is achieved by building solutions with communities, rather than merely delivering them

The discussion highlights HCL Foundation's pioneering initiatives in water stewardship, including the use of geospatial technologies, GIS-based mapping, and the Water DaMS platform for evidence-based governance of water bodies. Dr. Pundhir also underlines the importance of community ownership, integrated watershed management, biodiversity conservation, women's leadership, digital inclusion, and technology-enabled development in creating resilient ecosystems.

Drawing upon her address at the India Water Foundation's International Conference on ESG Transversality, she advocates for treating water as a shared strategic resource requiring collaborative stewardship among governments, corporates, civil society, academia, and local communities. The interview concludes with her vision for a systems-based CSR approach that aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals and strengthens climate resilience, digital equity, and inclusive development for the future.

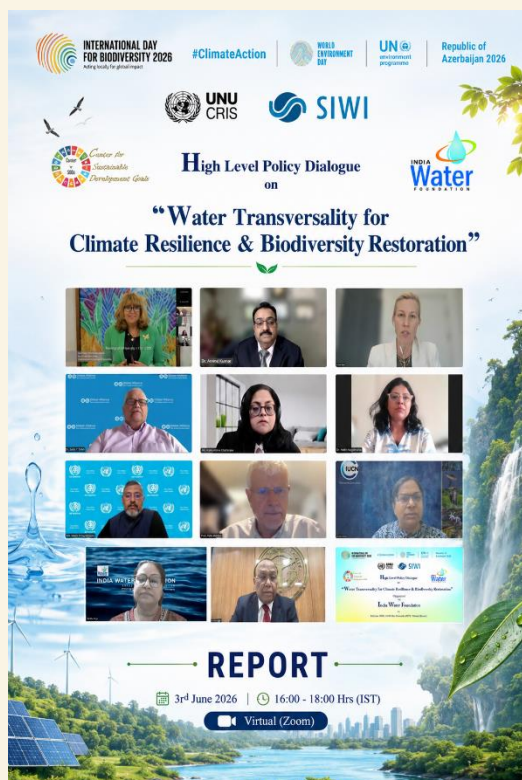


HIGH-LEVEL POLICY DIALOGUE ON "WATER TRANSVERSALITY FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND BIODIVERSITY RESTORATION"

On 3 June 2026, the India Water Foundation convened a High-Level Policy Dialogue on "Water Transversality for Climate Resilience and Biodiversity Restoration", bringing together distinguished experts from international organizations, academia, policy institutions, and civil society to explore water's central role in addressing the world's interconnected environmental and development challenges.

The dialogue reaffirmed that water is the foundation of climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, food security, public health, energy systems, and sustainable economic growth. Participants emphasized the need to move beyond fragmented approaches by integrating water considerations into climate policies, biodiversity frameworks, and national development strategies. Discussions highlighted the importance of nature-based solutions, including watershed restoration, wetland conservation, river rejuvenation, and sustainable land management, as effective pathways for strengthening resilience while protecting ecosystems.

Speakers also underscored the significance of inclusive water governance, community participation, gender-responsive leadership, scientific innovation, and enhanced investments to build resilient water systems. Looking ahead to the 2028 United Nations Water Conference, the dialogue called for elevating water as a strategic global priority and strengthening cross-sectoral partnerships to accelerate the achievement of climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development goals. The event concluded with a shared commitment to advancing Water Transversality as an integrated framework for securing a resilient, water-secure, and sustainable future.



biodiversity, development, and investment planning processes. The concept of water transversality provides a framework for overcoming these gaps by recognizing water as a cross-cutting element that must be embedded across policies, institutions, and sectors. Against this backdrop, the High-Level Policy Dialogue on "Water Transversality for Climate Resilience and Biodiversity Restoration" was convened to foster dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaborative action among key stakeholders working at the intersection of water, climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development.

Objectives

The High-Level Policy Dialogue aimed to advance understanding of water transversality as a strategic approach for strengthening climate resilience and biodiversity restoration. Specifically, the dialogue sought to: (i) highlight the central role of water in achieving climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development goals; (ii) promote integrated and cross-sectoral governance approaches that enhance policy coherence across water, climate, energy, food, and ecosystem management; (iii) examine the potential of ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions to address interconnected environmental challenges; (iv) facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and best practices among policymakers, experts, practitioners, and civil society organizations; (v) identify opportunities for inclusive and participatory water governance that strengthens the role of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities; and (vi) generate recommendations for strengthening cooperation, financing, capacity development, and policy action to place water at the center of global efforts toward climate resilience, biodiversity restoration, and sustainable development.

Key Themes and Speaker Highlights

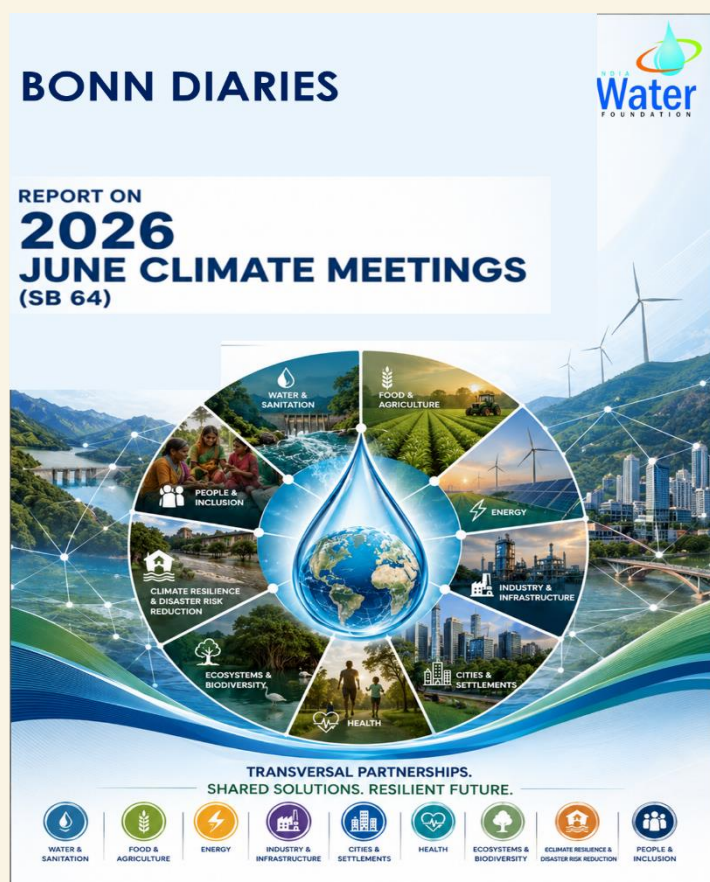
In his opening remarks, **Dr. Arvind Kumar**, President, India Water Foundation, emphasized that the interconnected crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and water insecurity can no longer be addressed through fragmented governance structures and sectoral approaches. He argued that while nature functions as an integrated system, policy responses continue to be constrained by institutional silos, resulting in ineffective and disconnected interventions. Introducing the concept of water transversality, he highlighted water as the central connecting element that links climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, food security, livelihoods, urban development, and sustainable economic growth. Drawing on examples from global and Indian initiatives, including ecosystem restoration, water-sensitive urban planning, river rejuvenation, and community-based conservation, he underscored the need to shift from fragmented management toward integrated governance and systems thinking. Dr. Kumar stressed that climate resilience cannot be achieved through infrastructure alone but requires ecosystem restoration, behavioural transformation, community participation, and cross-sectoral collaboration. He concluded by calling for a new governance paradigm that places water at the center of climate, biodiversity, and development agendas.



SB64 OFFICIAL SIDE EVENT: HIGH-LEVEL POLICY DIALOGUE ON CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS FOR WATER SECURITY IN A CLIMATE RESILIENT WORLD

On 16 June 2026, the India Water Foundation, in partnership with CICERO (Center for International Climate Research) and the AKO Foundation, convened a High-Level Policy Dialogue on "Cross-Sector Partnerships for Water Security in a Climate Resilient World" on the margins of the 64th sessions of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies (SB64) in Bonn, Germany. The Dialogue brought together distinguished policymakers, scientists, and practitioners to address the urgent imperative of transforming fragmented sectoral approaches into integrated water governance frameworks.

The Dialogue was anchored in a stark reality: nearly 75% of the global population lives in water-insecure regions, with 4 billion people experiencing severe water scarcity for at least one month each year. Climate change is fundamentally disrupting the hydrological cycle through intensifying floods, droughts, glacier melt, and sea-level rise, making water the primary medium through which climate impacts are experienced. Speakers from India, Norway, and international organisations articulated a powerful consensus: water is not merely a sector but the "connective tissue" linking climate resilience, food security, public health, ecosystem integrity, energy transitions, and economic development. The Dialogue identified actionable pathways for cross-sector partnerships, emphasised the critical role of science-policy integration, showcased innovative financing mechanisms including water credits, and called for embedding water transversality across all climate governance frameworks.



62ND SESSION UNHRC

Dr. Arvind Kumar Highlights India's Climate-Resilient Food Systems at UNHRC

During the 10th Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food at the 62nd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, Dr. Arvind Kumar, Founder and President of India Water Foundation, delivered a substantive intervention on the nexus between climate change, food systems, and human rights. Emphasizing that food system transformation is a rights-based imperative, he showcased India's pioneering initiatives, including climate-resilient crop varieties, the National Mission on Natural Farming, and the Jal Jeevan Mission as practical models for advancing food security, water resilience, and public health. Dr. Kumar also called for enhanced climate finance, technology transfer, and equitable adaptation support for developing countries, reaffirming that water remains the critical connector between climate resilience, sustainable agriculture, and human well-being.



Showcasing India's Development Story at Geneva's Iconic Broken Chair Square

On the sidelines of the 62nd Session of the UN Human Rights Council, the India Water Foundation organized a public exhibition at Geneva's renowned Broken Chair Square titled "Water, Nutrition, and Community Well-being: India's Journey Towards a Climate-Resilient Future." The exhibition presented India's achievements in safe drinking water, sanitation, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and climate adaptation through an engaging visual narrative. Drawing significant attention from delegates, diplomats, civil society representatives, and the public, the exhibition highlighted India's integrated and rights-based approach to sustainable development while demonstrating how water serves as the foundation for climate resilience, food security, biodiversity conservation, and community well-being.

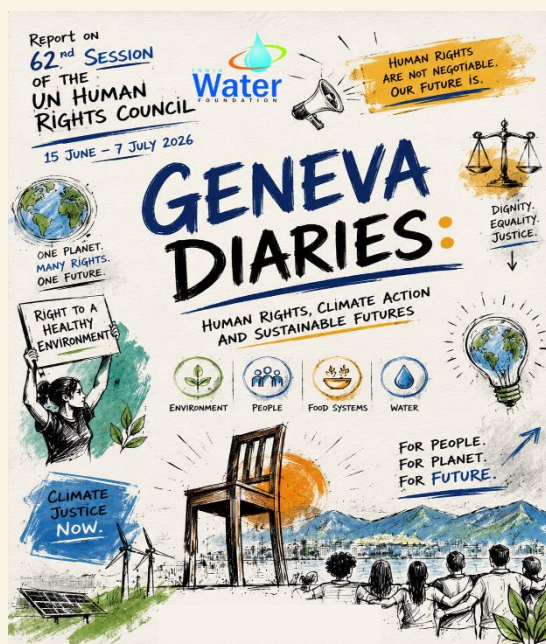


Bilateral Meeting with India's Ambassador to the WTO

As part of its strategic engagements in Geneva, the India Water Foundation delegation, led by Dr. Arvind Kumar, held a meeting with Dr. C. Senthil Pandian, IAS, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India to the World Trade Organization (WTO). The discussions focused on India's evolving role in multilateral trade, sustainable development, and the growing intersections between water security, climate-resilient agriculture, food systems, and international trade policy. The interaction reinforced the importance of cross-sectoral dialogue and strengthened the Foundation's commitment to promoting integrated policy solutions that connect water, climate, development, and global governance.

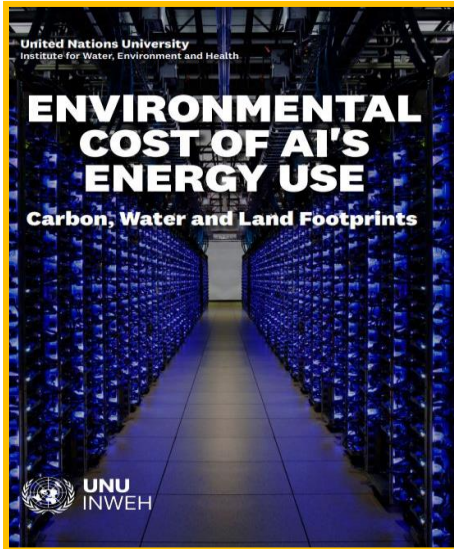


Read the complete account of these engagements, key discussions, and outcomes in our Geneva Diaries, documenting India Water Foundation's participation at the 62nd Session of the UN Human Rights Council.



MEDIA COVERAGE





The Environmental Cost of Artificial Intelligence: Carbon, Water, and Land Footprints

This report, *Environmental Cost of Artificial Intelligence: Carbon, Water and Land Footprints*, by the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH) on its 30th anniversary, examines one of the most underexplored consequences of AI's rapid expansion: the environmental footprints of the energy required to power it. As artificial intelligence becomes embedded in economies, public services, research, communication, and everyday life, it depends on a growing physical infrastructure of data centers, advanced chips, cooling systems, electricity grids, water resources, land, and critical mineral supply chains. The report shows that AI is not only a digital technology, but also a material system with measurable environmental costs.

Importantly, To address these risks, the report calls for a responsible AI ecosystem grounded in transparency, efficiency by design, equity and environmental justice, lifecycle responsibility, global cooperation, and sustainable use. By making AI's carbon, water, and land footprints visible and comparable, the report provides a practical basis for integrating AI into energy, climate, water, and land-use planning, ensuring that innovation advances without shifting environmental costs onto vulnerable communities.



Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2026

FFD4 took place during a moment of crisis and uncertainty. In mid-2025, United Nations Member States convened in Sevilla, Spain, for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4). The Conference was held amid a challenging global context: large and growing financing gaps for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a difficult macroeconomic environment with lingering effects of the pandemic, trade tensions, aid cuts and rising geopolitical tensions that increasingly put multilateralism under strain. The growing impacts of climate change, persistent inequality, and gaps and stresses in the international financial and debt architectures added to the headwinds for the development financing agenda. These initiatives complement the outcome document, often responding directly to commitments in the text, to advance tangible progress on investment, debt, and financial architecture reform.

SUCCESS STORIES



This AI-Powered 'Digital Nervous System' Is Helping Cities Save Water & Energy

When Ahmedabad-based automation expert Anil Agrawal founded Cimcon in 1988, smart cities were still a distant concept. Today, his company's AI and IoT-driven systems help cities, villages and irrigation networks reduce water loss, improve service reliability and save over 2 billion kWh of electricity.

**READ
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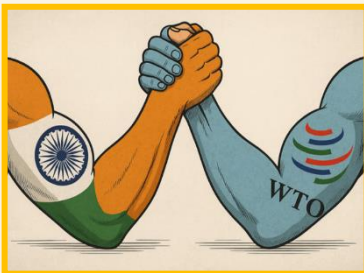
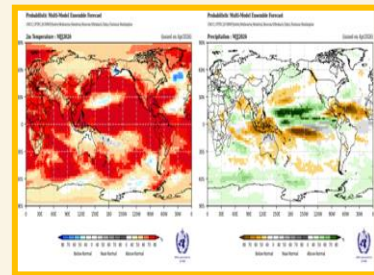
This Maharashtra Tribe Reads the Behaviour of Trees & Streams to Track Climate Change

Long before climate adaptation became a global priority, the Mahadev Kolis of Maharashtra's Western Ghats were tracking seasonal shifts, using native medicinal trees, and living by principles that kept forests and communities healthy.

**READ
MORE**

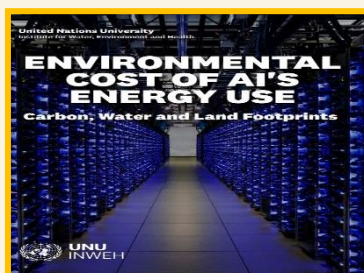
FRIDAY BLOGS

El Niño: Reweighing the Anatomy of Climate Crisis



Does India Need to Recalibrate Its Trade Stance in the New World Order?

Charting the Course to COP31 From Bonn to Antalya



AI Faceoff for the Next Generation!

Reweighing Strategic Opening for India at G7 in a Turbulent 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
India Water Foundation
Membership by scanning
QR code below



INVITATION TO JOIN SOCIAL OUTREACH MEMBERSHIP

Our Special JalMitra Social Outreach Membership

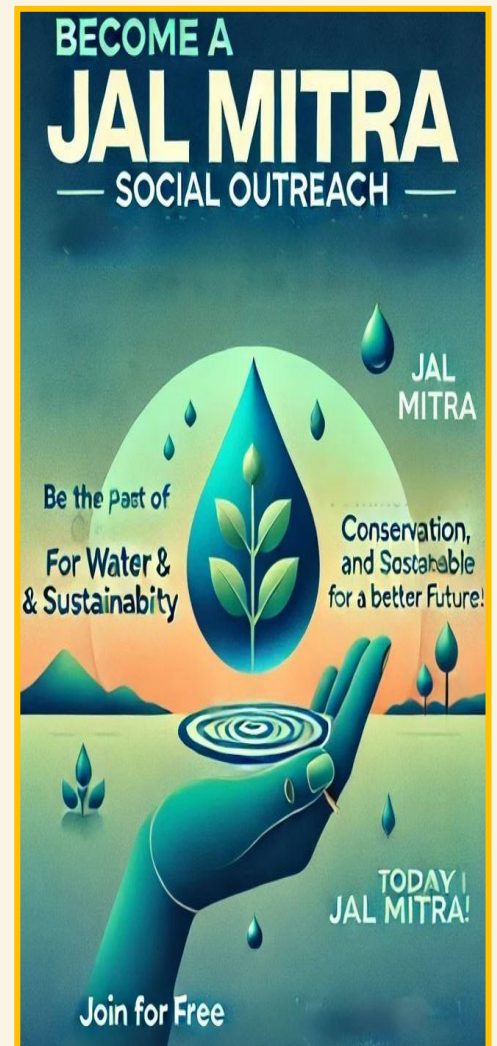
The JalMitra outreach program encourages sustainable living practices by promoting sustainable conservation and restoration projects. The campaign fosters awareness and behavioural change at the grassroots level, enabling communities to adopt environmentally responsible lifestyles that reduce ecological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

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

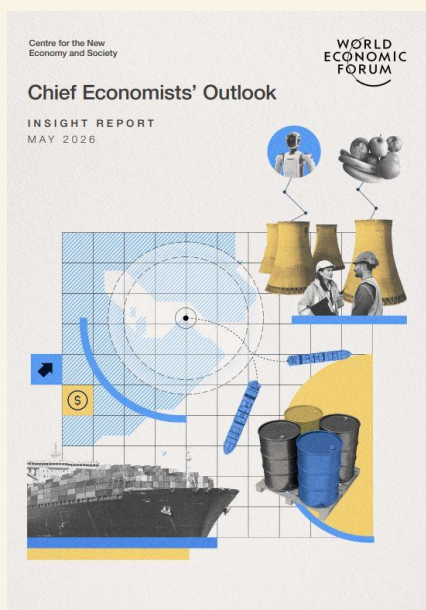
How to Join?

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

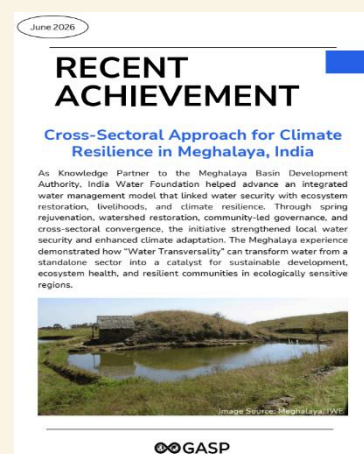
<https://indiawaterfoundation.org/jal-mitra/>



KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS



SPOTLIGHT



The India Water Foundation has been featured in the Global Alliance for a Sustainable Planet (GASP) Partner Spotlight Series, in recognition of its contributions to advancing integrated and climate-resilient water governance. The spotlight highlights IWF's work as the Knowledge Partner to the Meghalaya Basin Development Authority, where it supported the implementation of a cross-sectoral water management model linking water security with ecosystem restoration, sustainable livelihoods, and climate resilience.

The feature showcases the Meghalaya initiative as a successful demonstration of Water Transversality, illustrating how spring rejuvenation, watershed restoration, community-led governance, and ecosystem-based approaches can strengthen climate adaptation while promoting sustainable development. GASP also recognized IWF's broader commitment to localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), fostering community resilience, and promoting integrated water resource management through its "Putting People First" approach. This international recognition reaffirms the Foundation's growing role in shaping global discourse on water as a catalyst for climate resilience and sustainable development.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **7–15 July: High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF 2026).**

Convened by the United Nations under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at UN Headquarters in New York, HLPF 2026 serves as the UN's central platform for reviewing implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Forum brings together Heads of State, ministers, UN agencies, scientists, academia, civil society, youth and the private sector to review progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),

<https://hlpf.un.org/>

- **13–16 July: ECOSOC High-level Segment and Ministerial Meeting.**

The High-level Segment of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) convenes ministers and senior policymakers to review progress on sustainable development and strengthen international cooperation. Discussions focus on policy coherence, financing for sustainable development, climate action, poverty eradication, resilience, partnerships and implementation of the 2030 Agenda through integrated governance.

<https://www.un.org/en/events/>

- **27 July–1 August: 28th Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-28).**

Convened under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), SBSTTA-28 brings together scientists, policymakers and biodiversity experts to provide scientific and technical advice for CBD implementation. Discussions include ecosystem restoration, freshwater biodiversity, nature-based solutions, water-related ecosystems, climate adaptation and preparations for CBD COP17.

<https://www.cbd.int/meetings/>

- **7 July: HLPD Multi-stakeholder Partnerships to Accelerate SDG 6 via Water Transversality.** Organized by India Water Foundation. The proposed high-level policy dialogue will bring together representatives from governments, intergovernmental organisations, civil society, the private sector, academia, and community-based organisations to advance a multi-stakeholder partnership agenda for accelerating SDG 6 through the Water Transversality framework. <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83632144719?pwd=uc9Ql6ohBbBN9weXTSxYiSNEwO3D.1>

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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