

SUSTAINABLE ●
FUTURES
COLLABORATIVE

Integrated Futures

Annual Report
2025-2026

Integrated Futures

Research at the Intersection
of India's Climate, Energy,
and Environmental Challenges

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Breaking Down the Silos

Three years ago, we started the Sustainable Futures Collaborative on the understanding that India's climate, energy, and environmental challenges are not primarily failures of execution, but of thinking that is siloed, short-term, and unable to fully grasp problems that cut across sectors, levels of government, and disciplines.

This year, that understanding started to show its shape – not only through our work, but also through an external context that demonstrated why and how siloed thinking falls short. Trust in climate multilateralism continued to erode, with consensus fraying at a time when climate impacts are being most keenly felt. The escalating conflict in West Asia sent shocks through global energy markets and was a stark reminder that India's economic, geopolitical, and energy security are deeply intertwined with its own development choices.

At home, another summer of extreme heat followed by a variable monsoon made clear that adaptation is an immediate governance challenge, and the capacity to respond is varied and unevenly distributed across cities and states. And the National Clean Air Programme's first phase concluded with mixed progress, opening up the question of what a more ambitious, health-centred approach to air quality governance looks like.

The same pattern was seen in our own work. Questions that are usually seen as distinct increasingly converged. Heat and air pollution act synergistically to raise mortality risk across Indian cities. We understood that thinking of and acting on them as wholly distinct problems means missing the interaction that makes both worse. The institutional architecture we are helping Chhattisgarh build to chart its low-carbon future turned out to be equally relevant when the state's steel sector came up against the European Union's carbon border tax. We kept arriving at the same conclusion: that the boundaries between policy domains are administrative conveniences, and not always descriptions of how the problems actually behave.

Recognising where these boundaries break down is only the first step. Transcending them is dependent on crafting capable frameworks and institutions. That is why SFC invests in upstream policy work – a couple of recent examples are below.

The 16th Finance Commission's recommendation to notify heat as a national disaster follows directly from our 2023 report identifying the absence of a legal foundation for heat action as a critical gap. Our engagement with the National Disaster Management Authority has shaped guidelines that could unlock several thousand crores in disaster relief funds for heat adaptation, and our recommendations are now central to the development of over 350 next-generation Heat Action Plans.

Our role is to generate the evidence, build the case, develop the frameworks, and shift the institutional logic that enables change. Grassroots and civil society organisations better attuned to ground realities than we are can then adapt, strengthen, and co-create localised, contextual solutions.

It is a slower kind of leverage to build. It is also, we increasingly believe, the kind that lasts.

As we reflect on our third year, we find ourselves sitting with a different set of questions. How do you tell the story of work whose value lies in what it makes possible for others? How do you stay upstream without losing sight of the people downstream whose lives depend on whether any of this works? We do not yet have complete answers. But we believe that asking these questions openly is part of doing the work well.

This report is a record of what we are learning – about the problems we study, the institutions we work with, and the organisation we are trying to build. We hope you will read it in that spirit.

Finally, we remain deeply grateful to our partners, funders, friends, and well-wishers for their continued trust and support. As always, we look forward to your feedback.

Warmly,
The Fellows Group | Sustainable Futures Collaborative

The Year At a Glance



RESEARCH ACROSS THE DIVIDE

ANALYSED how heat and air pollution compound each other's toll on health — heat-related mortality rose by around 1.5 times under the highest PM2.5 exposures (*Environment International*), alongside a *Lancet Global Health* study on the health co-benefits of equitable climate mitigation across low- and middle-income countries.

BUILT the case for treating India's coastline as one interconnected system, moving planning beyond single-hazard responses toward multi-hazard adaptation governance.

REFRAMED India's net-zero and green industrial policy debates — drafted a four-part definitional framework for net-zero, and conducted a comparative study of renewable energy auctions in India and South Africa.



POLICY ENGAGEMENT

SHAPED the National Disaster Management Authority's forthcoming National Framework for Heatwave Mitigation and Management, aimed at opening up financing for long-term resilience.

SUPPORTED the Government of Himachal Pradesh in preparing its climate-focused Human Development Report 2025, embedding climate resilience across the state's development agenda.

PARTNERED with the Chhattisgarh government to integrate climate into state policies.

CONTRIBUTED to NITI Aayog's 'Scenarios Towards Viksit Bharat' and 'Net-Zero' reports, informing India's net-zero pathways and climate finance discussions.



EVENTS AND PLATFORMS

EXHIBITED 'Making the 'Invisible' Visible: Indoor Heat, Unpaid Domestic Work, and Women's Resilience' at Godrej Design Lab's Conscious Collective in Mumbai in December, using thermal imaging footage and audio narratives to bring attention to women's everyday experiences of heat.

CONVENED energy transition dialogues in Odisha and Indonesia, bringing together governments, industry, academia, and civil society to strengthen state-level energy transition planning.



OUR PEOPLE & INSTITUTION

GREW TO 30+ with new Fellows and Associate Fellows joining across Adaptation and Resilience, and Energy Transitions.

A 1:1 GENDER RATIO spanning 12 academic disciplines; 9 PhD holders and 19 Masters holders.

Team

(as of August 2026)

ADMINISTRATION Chayanika Sarmah

Manager, Administration

Tilak Angra

Senior Manager, Compliance

COMMUNICATIONS Karthika J

Associate (former)

Kartikeya Jain

Communications Lead

Sonali Verma

Communications Lead

Upamanyu Das

Senior Communications Associate



ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

Aditi Ghosh

Research Associate

Escandita Tewari

Research Associate (former)

Purvi Patel

Associate Fellow

Aditya Valiathan Pillai

Visiting Fellow

Ishan Kukreti

Programme Lead

Sony R K

Associate Fellow

Anna Agarwal

Fellow

Mukta Naik

Fellow

Tamanna Dalal

Senior Research Associate

CLIMATE POLICY

Aman Srivastava

Fellow and Coordinator

Kashmeera Patel

Senior Research Associate

Nikita Shukla

Senior Research Associate

Easwaran J Narassimhan

Visiting Fellow

Navroz K Dubash

Visiting Senior Fellow

Soutrik Goswami

Research Associate

Isha Sharma

Research Lead

Neha Miriam Kurian

Associate Fellow

ENERGY TRANSITIONS

Apoorva U Kumar

Research Associate

Rashi Agarwal

Senior Research Associate

Sahib Singh

Senior Research Associate

Ashwini K Swain

Fellow (Former)

Sarada Prasanna Das

Fellow

Shubhanshu Suman

Research Associate

ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE AND POLICY

Annanya Mahajan

Research Lead

Himanshu Pabreja

Research Lead

Nidhi Shukla

Research Lead (former)

Arunesh Karkun

Research Lead

Ishita Srivastava

Research Associate

Poonam Mangaraj

Research Lead (former)

Bhargav Krishna

Convenor, SFC, and Coordinator

Nazneen

Senior Research Associate (former)

Shibani Ghosh

Visiting Fellow

SUPPORT STAFF

Ram Kumar
Office Assistant

Ram Pukar Sharma
Office Caretaker

BOARD MEMBERS

Aman Srivastava

Gopal Sankaranarayanan

Senior Advocate | Supreme Court of India

Ashwini K Swain

Director, India Programme |
Regulatory Assistance Project

Moutushi Sengupta

Co-Founder | Oneworld Colab Pte. Ltd.

Bhargav Krishna

**ADVISORY
COUNCIL**

Aparna Uppaluri

Founder and Principal Advisor |
Antara Advisory

Mukund Rajan

Chairperson | ECube
Investment Advisors

Sharachchandra Lele

Distinguished Fellow | ATREE

Arati Kumar-Rao

Writer, photographer and
National Geographic Explorer

Navroz K Dubash

Chair

Shloka Nath

Independent Climate
Professional

Harald Winkler

Professor | University
of Cape Town

Nyrika Holkar

Executive Director |
Godrej and Boyce

Soumya Swaminathan

Chairperson | MS Swaminathan
Research Foundation

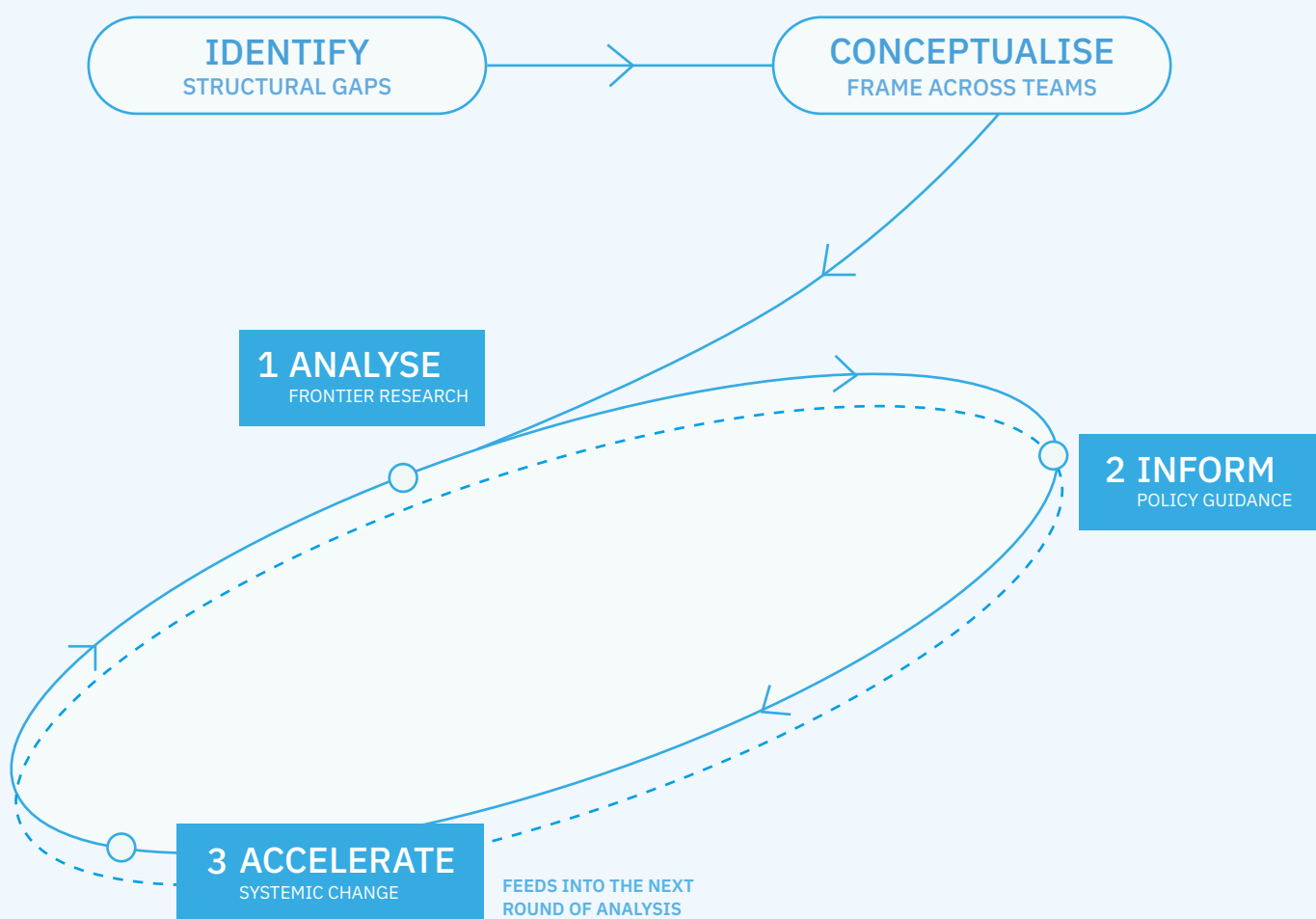
Shantanu Dixit

Member | Prayas
(Energy Group)



How We Think

Most organisations working on climate and sustainability rightly focus on the downstream: tools, dashboards, deployed solutions, last-mile outcomes. SFC works on what comes before that — the conceptual frameworks, institutional architectures, and governance approaches that determine whether implementation succeeds at all.



Our approach to identifying what we work on is bottom up and surfaced through open-ended conversations around the questions that are likely to shape policy conversations in the next 5-10 years. Ideas are shared and debated openly, and in that process, we question whether there is scope to shape our collective understanding of the problem, and in turn, guide the strategic choices that follow.

This is a deliberate choice. We spend less time answering questions around which institutional positions have already hardened, and more time identifying questions that have yet to be fully articulated.

Conceptualisation is where that initial instinct becomes a research strategy. At SFC, a question rarely sits neatly within a single domain. Heat resilience intersects with the resilience of our electricity grid. Trade policy shapes

the possibilities for industrial decarbonisation. Air quality is inseparable from questions of public health. Developing a body of work, therefore, often means bringing different teams and perspectives together, testing the frame against evidence and pushback, and refining it before any data are analysed.

Once a frame holds, the work moves through a continuous operational loop — Analyse, Inform, Accelerate — rather than a linear research cycle. Each strand of our work moves across all three, translating rigorous analysis into engagement and action, while insights from engagement and field observation feed into the next set of questions we ask. It is this movement between research, policy, and practice that allows our work to evolve with the problems we are trying to address, always with an eye on the upstream levers that can drive lasting change.

Here's how that played out for our work in extreme heat.
What began as a stocktake of Heat Action Plans (HAP) in 2023 surfaced gaps that are now reshaping national policy.

2023-24

ANALYSE

OUR HAP REVIEW SURFACES MAJOR GAPS:

Under financed, ill-suited to local context, poor understanding of vulnerability, lacking legal foundations.

OUR FIRST MULTI-CITY HEAT-MORTALITY STUDY

Will aid in setting specific temperature thresholds used to trigger heat alerts

2024-25

INFORM

APPOINTED TO THE NDMA TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

Our work fed directly into national frameworks and guidelines.

ANALYSIS OF HAP IMPLEMENTATION

Identified key barriers and drivers to heat action.

2025-26

ACCELERATE

HEAT DECLARED A NATIONAL DISASTER

~350 HAPs redesigned with our principles integral; significant disaster financing unlocked.

Adaptation & Resilience

Building systems that allow India to adapt to multiple and increasingly severe climate impacts

India's development hinges on managing a range of intensifying climate impacts: extreme heat, an eroding coastline, and urban flooding, among others. These fall hardest on those with the least capacity to absorb them. Our work aims to identify gaps in policy instruments, financing, and governance systems that together build the upstream institutional conditions necessary to foster resilience. Over the last year, our work on extreme heat spanned foundational research, national policy engagement, and efforts to unlock much-needed financing.

Building the case to accelerate strategic heat action

Extreme heat is one of India's most pressing public health and development challenges. Our research has shown that extreme heat causes around 1,500 deaths every year across 10 Indian cities.

India's response to heat has largely focused on managing emergencies rather than reducing long-term risks. Heat Action Plans (HAPs) – the principal policy instrument adopted by several states, districts, and cities – have proliferated in number, but our assessment in 2023 found that many of the HAPs lacked the institutional, financial, and legal foundations needed to build meaningful resilience. Plans are often poorly tailored to local risk, inadequately funded, and weak on vulnerability assessments. Our recent work studying heat action in nine Indian cities found that the weakly institutionalised nature of heat policy in India leads to an array of short-term actions, and has a weak focus on building long-term resilience.

Over the past year, our research and policy engagement have helped move India's heat governance beyond response-driven measures toward more institutionally grounded, long-term resilience.

Together, these initiatives helped shift the conversation on heat from managing seasonal emergencies to building the institutional foundations for long-term resilience. A new body of work on coastal governance identified critical gaps in how India manages multiple, interacting coastal risks. And a public exhibition on indoor heat surfaced the gendered dimensions of heat exposure that policy analysis alone could not reach.

● SHIMLA

● DELHI

● AHMEDABAD

● VARANASI

● KOLKATA

● MUMBAI

● PUNE

● CHENNAI

● HYDERABAD

● BENGALURU

1,100 DEATHS
deaths caused by
heat every year in **10 CITIES**

Our research also informed the National Disaster Management Authority's (NDMA) advisory for the next generation of approximately 350 Heat Action Plans.

Several states have already notified heat as a disaster, and recently the Centre added heatwaves to India's list of nationally notified natural disasters — following a recommendation by the 16th Finance Commission. States can now draw on the State and National Disaster Response Funds for heat relief and mitigation. This addresses one of the key institutional gaps identified in our work: the absence of a legal and financial framework for sustained heat action.

Aditya Valiathan Pillai was appointed to the NDMA's Technical Advisory Group on heat policy, where our team at SFC led the drafting of the forthcoming National Framework for Heatwave Mitigation and Management. The framework aims to provide guidance to states, cities, and districts on developing and implementing HAPs, strengthening the scientific basis for defining heatwave thresholds, and establishing

pathways for financing long-term heat resilience. Our findings have also influenced the wider ecosystem of organisations supporting HAPs, with vulnerability and risk profiling increasingly becoming a central component of local planning.

We have supported implementation by training state and city nodal heat officers through NDMA-led capacity-building programmes, particularly on financing heat actions – a gap our HAP assessments had identified. Tamanna Dalal talked about this at the National Institute of Disaster Management's National Level Capacity-Building Workshop. "Centrally sponsored schemes offer a powerful opportunity to boost heat resilience, with 18 of them having direct linkages to heat actions. Simple tweaks to these schemes and interventions to better target the most vulnerable could unlock major gains for India's heat resilience," she said. Bhargav Krishna also spoke at the same workshop on heat-health metrics including those used to measure heat stress and health outcomes, and their appropriate applications in assessing the impact of heat waves on populations.

“One thing that's been really heartening to see at the NDMA is the focus on mitigation over the last two years. We're close to introducing a national framework that lays out the actions states can take and, potentially, dedicated funding for long-term heat resilience that goes beyond short-term disaster response.”



ADITYA VALIATHAN PILLAI

International Workshop on Heatwaves, NDMA, FEBRUARY 2026

Rethinking coastal adaptation

India's coastline of

11,000 KM

supports rich ecosystems, major economic activity, and the lives and livelihoods of more than

250 million

people living within 50km of shorelines.

Coastal climate risks rarely strike in isolation — cyclones, storm surges, flooding, erosion, sea-level rise, and saltwater intrusion compound one another, amplifying damage in ways conventional planning struggles to anticipate.

In March this year, Sony R K and Escandita Tewari published **'Strengthening Coastal Resilience in India: A Multi-Hazard Approach to Adaptation Governance'**, our first issue brief on coastal resilience. The brief argues that India's current approach is planning for one hazard at a time and that creates blind spots, potentially leading to maladaptation, preparing communities to overcome the impacts of the last disaster rather than to be resilient to the next one.

Instead, they make the case for treating the coast as a dynamic socio-ecological system shaped by multiple, interacting risks. This requires governance that is coordinated across sectors and institutions, rather than fragmented across ministries and programmes. While existing initiatives such as the Integrated Coastal Zone Management programme and the National Coastal Mission provide an important foundation, they need stronger institutional coordination and implementation to support adaptation at the scale and complexity that climate change demands.

Like our work on extreme heat, this research seeks to identify a governance gap which can ultimately foster policy shifts. By building the evidence for a multi-hazard approach to adaptation, we hope to shape how coastal resilience is understood and governed in the years ahead.



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Image: Prasoon Kiran

Making the 'Invisible' Visible

Alongside building stronger policy frameworks, we also need new ways of understanding and communicating climate risks. This year, we invested in storytelling as a way of connecting research with lived experience, surfacing dimensions of extreme heat that conventional policy analysis often struggles to capture.

Sonali Verma, in collaboration with independent artist Pritish Bali, conceptualised and developed **Making the 'Invisible' Visible: Indoor Heat, Unpaid Domestic Work, and Women's Resilience**, an audio-visual exhibit documenting how women experience extreme heat inside their homes while carrying out unpaid domestic and care work. Drawing on field research across Delhi, Mumbai, and Hyderabad, the exhibit combines thermal imaging with women's own voices to reveal indoor heat as an everyday, domestic, and deeply gendered climate risk. It shows how housing conditions, ventilation, and unpaid care work shape heat exposure in ways that remain largely absent from HAPs and adaptation policy. By bringing women's everyday experiences into

public and policy conversations, the aim is to broaden how heat vulnerability is understood and, ultimately, what adaptation efforts respond to.

The exhibit premiered at Godrej Design Lab's Conscious Collective 2025 before travelling to Mumbai Climate Week and later to the India Heat Summit and the National Gallery of Modern Art, Bengaluru. Reaching more than 8,000 visitors in person and over two million people through social media, it helped bring indoor heat into conversations among policymakers, urban practitioners, designers, researchers, and the wider public.

The project builds on Sonali Verma's guide to communicating extreme heat, published in India Development Review, and reflects our broader commitment to using storytelling alongside research to make complex climate risks more visible.

“गर्मी की वजह से रात को नींद नहीं आती, और अगले दिन चिड़चिड़ापन रहता है। गुस्सा आता है, और कभी-कभी वो बच्चों पर निकल जाता है।”

Because of the heat, I can't sleep at night, and the next day I feel irritable throughout. I get angry, and sometimes that frustration comes out on my children.

MONIKA, NORTH-WEST DELHI

“घर में पटरी की छत की वजह से इतनी गर्मी होती है, नाक से खून आने लगता है।”

Because of the tin roof, it gets so hot inside the house that my nose sometimes starts bleeding.

NASREEN SHAIKH, MUMBAI

“जब ज्यादा गर्मी हो जाती है तो मैं फ्रिज खोल कर बैठ जाती हूँ ठंडक के लिए। पति गुस्सा करते हैं कि ठंडक खत्म हो जाएगी, पर बड़ा फ्रिज होता तो उसके अंदर ही बैठ जाती।”

When it gets too hot, I sit in front of the open fridge to cool down. My husband scolds me that the cooling will run out, but if the fridge were bigger, I'd sit inside it.

SAVITA, NEW DELHI



The exhibit displayed at Godrej Design Lab's Conscious Collective 2025.

Climate Policy

Embedding a development-centric climate-ready approach to policymaking

The central challenge of climate action lies not just in setting ambitious goals, but in building the institutions, governance systems, and policy instruments needed to deliver on them. For countries like India, this transition must advance multiple objectives simultaneously – supporting socio-economic development, strengthening energy security, creating jobs, and addressing equity and resource considerations. Climate policy, therefore, must be an integral part of development planning.

The Climate Policy team at SFC explores how India can enable this by rethinking approaches to industrial and innovation policy, and by advancing climate action at the sub-national level. From developing a state's climate-sensitive development strategy to analysing carbon markets, innovation policy, and net-zero frameworks, our research focuses on enabling a climate transition that is equitable, development-centred, and grounded in India's priorities.

Climate-sensitive development in practice

One of our largest collaborative endeavours this year was supporting the Government of Himachal Pradesh – working with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India – in preparing the **Himachal Pradesh Human Development Report 2025: Building the Future in a Climate-Impacted World.**

Himachal Pradesh is one of India's most climate-vulnerable states. Rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, glacier retreat, and more frequent extreme weather events increasingly threaten the natural systems that underpin the state's economy and the development gains it has achieved in health, education, and livelihoods. At the same time, rapid growth in tourism and construction is threatening the fragile ecology of the state.

The report argues that responding to these challenges requires climate action to be embedded across the state's entire development agenda – not treated as a stand-alone environmental concern. It examines five interconnected themes relevant to the state's key economic sectors – agriculture, water and forestry; construction and tourism; health – and the key enablers of climate action – climate finance; and governance – to highlight how climate risks cut across them all, their impacts, and potential responses. It argues for stronger convergence between government departments, greater coordination across planning and budgeting processes, and closer collaboration



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Image: Shutterstock

“Himachal Pradesh faces acute challenges and vulnerability arising from natural disasters and climate change. This makes it imperative to make our policies and planning frameworks to be shaped differently with a deep respect for our fragile ecosystem and dispersed communities. This first-of-its-kind State Human Development Report that explicitly examines the impacts of climate change on human development, is both timely and essential.”

SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU
Chief Minister Of Himachal Pradesh

between state institutions, local governments, researchers, and communities to enhance mitigation and resilience efforts towards supporting greater human development. The project itself reflected this philosophy. Researchers from across SFC contributed expertise spanning adaptation, climate policy, environmental governance, and energy transitions, while fieldwork across the state brought together evidence from government officials, farmers, women's groups, tribal communities, tourism workers, and local institutions.

Building institutions at the state level

Working in partnership with local actors such as the Hidayatullah National Law University (HNLU), we deepened our partnership with the Government of Chhattisgarh to co-develop a blueprint for the proposed Low Carbon Climate-Resilient Development Commission (LCDC) and a broader institutional framework for climate governance, potentially anchored in new climate legislation.

The engagement focused on creating durable mechanisms to coordinate climate action across sectors, develop long-term decarbonisation and resilience pathways, and provide greater predictability

for industry. We also worked with the state's Department of Industries to spread awareness among local stakeholders – and understand from them in turn – how the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) could affect Chhattisgarh's steel sector, with an aim to ensure that climate policy and industrial competitiveness are considered together.



Glimpses of fieldwork with farmers in Himachal Pradesh discussing the salience of irrigation systems in the face of a changing climate.

Image: Sony R K, SFC

We also contributed to the NITI Aayog's first government-led evaluation of
INDIA'S NET-ZERO PATHWAYS.

As part of the net-zero working group, our input on the financial and macroeconomic considerations of a low-carbon transition informed

Volumes 2 and 9

of the scenarios towards Viksit Bharat and net-zero reports, released in February 2026.

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Designing the instruments for a development-centered transition

This year, much of our work examined whether the tools emerging to guide India's climate transition are capable of supporting outcomes that are not only effective, but also equitable and grounded in the country's development priorities.

Before designing these instruments, however, there must be clarity on the goal itself. Our issue brief, **'What Does Net-Zero Mean? Defining Goals Aligned with National Contexts'**, argued that as India progresses towards its 2070 net-zero target, developing a shared understanding of what 'net-zero' means is essential for coherent policymaking across governments, regulators, industries, and civil society. Rather than prescribing a pathway, authors Nikita Shukla, Aman Srivastava, and Easwaran J Narassimhan, unpack net-zero into four constituent elements – targets, scope, sinks and offsets, and governance – and provide a framework to strengthen clarity, comparability, and accountability. They argue that India's approach to net-zero must reflect its own development priorities, institutional capacities, and economic realities, rather than relying on definitions developed in other national contexts.

Building on this, Kashmeera Patel, Easwaran J Narassimhan, Aman Srivastava, and Ashwini K Swain looked at India's Carbon Credit Trading Scheme – which lays the foundation to establish an Indian carbon market as a significant means to realise India's climate commitments – through the lens of institutional, regulatory, and market-related elements, in collaboration with the Prayas (Energy Group). Together, they identified opportunities to strengthen institutional clarity, transparency, market-readiness, and inclusive participation to shape a carbon market that is both functional and fair.

We also examined how national context shapes the design of climate policy instruments. In a study titled **'What Shapes Green Industrial Policy Objectives and Design?'**, published in the *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis*, Easwaran J Narassimhan analysed renewable energy auctions in India and South Africa to understand why identical policy instruments can produce different outcomes. The study found that while India's auctions were designed primarily to reduce electricity prices, South Africa's incorporated broader developmental objectives such as localisation and employment generation. The research demonstrates that policy instruments cannot be transplanted across countries unchanged; their design must reflect national priorities, political economies, and institutional contexts.

Diving deeper into the national context and priorities, we studied how public investment can better support India's clean energy transition through the development of a robust domestic manufacturing ecosystem. Through our 'Clean Energy RD&D Insights' blog series on solar photovoltaics, green hydrogen, and energy storage, we found that while India has made significant progress in deploying clean technologies, public investment in research and development remains fragmented and limited, leaving India dependent on imported technology and exposed to supply-chain and sovereignty risk. Read together, these pieces argue that technological self-reliance is itself an equity and justice question – a country that cannot shape the technologies underpinning its own transition has less control over the terms of that transition.

Situating India's climate transition in a changing global landscape

In addition to integrating climate considerations into local development planning and working on the means to deliver upon them, we also examined how India can engage with the international climate regime while ensuring that global climate ambition remains aligned with national development priorities.

In '30 Years of Climate Talks: How Have the COPs Fared and What Next?', Isha Sharma, Aman Srivastava, and Nikita Shukla reflected on three decades of multilateral climate negotiations, tracing the evolution of the COP process from the Kyoto Protocol to the Paris Agreement and beyond. The piece argues that while international cooperation has been indispensable in building a global climate architecture, persistent gaps in finance, equity, and implementation mean that future progress will depend on strengthening the links between global commitments and national development strategies.

In 'Who Owns Tomorrow's Emissions?', Aman Srivastava and Nikita Shukla argued that debates on climate responsibility must move beyond historical emissions alone to consider countries' differing development trajectories, capacities, and future pathways, reinforcing the need for climate action that is both equitable and development-oriented.

These ideas also informed wider public discussions around international climate negotiations.

Ahead of COP30, Navroz K Dubash contributed to discussions in Carbon Brief on reforming the UN climate negotiations and spoke to *The Quint* on the geopolitical challenges facing the summit. Aman Srivastava discussed India's role in shaping the Global South's climate agenda in an article in DW.

Energy Transitions

Rethinking the configuration of technology, politics, and institutions to build a 21st century energy system

The current challenge of India's energy transition is no longer only deploying clean energy technologies, but ensuring that the institutions, industries, and governments responsible for implementing them are prepared for the scale and complexity of the transition ahead. Achieving this requires more than ambitious targets. It calls for innovation systems that can develop

new technologies, sectors that are ready to adopt them, and governance that can coordinate the transition across multiple actors. This is the readiness question our work took up over the last year — from green hydrogen and nuclear energy to urban transitions and sectoral preparedness — in exploring what it will take for India's energy transition to be both competitive and resilient.

Preparing states, cities, and sectors for the energy transition

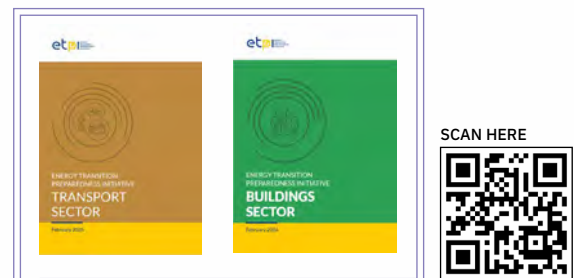
States are critical actors in India's energy transition — many of the decisions that shape energy demand, transport, buildings, and industrial development are taken at the state level. Our work has focused on understanding how prepared states are for this transition and supporting evidence-based policymaking through research and partnerships.

Through the **Energy Transitions Preparedness Initiative (ETPI)**, a multi-sectoral, multi-state endeavour to understand state-level plans, actions, and governance processes towards an energy transition, we conducted assessments of India's transport and buildings sectors across 10 states.

The transport report found that policy momentum around electric mobility and sustainable transport is growing, but that institutional fragmentation, financing, and implementation capacity remain major constraints. **The buildings report** showed that while states have begun embedding energy efficiency into planning and regulation, accelerating the transition will require stronger coordination between national and state governments and across the broader construction and buildings ecosystem.

ETPI is a collaborative initiative of SFC, WRI India, and Prayas (Energy Group).

We conducted a workshop in Indonesia with WRI Indonesia in July, where we presented the ETPI indicator framework for assessing state-level energy transition readiness, shared findings from the first and second rounds of assessments, and discussed key lessons from India's energy transition experience.



The next ETPI assessment cycle will expand its coverage from 10 to 12 states, with Assam and Telangana joining the assessment.

It will also broaden its sectoral scope by including the industry sector alongside the existing electricity, buildings, transport, and cross-cutting sectors.

A journal article by Sarada Prasanna Das, 'Cities at the Forefront: Shaping Low-carbon Futures in India', published in *VNU Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, examined the political economy of energy transitions in Indian cities, arguing that while cities are increasingly adopting climate action plans, rooftop solar, electric mobility, and energy-efficient buildings, the pace of transition is ultimately shaped by governance.

We also deepened our engagement with Odisha. We collaborated with Xavier University, Bhubaneswar, to convene a series of dialogues on the state's energy transition. Bringing together government, industry, academia, and civil society, these discussions explored opportunities ranging from rooftop solar to the energy future of Odisha. Building on this engagement, we have established a quarterly energy transition roundtable for Odisha and eastern India, creating an ongoing platform to strengthen collaboration and evidence-informed policymaking on the region's transition.

SFC is a consortium partner in the Centre for Climate Change Impact and Adaptation, a collaboration between the Bhubaneswar City Knowledge Innovation Cluster (BCKIC), Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), and Imperial College London. As co-lead of the Centre's sustainable energy work, we contribute to collaborative research and policy engagement on energy transition and climate adaptation in Odisha.



Beyond Odisha, Sarada Prasanna Das presented a paper on **‘Innovative Governance of Off-grid Renewable Energy in Chhattisgarh’** in the Science, Technology, and Society network conference held at OP Jindal Global University, Sonapat in December. The paper examined Chhattisgarh’s unique model of renewable energy governance, where technologies and institutions have evolved together to create a new form of state-level renewable energy bureaucracy.

Rashi Agarwal attended the JETNET Annual Conference 2025 in Goa, organised by the Just Transition Research Centre at IIT Kanpur, where she presented a case study titled, **‘Institutional Governance in Advancing Just Energy Transition: Case of Jharkhand’s Task Force – Sustainable Just Transition’**. Developed jointly with Sarada Prasanna Das and Ashwini K Swain from SFC, with inputs from Anjali Patel, this case study assessed the Task Force to reiterate the importance of subnational institutions and governance for a just energy transition in India. Drawing insights from the Task Force for other coal-dependent states undergoing an energy transition, it recommends integrating transition strategies with state climate plans, strengthening institutional capacities, and building implementable frameworks for subnational preparedness for energy transition.



Rashi Agarwal at the JETNET Annual Conference 2025

The image shows the front cover of a report. At the top left is the 'etn' logo. Below it is a blue header with the text 'GOVERNING INDIA'S JUST ENERGY TRANSITION: THE CASE OF JHARKHAND'S TASK FORCE ON SUSTAINABLE JUST TRANSITION'. The cover features a landscape photograph of a sunset or sunrise over a body of water.

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A square QR code with a black and white pixelated pattern, used for digital access to the report.

Our work also informed national policy processes through submissions on the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2025 and the draft National Electricity Policy 2026. We highlighted the need for a more resilient, flexible, and future-ready power system, with recommendations on strengthening electricity regulation, improving the financial viability of distribution companies, integrating demand-side flexibility and distributed energy resources, and aligning electricity planning with Indias long-term decarbonisation goals.

Exploring India's innovation ecosystem for clean energy technologies

As India pursues new clean energy technologies, a key question is whether its innovation ecosystem is keeping pace with deployment ambitions. Our team's writings explored this challenge from two perspectives.

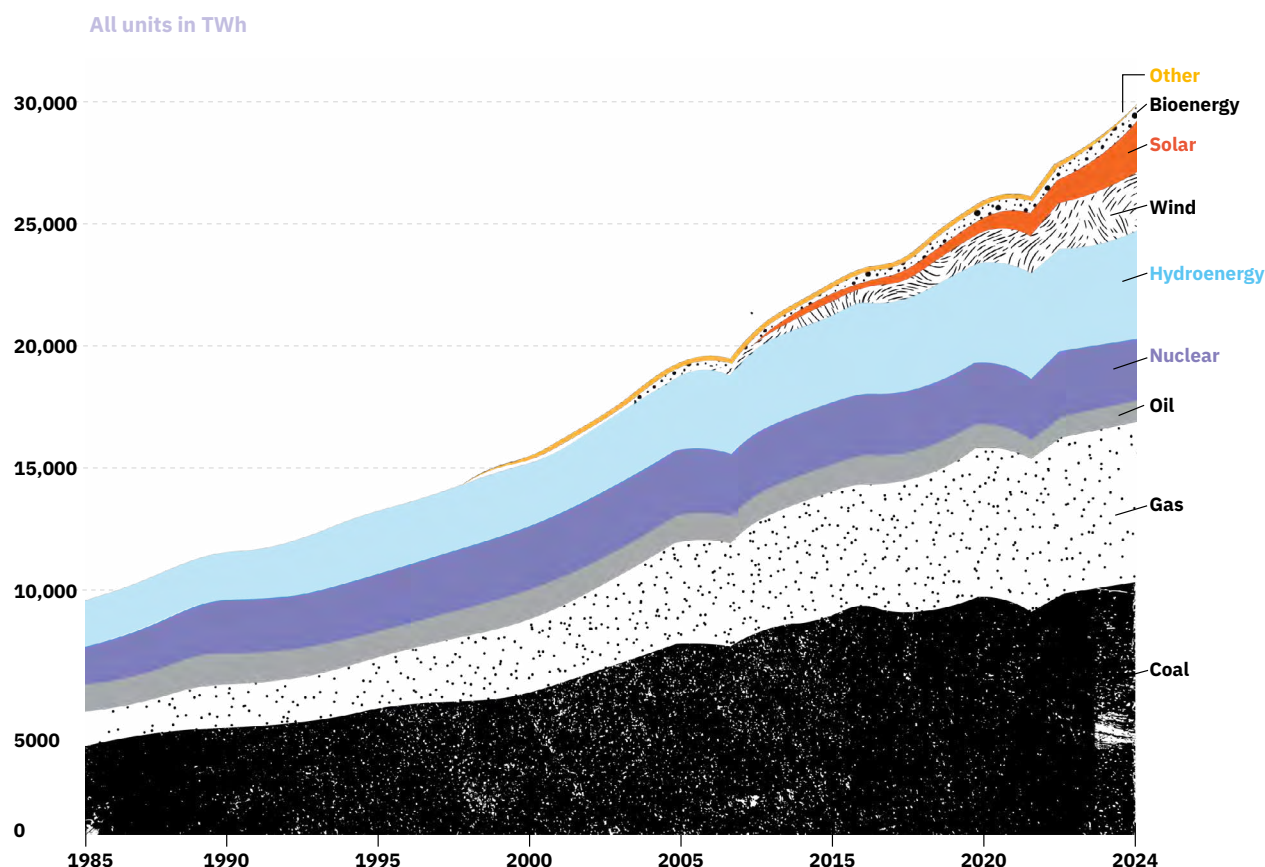
In 'Beyond the Hype: Opportunities and Limits of India's Green Hydrogen Pursuit', Shubranshu Suman and Ashwini K Swain assessed the opportunities and limitations of India's National Green Hydrogen Mission. They argued that while green hydrogen could play a critical role in decarbonising hard-to-abate sectors and strengthening energy security, achieving these ambitions will depend on addressing persistent challenges around demand creation, costs, infrastructure, supply chains, and domestic innovation. It also called for a more equitable and innovation-led approach to ensure that India's green hydrogen strategy delivers long-term industrial and developmental benefits.

We also explored India's renewed interest in nuclear energy. In 'What Do India's Nuclear Power Ambitions Mean for Its Energy Future?', Apoorva U Kumar and Ashwini K Swain argued that while nuclear power could strengthen energy security and provide reliable low-carbon electricity, its contribution will ultimately depend on the institutional, financial, and regulatory conditions needed to deliver new capacity. The blog highlights that decisions on nuclear expansion must balance technological potential with questions of cost, implementation, and long-term system planning.



Glimpses of the Unit III dome and the project site of Tarapur Atomic Power Project (TAPP) near Mumbai.

Image: Wikimedia Commons.



Nuclear energy is the second largest source of clean energy after hydropower.

Environmental Governance and Policy

Limiting the threat of environmental pollution through health-focused, systemic transformations

Air pollution is no longer simply an environmental challenge. It is one of India's largest public health risks, and exposure to it is shaped by decisions taken across sectors like, transport, energy, industry, urban planning, and agriculture policy. Lasting improvements in air quality will therefore require more than stricter pollution control. They depend on stronger institutions, better integration of science into policies, and governance systems that are capable of acting across sectors.

Analysing the intersection of climate change, air pollution, and health

Our work has sought to strengthen the evidence on how heat and air pollution interact, while making the case for more integrated approaches to climate, air quality, and public health governance.

Bhargav Krishna co-authored a study, **published in *Environment International***, showing that heat and air pollution together significantly increase daily mortality in India. The study found that under the highest PM_{2.5} exposures, heat-related mortality increased by around 1.5 times, highlighting the need for policies that address the shared antecedents of both environmental risks.

We translated this emerging evidence for a wider audience through an SFC blog, authored by Poonam Mangaraj, which argues for integrating Heat Action Plans and air quality planning, strengthening coordination across urban, health, pollution, and disaster management agencies, and investing in interventions such as blue-green infrastructure that can simultaneously reduce heat exposure, improve air quality, and protect public health.

Another study published in ***The Lancet Global Health***, co-authored by Navroz Dubash and Bhargav Krishna, examined the health co-benefits of climate action across low- and middle-income countries. The study found that equitable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions alone do not sufficiently improve air quality and health co-benefits. The authors make the case that the most favourable scenario to maximise well-being is where higher income countries pay greater climate mitigation costs, and low and middle income countries such as India prioritise conventional air quality controls alongside commitments on the energy transition that have already been made.

Over the last year, we have been working at this intersection of science, public health, and policy. Our research aims to strengthen the institutional and scientific foundations of environmental governance, while building evidence on how climate and environmental risks affect health. Specifically, we focused on two priorities: strengthening the National Clean Air Programme as it enters its next phase, and building a case for why air pollution and climate impacts such as extreme heat must be viewed as co-existent and not siloed issues.

Under the highest

PM_{2.5} exposures,
heat related mortality increased by around
1.5 times.



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Extreme heat and air pollution are often treated as separate environmental challenges, with different institutions, policies, and responses.

Yet they frequently occur together,

share similar underlying drivers,

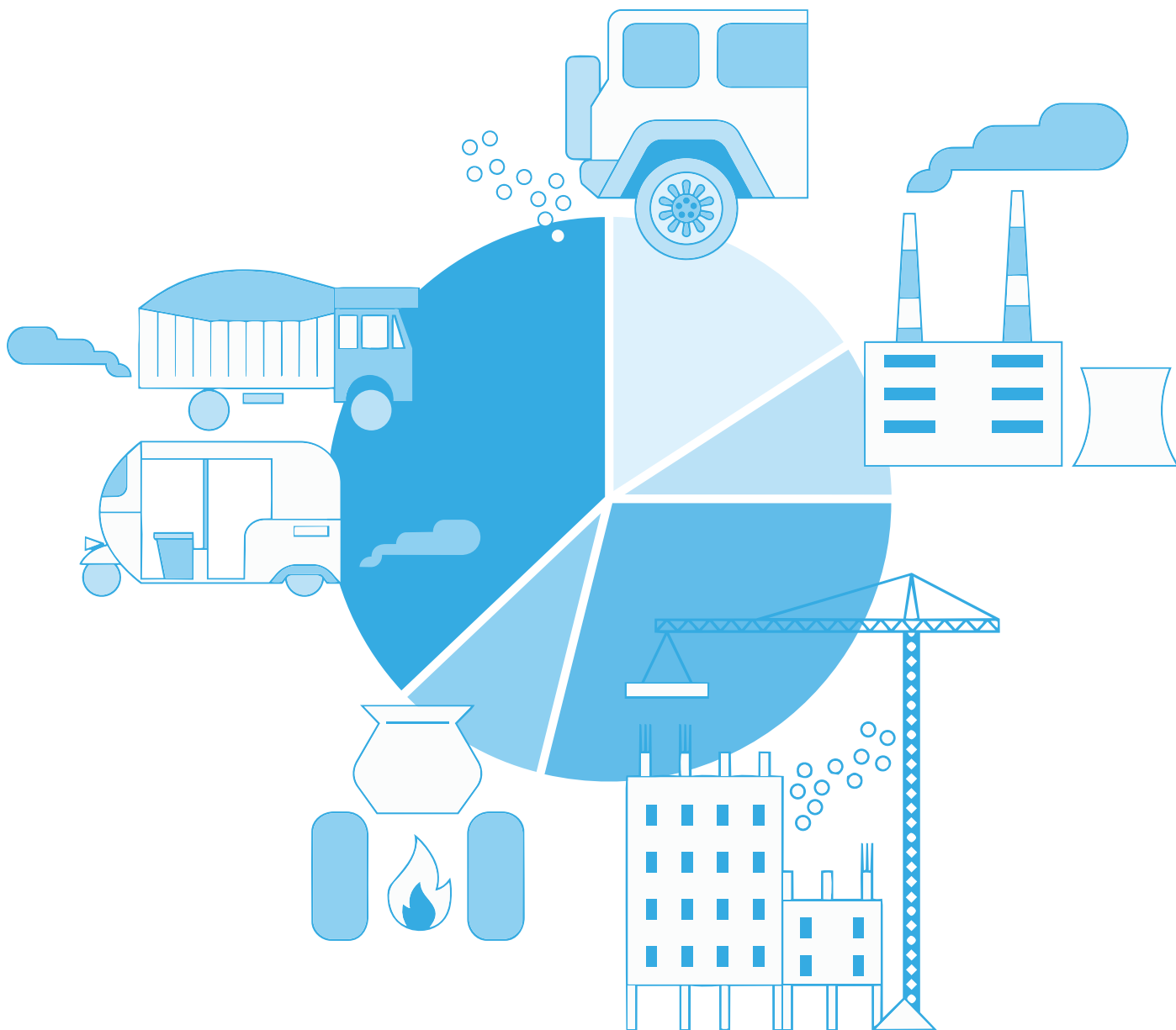
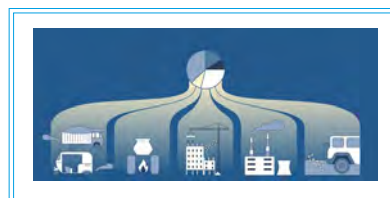
and can amplify each other's impacts on health.

Informing the next generation of clean air policy and action

The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), launched in 2019, has been India's flagship programme for improving urban air quality. NCAP concluded its first phase in March 2026. As the programme looks to renew, there is an opportunity to strengthen the scientific and institutional foundations on which it rests, and focus it on the true purpose of its existence: improving health outcomes.

As a first step, we examined the scientific basis of city clean air programmes in our brief **Strengthening the Scientific Foundations of NCAP: Building a Standardised Framework for Source Apportionment and Emission Inventories**, co-authored by Nazneen, Vanshika Madaan, Poonam Mangaraj, and Bhargav Krishna. They found significant inconsistencies in the way Indian cities have prepared emissions inventories and thereby identified pollution sources, making it difficult to compare evidence, prioritise interventions, or evaluate progress of NCAP across cities.

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They suggest that NCAP 2.0 be built on a standardised national framework for source apportionment studies, which identify the relative contribution of different pollution sources to air pollution, and on emissions inventories, which estimate the quantity of pollutants from activities such as transport, industry, waste burning, and household fuel use. Together, they provide the scientific foundation needed to identify the most important sources of pollution, target interventions effectively, and evaluate whether they are working. They also recommend that these studies be updated every three to five years, reflecting changes in spatial and temporal pollution dynamics.

This work was complemented by **Different Paths to Clean Air: Global Insights for India's Reform Agenda**, which examined how seven countries have built institutions and evolved their strategies to manage air pollution. Authors of this brief, Ishita Srivastava, Arunesh Karkun, and Bhargav Krishna, ask what kinds of scientific, regulatory, and governance systems enable sustained improvements in air quality, finding that across all studied countries, science plays a fundamental role in establishing strict, health-based air quality standards, that countries have historically had a strong focus on PM2.5 reduction, and innovations in governance have enabled airshed-level air quality management. They argue that India's next phase of clean air policy should be built around stronger institutions and public health outcomes, rather than tracking numbers and using activity-based measures alone.

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“The question of a missing health frame continues to remain an issue where our understanding of health science is really lacking in our environmental policy... our regulators are dealing with a 21st century problem with a 20th century institutional design.”

BHARGAV KRISHNA

Discussion on 'From smog to sickness: Understanding air pollution in a changing climate'
HARVARD T.H. CHAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH – INDIA RESEARCH CENTRE, JANUARY 2026.

Publications

Journal Articles

1.	Global Climate Justice and the Future of Air Quality Co-Benefits in Low-Income and Middle-Income Countries: An Energy, Climate, and Health Modelling Study	THE LANCET GLOBAL HEALTH, 14, NO 4, 512-523, MARCH 2026
	Bhargav Krishna and Navroz K Dubash were members of the author group	
2.	Cities at the Forefront: Shaping Low-carbon Futures in India	VNU JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, 1, NO 1, 45-54, OCTOBER 2025
	Das, Sarada Prasanna	
3.	Editorial: Researching Climate Policy in Uncertain Times	CLIMATE POLICY JOURNAL, AUGUST 2025
	Dubash, Navroz K, W Pieter Pauw, and Yacob Mulugetta	
4.	What Shapes Green Industrial Policy Objectives and Design? A Comparative Policy Analysis of Renewable Energy Auctions in India and South Africa	JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE POLICY ANALYSIS: RESEARCH AND PRACTICE, 27, NO 3, 285-315, MAY 2025
	Narassimhan, Easwaran J	
5.	Synergistic associations of ambient air pollution and heat on daily mortality in India	ENVIRONMENT INTERNATIONAL, 199 MARCH, 2025: 109426
	Bhargav Krishna was a member of the author group	

Book Chapters

1.	Air Pollution: Public Health Impacts and Policy Measures	HEALTHCARE FOR ALL: COMMUNITY ACTION AND PUBLIC SYSTEMS FOR AN INCLUSIVE INDIA. EDITED BY K SRINATH REDDY, GIRIJA VAIDYANATHAN, AND AMARJEET SINHA (CHAPTER 19). ROUTLEDGE, OCTOBER 2025
	Krishna, Bhargav, and Nazneen	

Reports and Issue Briefs

1. **Strengthening Coastal Resilience in India:
A Multi-Hazard Approach to Adaptation Governance** (SFC),
MARCH 2026
R K, Sony, and Escandita Tewari

2. **Energy Transitions Preparedness Initiative:
Transport Sector FY 23-24** ENERGY TRANSITIONS
PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE,
FEBRUARY 2026
Das, Sarada Prasanna, Arunesh Karkun, and Ashwini K Swain
were members of the author group

3. **Energy Transitions Preparedness Initiative:
Buildings Sector FY 23-24** ENERGY TRANSITIONS
PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE,
FEBRUARY 2026
Das, Sarada Prasanna, Catherine Ayallore, and
Ashwini K Swain were members of the author group

4. **Strengthening the Scientific Foundations of NCAP:
Building a Standardised Framework for Source
Apportionment and Emission Inventories** (SFC),
JANUARY 2026
Nazneen, Vanshika Madaan, Poonam Mangaraj, and Bhargav Krishna

5. **Different Paths to Clean Air:
Global Insights for India's Reform Agenda** (SFC),
NOVEMBER 2025
Srivastava, Ishita, Arunesh Karkun, and Bhargav Krishna

6. **What Does Net-Zero Mean?
Defining Goals Aligned With National Contexts** (SFC),
JULY 2025
Shukla, Nikita, Aman Srivastava, and Easwaran J. Narassimhan

7. **The Indian Carbon Market: Institutional,
Regulatory, and Market Considerations** (SFC),
APRIL 2025
Patel, Kashmeera, Easwaran J. Narassimhan, Aman Srivastava,
Ashwini K. Swain, Ashok Sreenivas, and Aditya Chuneekar

Op-eds & Blogs

1. **India's Energy Storage RD&D Bet: Why Batteries Dominate, and What That Means for the Future** (SFC), MARCH 2026
Patel, Kashmeera, Aman Srivastava, and Easwaran J Narassimhan

2. **From Budget Announcements to Outcomes: Why Instrument Choice and Design Will Decide What Scales** (SFC), FEBRUARY 2026
Shukla, Nikita, Aman Srivastava, and Easwaran J Narassimha

3. **India's AI Push Is Quietly Draining Its Energy, Resources, and Space** THE QUINT, DECEMBER 2025
Tewari, Escandita

4. **Forest Finance and the Challenges Money Cannot Fix** MONGABAY INDIA, DECEMBER 2025
Kukreti, Ishan

5. **Beyond the Hype: Opportunities and Limits of India's Green Hydrogen Pursuit** (SFC), DECEMBER 2025
Suman, Shubhranshu, and Ashwini K Swain

6. **India's Green Hydrogen Push: Engineering for Today or Innovating for Tomorrow?** (SFC), DECEMBER 2025
Patel, Kashmeera, Aman Srivastava, and Easwaran J Narassimhan

7. **The Disconnect: Why Air Pollution Isn't a Public Health Priority** THE INDIAN EXPRESS, NOVEMBER 2025
Patel, Purvi

8. **Avoiding the Climate "Ambition Trap"** SCIENCE MAGAZINE, NOVEMBER 2025
Dubash, Navroz K

9. **30 Years of Climate Talks: How Have the COPs Fared and What Next?** (SFC), NOVEMBER 2025
Sharma, Isha, Aman Srivastava, and Nikita Shukla

10. **Interplay of Heat and Air Pollution: Unpacking the Science and Policy Blind Spot in India** (SFC), OCTOBER 2025
Mangaraj, Poonam

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| 11. | Who Owns Tomorrow's Emissions?
Srivastava, Aman, and Nikita Shukla | THE WIRE,
OCTOBER 2025 |
| 12. | India's Solar Crossroads: Borrowing Innovation or Building Its Own?
Patel, Kashmeera, Aman Srivastava and Easwaran J Narassimhan | (SFC),
SEPTEMBER 2025 |
| 13. | Labour, Nature and Capitalism: Exploring Labour-Environmental Conflicts in Kerala, India by Silpa Satheesh (2025): A Review
R K, Sony | DOING SOCIOLOGY,
SEPTEMBER 2025 |
| 14. | What do India's Nuclear Power Ambitions Mean for Its Energy Future?
Kumar, Apoorva U, and Ashwini K Swain | (SFC),
SEPTEMBER 2025 |
| 15. | From Slack Threads to Strategy Retreats: Two Years of SFC Mean for Its Energy Future?
Dalal, Tamanna, Arunesh Karkun, Karthika J, Kashmeera Patel, and Rashi Agarwal | (SFC),
AUGUST 2025 |
| 16. | Visualising the Heat Crisis: A Guide for Nonprofits
Verma, Sonali | INDIA DEVELOPMENT
REVIEW, JULY 2025 |
| 17. | One Lakh Crore for Innovation: Getting Strategic About Clean Energy R&D
Patel, Kashmeera, Aman Srivastava, and Easwaran J Narassimhan | (SFC),
JULY 2025 |
| 18. | Hot Takes, Cold Action: How Heat is Misplaced Within India's Bureaucracy
Tewari, Escandita | (SFC),
JULY 2025 |
| 19. | The Climate Challenge as a Development Opportunity
Dubash, Navroz K | PROJECT SYNDICATE,
MAY 2025 |
| 20. | Navigating India's Climate Futures Requires a Nuanced and Transparent Approach to Modelling
Shukla, Nikita, Aman Srivastava, Easwaran J Narassimhan | (SFC),
APRIL 2025 |

Speaking Engagements

ADITYA VALIATHAN PILLAI

30 JULY 2025

Overview of the National Framework for Heatwave Mitigation and Management
NDMA

5 AUGUST 2025

Why extreme heat merits coverage
OXFORD CLIMATE JOURNALISM NETWORK
OXFORD UNIVERSITY

14 DECEMBER 2025

Is the future of comfort collective?
CONSCIOUS COLLECTIVE 2025
GODREJ DESIGN LAB

26 FEBRUARY 2026

Why does state-led extreme heat adaptation occur when the costs and benefits of action are diffuse?
THE CLIMATE INSTITUTE, AHMEDABAD UNIVERSITY

ADITYA VALIATHAN PILLAI AND TAMANNA DALAL

19 AUGUST 2025

How Indian heat policy addresses workers' heat stress
WIEGO (WOMEN IN INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT: GLOBALISING AND ORGANISING) AND FES (FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG)

AMAN SRIVASTAVA

30 APRIL 2025

Stakeholder workshop: Indo-German climate and development cooperation
NEW CLIMATE INSTITUTE

14 MARCH 2026

Green Protectionism: Can India Navigate the New Trade-Environment Nexus?
TRADE, ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCE CONCLAVE, SHIV NADAR UNIVERSITY

AMAN SRIVASTAVA AND EASWARAN J NARASSIMHAN

6 MAY 2025

Operationalising the Global Stocktake Outcome in an Increasingly Fractured World
CENTRE FOR SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

ANNANYA MAHAJAN

18 NOVEMBER 2025

Air pollution as an ongoing disaster in India
SPHERE INDIA ACADEMY

20 DECEMBER 2025

Understanding the true health cost of Delhi's air
GAIA LINK AND HABITAT INDIA

ARUNESH KARKUN

22 MAY 2025

Air pollution and air quality management
EPISTEME 2025, PRAVAHA FOUNDATION, IIT HYDERABAD

2 DECEMBER 2025

Rethinking GRAP: How can we optimise the measures for the construction industry?
COUNCIL ON ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND WATER

9 DECEMBER 2025

Different paths to clean air: Insights from global regulatory regimes
CENTRE FOR SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

ASHWINI K SWAIN

23 APRIL 2025

Energy Transition and Climate Justice: A Path Less Travelled
INDIA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

2 SEPTEMBER 2025

Accelerating Demand-Side Energy Transitions Through Collaborative Governance
WRI CONNECT KARO 2025

BHARGAV KRISHNA

2 DECEMBER 2025

*Air pollution data, health, and policy –
The GRAP experience*
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, VIETNAM

3 DECEMBER 2025

A Hazy Status Quo: India and Air Pollution
**THE LAKSHMI MITTAL AND FAMILY SOUTH ASIA
INSTITUTE AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

13 DECEMBER 2025

Framing the future with heat policy
**CONSCIOUS COLLECTIVE 2025,
GODREJ DESIGN LAB**

28 JANUARY 2026

*From Smog to Sickness: Understanding Air Pollution
in a Changing Climate*
**INDIA RESEARCH CENTER HARVARD
T.H CHAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

16 FEBRUARY 2026

Is India getting too hot for roti, kapda, aur makaan?
MUMBAI CLIMATE WEEK

ISHAN KUKRETI

30 JULY 2025

*Converging Paths: Global Governance
for Climate Justice and Health Equity*
**OBSERVER RESEARCH FOUNDATION (ORF)
AND UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY**



Annanya Mahajan presented on 'Understanding the true health cost of Delhi's air' at an event by Gaialink and Habitat India on 20 December 2025.

Image: Habitat India

KARTIKEYA JAIN

27 FEBRUARY 2026

Climate Communication Workshop: Empowering Professionals and Communities to Lead through Science, Behavior, and Authenticity

GAIALINK, DELHI CLIMATE INNOVATION WEEK, AND TERI SAS

MUKTA NAIK

12 DECEMBER 2025

Housing Challenges for the Urban Poor in

Uttarakhand: Policy Landscape and Way Ahead

DOON LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTRE, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION, AND DOON SAMAGR VIKAS ABHIYAN

21 FEBRUARY 2026

How startups and innovators interface

with municipal governments

DELHI CLIMATE INNOVATION WEEK

26 FEBRUARY 2026

Co-Creating Solutions: Climate-Resilient Vending Zones

National Consultation on Street Vendors and Climate Justice

WIEGO AND JANPAHAL

17 MARCH 2026

Panel discussion and book launch of

'City Limits: The Crisis of Urbanisation'

SAMRUDDHA BHARAT FOUNDATION

23 MARCH 2026

Climate Justice for Home-Based Workers:

Voices, Evidence and Action

WIEGO AND SEWA DELHI

NEHA KURIAN

26 OCTOBER 2025

International Seminar on Reimagining Decentralisation

in Kerala: Local Governance for a Sustainable Future

GRAMEENA PATANA KENDRAM

8 NOVEMBER 2025

Local level planning tools as a means to institutionalise and strengthen grass-root level capacity and response to disasters

STEP GLOBAL SUMMIT 2025, SAVE VIBRANT EARTH FOUNDATION

NIKITA SHUKLA

9 OCTOBER 2025

Sustainable Finance & Green Industrial

Policy Working Group Roundtable

INDIA GREEN STEEL NETWORK'S (IGSN) THIRD ANNUAL CONVENING, CLIMATE CATALYST

POONAM MANGARAJ

21 AUGUST 2025

Rethinking crop residue burning through the

lens of high-resolution observations

INDIA CLEAN AIR SUMMIT 2025, CENTER FOR STUDY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND POLICY

PURVI PATEL

20 FEBRUARY 2026

Dissemination of Heat-Health Guidelines for

Vulnerable Communities in Mumbai

MUMBAI FIRST

21 MARCH 2026

Science to Policy Translation for Future-

Ready Food Systems in India

INDIAN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

RASHI AGARWAL

29 OCTOBER 2025

Pathways to Careers in Climate and Sustainability

HERTIE SCHOOL, AND HANSRAJ

COLLEGE, DELHI UNIVERSITY

7 OCTOBER 2025

Institutional Governance in Advancing Just Energy Transition:

Case of Jharkhand's Task Force – Sustainable Just Transition

JETNET ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025,

JUST TRANSITION RESEARCH CENTRE AT IIT KANPUR

SARADA PRASANNA DAS

18 FEBRUARY 2026

Strategies for thermal power in India and the

Global South

MUMBAI CLIMATE WEEK

15 DECEMBER 2025

Innovative Governance of Off-grid

Renewable Energy in Chhattisgarh

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIETY NETWORK CONFERENCE, OP JINDAL GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

SHIBANI GHOSH**27 APRIL 2025***Navigating Environmental Justice:
Legal Remedies and Beyond***OP JINDAL GLOBAL LAW SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY****28 APRIL 2025***Climate litigation lessons from India***CORNERSTONE CLIMATE AND MISHCON PURPOSE****31 OCTOBER 2025***Decoding 'MK Ranjitsinh'***THE WEST BENGAL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES (NUJS)****8 NOVEMBER 2025***Forest (Conservation) Act – Godavarman
Order and its Relevance Today***CONCLAVE ON ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION,
CONSTITUTIONAL CONDUCT GROUP (CCG)****6 DECEMBER 2025***Building climate-resilient cities***VIDHI CENTRE FOR LEGAL POLICY****SONALI VERMA****8 NOVEMBER 2025***Indoor Heat, Unpaid Domestic Work,
and Women's Resilience***NAZARIA ARTS COLLECTIVE****SONY R K****19 JUNE 2025***Broken Ecologies and Emerging Food Narratives***COALITION FOR FOOD SYSTEMS
TRANSFORMA(C)TION IN INDIA****24 OCTOBER 2025***India's Pathways to COP30: Advancing Climate
Resilience, Equity & Sustainable Development***SPHERE INDIA ACADEMY AND IIT ROORKEE****20 FEBRUARY 2026***On food systems and why they matter***ASHOKA YOUNG SCHOLARS PROGRAMME****16 DECEMBER 2025***Epistemic Uncertainties and the Politics of Scientific
Knowledge in Environmental Governance***OP JINDAL GLOBAL UNIVERSITY,
STS INDIA NETWORK, AND IIT DELHI****SOUTRIK GOSWAMI****15 OCTOBER 2025***India's Carbon Credit Trading Scheme and
an Energy Transition Finance Mechanism***ASIA SOCIETY POLICY INSTITUTE****7 NOVEMBER 2025***Envisioning India's NDCs:**Milestones for Upcoming NDC Updates***WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE INDIA****31 JANUARY 2026***From 'Likes' to Laws – Redefining Gen Z**Participation in Policymaking Roundtable***POLICY AGORA FELLOWSHIP, ORF****TAMANNA DALAL****13 JUNE 2025***Heatwave Preparedness***NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DISASTER
MANAGEMENT, VARDHMAN MAHAVIR MEDICAL
COLLEGE, AND SAFDARJUNG HOSPITAL**

Bhargav Krishna was in conversation with Radhika Khosla, Associate Professor, University of Oxford, about the future of heat policy at Godrej Design Lab's Conscious Collective 2025.

Academic Engagements

Aman Srivastava

GUEST LECTURER

AUGUST 2025 & DECEMBER 2025

Taught a core course on Public Policy for Climate Change & co-taught an elective course on Climate Finance at **Kautilya School of Public Policy**

Ashwini K Swain

TEACHER

SEPTEMBER 2025

Co-taught a course on Energy Transition and Natural Resource Governance at **TISS, Hyderabad**

Events

BOOK DISCUSSION | 'MORE AND MORE AND MORE: AN ALL CONSUMING HISTORY OF ENERGY'

A discussion of the book by Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, historian of science, technology and the environment at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, with Elizabeth Chatterjee, Assistant Professor of Environmental History at the University of Chicago, and Ashwini K Swain, Fellow, SFC, in April

STRENGTHENING CLIMATE GOVERNANCE IN ASIA-PACIFIC

A webinar in October with the Asia Society Policy Institute and the International Climate Councils Network on climate governance in the Asia-Pacific region, including the role local climate councils can play in implementing NDCs and raising ambition

CO-CREATION WORKSHOP ON HEAT SOLUTIONS WITH PURPOSE INDIA

Co-hosted a workshop with Purpose India in June, bringing together urban planners, researchers, designers, journalists, and community leaders to co-create community-driven responses to extreme heat, structured around 'Heat at Home', 'Heat at Work', and 'Heat on the Road'

ETPI WORKSHOP IN INDONESIA

Collaborated with WRI Indonesia and Prayas (Energy Group) on a workshop in July 2025 under the Energy Transition Preparedness Initiative, presenting the indicator framework developed to evaluate state-level transition readiness and sharing findings from the first and second assessments

SHOWCASE OF EXHIBIT ON INDOOR HEAT AND WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES AT CONSCIOUS COLLECTIVE 2025 AND MUMBAI CLIMATE WEEK

Exhibited 'Making the 'Invisible' Visible: Indoor Heat, Unpaid Domestic Work, and Women's Resilience' at At Godrej Design Lab's Conscious Collective in Mumbai in December, and at Mumbai Climate Week in February, using thermal imaging footage and audio narratives to bring attention to women's everyday experiences of heat

SHINE ON THE ROOFTOP: HOW CAN ODISHA HARNESS THE POTENTIAL OF ROOFTOP SOLAR?

Organised a closed-door roundtable in October with Xavier University, Bhubaneswar on bridging the trust gap between utilities and consumers, strengthening local capacity, and building after-sales ecosystems for rooftop solar

WORKSHOP ON THE ENERGY FUTURE OF ODISHA

Organised with Xavier University, Bhubaneswar, in November to discuss an energy transition pathway for the state that retains industrial competitiveness, ensures reliable energy access, and creates opportunities for all

INTERNAL TALKS SERIES

Hosted Rohit Azad (JNU) and Shouvik Chakraborty (University of Massachusetts, Amherst) on 'Socially necessary green development in India' in August, and Shahana Chattaraj (WRI) on 'Migration and Resilience in a Changing Climate' in October



SFC collaborated with Purpose to host a closed-door workshop that brought together urban planners, researchers, designers, journalists, and community leaders to co-create community-driven, non-policy responses to extreme heat.

Policy Engagements

GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH (CHHATTISGARH STATE CENTRE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE)

On a blueprint for the proposed Low Carbon Climate-Resilient Development Commission (LCDC) and a broader institutional framework for climate governance, potentially anchored in new climate legislation

NITI AAYOG

Part of the Net-Zero Working Group, providing expert input on the financial and macroeconomic considerations of India's low-carbon transition, informing Volumes 2 and 9 of Scenarios Towards Viksit Bharat and Net-Zero, released February 2026

GOVERNMENT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH AND UNDP

On drafting a climate-focused human development report examining the intersection of climate mitigation and adaptation with key state sectors, launched by the Chief Minister in September 2025

MINISTRY OF POWER

Submitted comments on the Electricity Amendment Act 2025 and suggested measures to strengthen the legislation

NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Continued engagement on several key aspects of heat policy, including the preparation of the National Heatwaves Mitigation and Management Framework. Aditya Valiathan Pillai is part of the NDMA's Technical Advisory Group for the framework

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Participated in stakeholder consultations on the National Adaptation Plan and submitted written feedback on the draft plan

CONFEDERATION OF INDIAN INDUSTRY

Aman Srivastava is member of CII's Climate Change Council, a platform to share expertise, develop progressive climate policies, and represent Indian industry globally, shaping the national climate agenda



Orientation workshop for government officials from various departments in Himachal Pradesh, as part of the process of developing a climate-focused Human Development Report for the state.

Partnerships & Collaborations

HIDAYATULLAH NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY

as a local partner to aid in drafting an institutional framework for climate governance

WRI INDIA AND PRAYAS (ENERGY GROUP)

on the Energy Transition Preparedness Initiative

THE CENTER FOR STUDY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND POLICY

to generate system-wide insights and policy recommendations to strengthen climate resilience in mountain and coastal socioecological systems

XAVIER UNIVERSITY, BHUBANESWAR

for a quarterly roundtable on energy transition in Odisha and Eastern India

SALATA INSTITUTE FOR CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY, MITTAL SOUTH ASIA INSTITUTE, AND T. H. CHAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

for upcoming work examining how more effective temperature thresholds for heatwave declarations can be set based on health impacts, and expanding our understanding of how heat exposure and human physiology determine the limits of survivability

IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON, NISER BHUBANESWAR, KIIT BHUBANESWAR, AND IISC BENGALURU

on the Centre for Climate Impact Adaptation, a consortium focused on climate adaptation, resilience, and mitigation through data-driven, field-validated, bottom-up solutions in India's eastern and north-eastern regions



In The Media

CARBON BRIEF

Q&A: What does India's new Paris Agreement pledge mean for climate action?

NAVROZ K DUBASH
27 MARCH 2026

AFP

India Raises Climate Ambition, Targets 60% Clean Power by 2035

AMAN SRIVASTAVA
25 MARCH 2026

BUSINESS STANDARD

Policy response to heatwaves remains cool even as nationwide instances grow

ADITYA VALIATHAN PILLAI
17 MARCH 2026

WIRED (ITALY)

Inquinamento in India, una densa coltre di smog soffoca Delhi e i suoi 30 milioni di abitanti: è l'apocalisse sanitaria

ARUNESH KARKUN
19 JANUARY 2026

MONGABAY INDIA

Monitoring India's clean air programme needs reimagining, suggests analysis

BHARGAV KRISHNA
14 JANUARY 2026

INDIAN EXPRESS

How cities with geography like Delhi dealt with air pollution: Researchers answer

ISHITA SRIVASTAVA, ARUNESH KARKUN, AND BHARGAV KRISHNA
11 DECEMBER 2025

UNBOXING BENGALURU & BENGAWALK

What is causing air pollution in Bengaluru?

BHARGAV KRISHNA
10 DECEMBER 2025

THE STRAITS TIMES

'All being poisoned slowly': Air purifiers offer only limited respite from India's chronic pollution

BHARGAV KRISHNA
8 DECEMBER 2025

THE BORING CLIMATE PODCAST

The Hidden Cost of Heat

ADITYA VALIATHAN PILLAI
2 DECEMBER 2025

THE NEW YORK TIMES

How Many People Die in India From Hot Weather? Nobody Really Knows.

BHARGAV KRISHNA
16 NOVEMBER 2025

DW

COP30 in Brazil: Can India lead the Global South on climate?

AMAN SRIVASTAVA
12 NOVEMBER 2025

FRANCE24

Green goals versus growth needs: India's climate scorecard

AMAN SRIVASTAVA
5 NOVEMBER 2025

DOWN TO EARTH

The NDC death loop (Part 2): Demands for ambition, disappointment and relevance in a fractured world

NAVROZ K DUBASH
8 OCTOBER 2025

THE GUARDIAN

'Huge energy challenges': how can India make the leap to become a green, clean country?

ASHWINI K SWAIN
28 SEPTEMBER 2025

THE QUINT

From Trump's 'Con Job' Claim to EU Rift, COP30 Won't Be Easy in a Tipping World

NAVROZ K DUBASH
25 SEPTEMBER 2025

CARBON BRIEF

COP experts: How could the UN climate talks be reformed?

NAVROZ K DUBASH
11 AUGUST 2025

MONGABAY INDIA

A new analysis in a warming state links land use change to increasing heat

ADITYA VALIATHAN PILLAI
5 AUGUST 2025

THE MIGRATION STORY PODCAST

The Big India Melt: From Heat Stress to the Politics of Shade

ADITYA VALIATHAN PILLAI
16 JULY 2025

OUTLOOK BUSINESS

Trouble in the Air: How Pollution is Bleeding India's Health & Economy

BHARGAV KRISHNA
26 JUNE 2025

ASSOCIATED PRESS

India's steel expansion threatens climate goals and global efforts to clean up industry: report

EASWARAN J NARASSIMHAN
20 MAY 2025

DOWN TO EARTH

Reducing aerosol pollution could worsen heat risks — we need policy that can handle both

BHARGAV KRISHNA
7 APRIL 2025

How cities with geography like Delhi dealt with air pollution: Researchers answer

A new report has provided detailed pathways to improve air quality in India, including Delhi, by examining how other countries addressed their diverse pollution challenges

Written by:
Amit Chauhan
9 min read · New Delhi



Q&A: What does India's new Paris Agreement pledge mean for climate action?

27.03.26 | EMISSIONS

By: Aruna Chandrasekhar



COP30 in Brazil: Can India lead the Global South on climate?

Harish Patel in New Delhi

9/10/2023

As rich nations drag their feet, India's role is pivotal in bringing together the Global North and South on climate action.

f x



People standing in line before a facade branded by the United Nations with a hashtag and letters spelling 'COP30' in Brazil.

The Brazilian city of Belém is hosting the COP30 climate conference. India will play a decisive role at the summit.

Image: Kyndigature alliance

Communications & Storytelling

Our communications have kept focus on making our research more accessible, engaging, and relevant to wider audiences. We invested in explaining complex policy questions through visual storytelling, short-form content, and researcher-led narratives that connected evidence with everyday climate challenges.

Research across extreme heat, air pollution, energy transitions, climate policy, and coastal resilience was translated into explainers, carousels, blogs, and short videos designed to unpack complex ideas in clear and engaging ways. Through social media, we explored questions such as how prepared India's states are for the energy transition, why Heat Action Plans need stronger institutional foundations, what net-zero means for India, and why heat and air pollution must be understood together.

Alongside communicating research, we also highlighted our team behind it. Through researcher profiles, behind-the-scenes content, and our year-end retrospective, we highlighted the collaborations, fieldwork, and interdisciplinary thinking that underpin SFC's work.

This year also marked an important shift from communications towards storytelling as a research and engagement tool. Making the 'Invisible' Visible: Indoor Heat, Unpaid Domestic Work, and Women's Resilience' demonstrated how immersive storytelling can bring lived experience into public and policy conversations in ways that conventional reports often cannot. Combining thermal imaging and audio narratives, the exhibition reached more than 8,000 visitors in person and over two million people online, helping bring the overlooked issue of indoor heat into discussions among policymakers, researchers, designers, and the wider public.

Building on this experience, we are beginning to embed storytelling more deeply across SFC's work. We see storytelling not simply as a way of communicating research after it is complete, but as a means of documenting lived experience, broadening participation in policy debates, and making complex climate and development challenges more visible across our research.

LOOKING AHEAD:

Questions we are taking forward

As we venture deeper into 2026-27 and beyond, we are acutely aware that while the big questions we focus on are unchanged, shifting domestic and global contexts require us to evolve our approaches to addressing them.

Our ongoing focus on low-carbon development is increasingly aimed at fostering prudent and integrated policy and governance ecosystems. For instance, we are studying the construct of a strategic clean tech innovation ecosystem, developing a diffusion framework to deploy these clean technologies, and exploring how to integrate circularity considerations into clean tech policies, while in parallel aiming to strengthen the economic resilience of MSMEs in the face of new climate regulations.

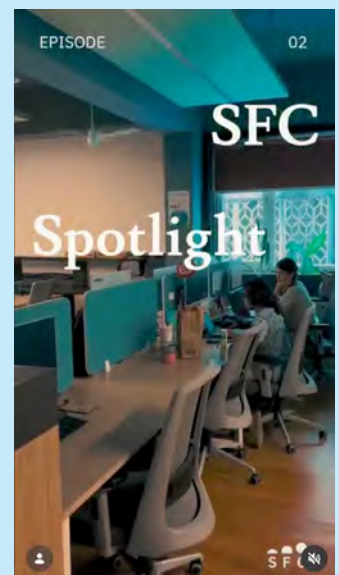
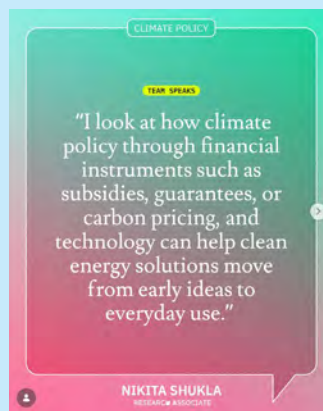
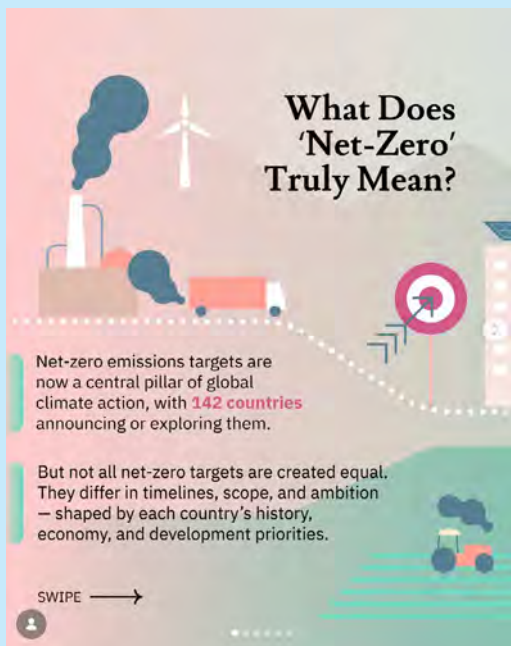
The shift towards more coherent and integrated policies is completed by our work examining how to foster more coordinated governance across sectors.

For instance, we are at the early stages of examining the institutional, governance and regulatory mechanisms needed to manage emerging climate-altering geoengineering technologies, while supporting the NCR Planning Board – a body whose mandate cuts across four states/UTs – on monitoring and evaluation of NCR's clean air action plan. Similarly, we are charting the future of the rural economy by linking the energy transition with climate goals and local livelihood generation opportunities.

Notably, it is increasingly evident that the ability to implement sound policy and governance frameworks is often limited by institutional capacity for long-term thinking on these issues. Towards realising our objectives, therefore, we hope to establish a capacity building vertical that aims to train government, civil society, and practitioners on thinking strategically about meeting climate, energy, environment, and development goals.

2 million+

People reached through the
'Making the 'Invisible' Visible' exhibit on heat



60,000+

Instagram views

10,000+

LinkedIn followers

Research videos
featuring authors
explaining key
findings

Visual explainers on
heat, air pollution,
energy transitions,
climate policy, and
coastal resilience

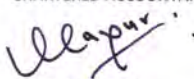
Financial Information

SFC RESEARCH FOUNDATION
CIN U88900DL2023NPL419116
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31.03.2026

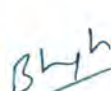
PARTICULARS	NOTE NO.	Figures as at 31.03.2026		Figures as at 31.03.2025	
		(Fig. in Rs.)	(Fig. in '00)	(Fig. in Rs.)	(Fig. in '00)
1	2	3		4	
I. EQUITY AND LIABILITIES					
1 Shareholders' Funds					
(a) Share Capital	1	60,000.00	600.00	60,000.00	600.00
(b) Reserves and Surplus	2	14,992,851.04	149,928.51	16,533,482.23	165,334.82
(c) Money Received against share warrant		-	-	-	-
		15,052,851.04	150,528.51	16,593,482.23	165,934.82
2 Share Application Money Pending Allotment		-	-	-	-
3 Non- Current Liabilities					
(a) Long Term Borrowings	3	-	-	-	-
(b) Deferred Tax Liabilities (Net)		-	-	-	-
(c) Other Long Term liabilities	4	-	-	-	-
(d) Long-term provisions	5	3,105,673.20	31,056.73	1,671,607.00	16,716.07
		3,105,673.20	31,056.73	1,671,607.00	16,716.07
4 Current Liabilities					
(a) Short Term Borrowings	6	-	-	-	-
(b) Trade Payables		-	-	-	-
(c) Other Current Liabilities	7	584,217.00	5,842.17	434,875.00	4,348.75
(d) Short Term Provisions	8	-	-	-	-
		584,217.00	5,842.17	434,875.00	4,348.75
TOTAL		18,742,741.24	187,427.41	18,699,964.23	186,999.64
II. ASSETS					
1 Non Current Assets					
Property, Plant and Equipment & Intangible					
(a) Assets					
(i) Property, Plant and Equipment	9	10,167,985.15	101,679.85	9,398,017.85	93,980.18
(ii) Intangible Assets		-	-	-	-
(iii) Capital Work In Progress		-	-	-	-
(iv) Intangible Assets under Development		-	-	-	-
		10,167,985.15	101,679.85	9,398,017.85	93,980.18
(b) Non Current Investments	10	1,408,201.00	14,082.01	-	-
(c) Deferred tax Assets (net)		-	-	-	-
(d) Long-term loans and advances	11	-	-	-	-
(e) Other non-current assets	12	-	-	-	-
		11,576,186.15	115,761.86	9,398,017.85	93,980.18
2 Current Assets					
(a) Current Investments	13	-	-	-	-
(b) Inventories		-	-	-	-
(c) Trade Receivables		-	-	-	-
(d) Cash and Cash equivalents	14	5,544,145.09	55,441.45	7,617,610.38	76,176.10
(e) Short Term Loan and Advances	15	-	-	67,000.00	670.00
(f) Other Current Assets	16	1,622,410.00	16,224.10	1,617,336.00	16,173.36
		7,166,555.09	71,665.55	9,301,946.38	93,019.46
TOTAL		18,742,741.24	187,427.41	18,699,964.23	186,999.64

Significant Accounting Policies and Notes to Account 22

As per our report of even date attached
FOR MAYUR & CO.
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS


CA MAYUR GUPTA
(Prop.)(M.NO.503036)(FRN-021448N)
UDIN 26503036MKIERJ055




BHARGAV KRISHNA
Director
DIN-10293824

FOR SFC RESEARCH FOUNDATION




AMAN SRIVASTAVA
Director
DIN-11030530

PLACE : DELHI
DATE : 22/07/2026

SFC RESEARCH FOUNDATION
CIN U88900DL2023NPL419116
STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31.03.2026

PARTICULARS		NOTE NO.	For the year ending on 31.03.2026		For the year ending on 31.03.2025	
			(Fig. in Rs.)	(Fig. in '00)	(Fig. in Rs.)	(Fig. in '00)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I. INCOME:						
(a) Donation Received	17	60,500,000.00	605,000.00	40,500,000.00	405,000.00	
(b) Other Income	18	1,156,101.00	11,561.01	2,460,026.00	24,600.26	
Total Revenue		61,656,101.00	616,561.01	42,960,026.00	429,600.26	
II. EXPENSES:						
(a) Utilization On Programmes And Activities	19	55,068,316.80	550,683.17	44,165,132.61	441,651.33	
(b) Finance Cost	20	60,072.06	600.72	27,790.00	277.90	
(c) Depreciation and Amortisation Expenses	9	1,486,420.04	14,864.20	1,497,909.00	14,979.09	
(d) Administration Expenses	21	6,581,923.29	65,819.23	3,291,423.68	32,914.24	
Total Expenses		63,196,732.19	631,967.32	48,982,255.29	489,822.55	
III. Surplus / (Deficit) Before exceptional and extraordinary items and Tax (I-II)		(1,540,631.19)	(15,406.31)	(6,022,229.29)	(60,222.29)	
IV. Exceptional Items - Allocation to specific Fund		-	-	-	-	
V. Surplus / (Deficit) Before extraordinary items and Tax (III-IV)		(1,540,631.19)	(15,406.31)	(6,022,229.29)	(60,222.29)	
VI. Extraordinary Items		-	-	-	-	
VII. Surplus / (Deficit) before tax (V-VI)		(1,540,631.19)	(15,406.31)	(6,022,229.29)	(60,222.29)	
VIII. Tax Expenses						
(1) Current Tax		-	-	-	-	
(2) Deferred Tax		-	-	-	-	
IX. Surplus (Deficit) for the period from continuing operations (VII-VIII)		(1,540,631.19)	(15,406.31)	(6,022,229.29)	(60,222.29)	
X. Surplus/(Deficit) from discontinuing operations		-	-	-	-	
XI. Tax expense of discontinuing operations		-	-	-	-	
XII. Surplus/(Deficit) from Discontinuing operations (after tax) (X-XI)		-	-	-	-	
XIII. Surplus (Deficit) for the period (IX + XII)		(1,540,631.19)	(15,406.31)	(6,022,229.29)	(60,222.29)	
Earnings per equity share:						
(1) Basic		(256.77)	(256.77)	(1,003.70)	(1,003.70)	
(2) Diluted		(256.77)	(256.77)	(1,003.70)	(1,003.70)	

Significant Accounting Policies and Notes to Account

As per our report of even date attached

FOR MAYUR & CO.

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

CA MAYUR GUPTA

(Prop.)(M.NO.503036)(FRN-021448N)

UDIN 26503036MKIERJ7055



FOR SFC RESEARCH FOUNDATION

BHARGAV KRISHNA

Director

DIN-10293824



AMAN SRIVASTAVA

Director

DIN-11030530

PLACE : DELHI

DATE : 22/07/2026

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 /Sustainablefuturescollaborative

 @sustainablefuturescollab

 sustainablefutures.org