IORA Ecological Solutions

2024-25 Annual Report

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About Us

Founded in 2009, IORA brings together a powerful blend of multidisciplinary expertise spanning finance, on-ground programme implementation, policy advisory, and scientific research.

Today, we are a leading environmental advisory firm in India, working at the forefront of natural resource conservation and climate action. With a strong track record in designing and implementing Nature-based Solutions (NbS) projects across India and globally, we enable scalable ecosystem conservation and climate resilience.

Through strategic partnerships, we leverage collective expertise to inform action, foster dialogue, and influence policy and decision-making.

We are committed to enabling the conservation of natural ecosystems and building climate-resilient communities through data-driven decision-making, convergent partnerships, and innovative financing mechanisms.

Our work is anchored in advancing a global transition to Net Zero and a climate-resilient economy through NbS.

As we strive to reduce GHG emissions, promote sustainable forest management, and restore ecological balance, our initiatives align with global priorities for urgent environmental and economic transformation. We address the triple planetary crisis: climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, by responding to local realities through policy alignment, incentivised conservation, climate finance mobilisation, and capacity building for sustainable development.

Key Sectors

Measurement and Monitoring for Nature

Policy Advisory

Strategic Advisory

Developing and Financing Nature-based Solutions

Preface

In 2024, through diverse partnerships across India and globally, we advanced NbS that restore ecosystems, strengthen livelihoods, and shape the future of climate finance.

We scaled carbon and agroforestry projects across tea estates in Assam and West Bengal, launched large-scale land restoration in Rajasthan and Uttarakhand, and helped turn degraded plantations in the Western Ghats into carbon sinks. Our international footprint expanded with renewable energy certifications in Southeast Asia and a bioenergy feasibility study in the Philippines.

Beyond implementation, we deepened our role in shaping climate policy, supporting the Green Credit Programme, piloting PES models, and advising on ecological fiscal transfers for the 16th Finance Commission. Our collaborations with HSBC, the World Bank, and Michigan State University pushed the frontier on nature-based metrics, digital monitoring, and sustainable investment frameworks.

From biogas units in villages to AI-powered biodiversity platforms, each initiative reflects our commitment to a regenerative, resilient, and inclusive future. As we look ahead, IORA remains focused on scaling innovative, data-driven solutions that make nature count.

Landscape Restoration and Biodiversity Conservation

Partnership with Tata Coffee Limited (TCL) for Tree Plantation in the Western Ghats

TCL integrates environmental sustainability into its growth strategy, strengthening operational efficiency, risk management, and stakeholder engagement.

In alignment with this approach, IORA is supporting TCL in the implementation of Afforestation, Reforestation, and Revegetation (ARR) interventions. Recognised by the IPCC as a key climate mitigation pathway, ARR has the potential to contribute up to 40% of the global CO_2 removal required to limit temperature rise to 2°C.

IORA's scope of work includes field data collection, capacity building, stakeholder consultations, and the development of project documentation, alongside ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure effectiveness across the project lifecycle.

This collaboration reflects a shared commitment to climate action and resilience, advancing sustainable outcomes for both business operations and surrounding ecosystems.

The initiative targets the plantation of over **1.3 million trees** across **25 TCL estates** situated in the Western Ghats, covering the regions of Kodagu, Hassan, Chikkamagalur, and Coimbatore.

ITC's Mission Sunehra Kal - Biodiversity Inventory of Restored Pasture Lands in Rajasthan

IORA conducted a comprehensive biodiversity inventory for ITC Limited across three pastureland sites in Rajasthan: Govardhanpura, Motipura, and Gadiya. The assessment aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of ITC’s restoration efforts on barren and degraded community lands, with a focus on enhancing biodiversity and improving land productivity.

These interventions contribute not only to biodiversity conservation but also to the delivery of critical ecosystem services that support sustainable rural livelihoods. The initiative forms part of ITC Limited’s flagship sustainability programme, Mission Sunehra Kal, which demonstrates a long-term commitment to ecosystem restoration and inclusive, sustainable growth.

The broader objective of the initiative is to strengthen environmental resilience by addressing key challenges such as water stewardship, climate-smart agriculture, and social forestry.

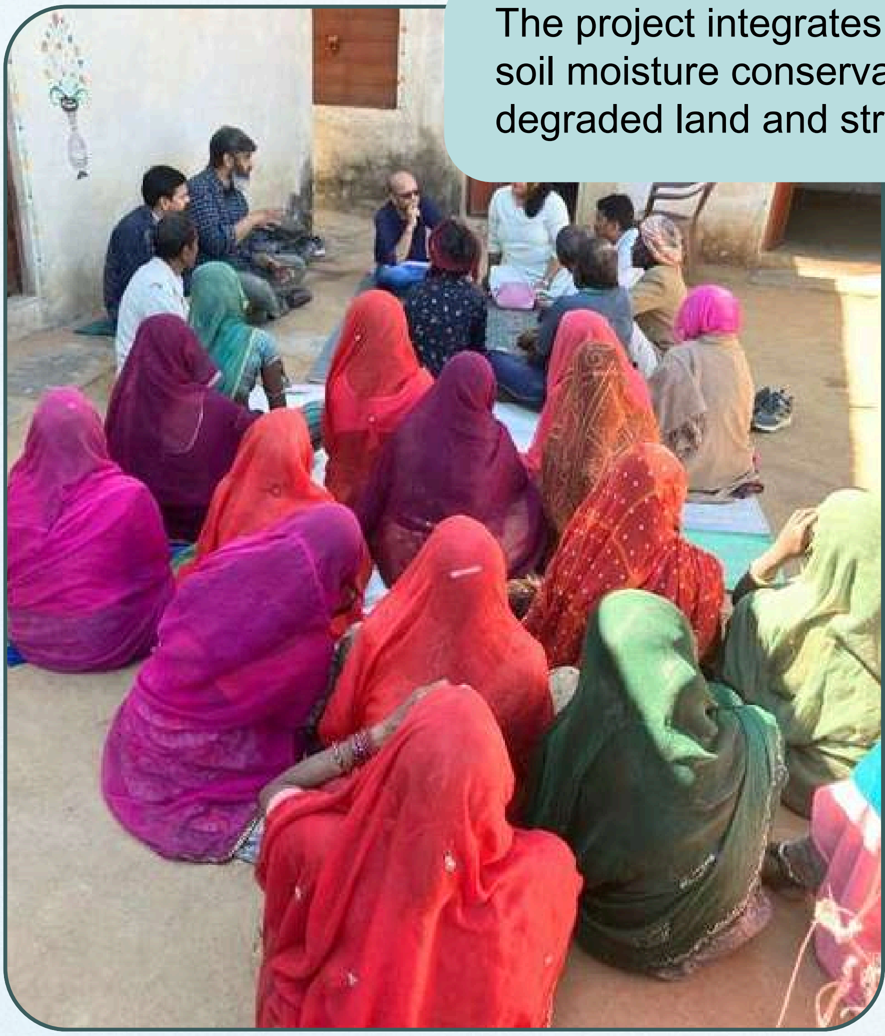
Through collaborative engagement with government agencies, NGOs, and local communities, we emphasise participatory planning and community ownership to ensure lasting ecological and socio-economic impact.

Community-Led Reforestation and Agroforestry on Pasture Lands in South Aravalli, Rajasthan

In partnership with Jatan Sansthan, IORA is spearheading a transformative landscape restoration initiative in the Aravalli Hills of Rajasthan, targeting the revival of 200,000 hectares of pasturelands.

Beyond ecological gains, the initiative is designed to boost rural livelihoods, enhance household incomes, and address micronutrient malnutrition through sustainable land use practices. At its core, the project champions ecological sovereignty and community self-governance, combining strategic planning with grassroots participation. By empowering local communities as environmental stewards, this initiative sets a model for inclusive and resilient rural development.

The project integrates reforestation, agroforestry, and soil moisture conservation techniques to regenerate degraded land and strengthen ecosystem services.



Landscape-Based Approach Towards Revitalization Of Degraded Agro-Ecology For Livelihood Generation Of Marginalized Communities

IORA, in collaboration with Urvara Krishi Private Limited (UKPL), is leading a project to promote agroforestry practices among small and marginal farmers across tribal districts in Maharashtra and Odisha. Implemented over the period 2021–2024, the initiative spans Amravati, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Nagpur, Wardha, and Yavatmal in Maharashtra, and Koraput and Nabarangpur in Odisha.

The project supports UKPL in encouraging agroforestry interventions aimed at optimising land use, enhancing biodiversity, and improving soil health. Integrating a mix of tree species with conventional cropping systems enables farmers to increase yields while strengthening environmental sustainability. The initiative focuses on fostering economically viable and ecologically sound farming models through the application of advanced technology and proven practices.

IORA's role includes facilitating stakeholder consultations, conducting capacity-building sessions, collecting field data, and preparing project documentation. In addition, IORA is responsible for monitoring and evaluation across the project's lifecycle.

Covering more than 13,000 hectares, the project is expected to drive long-term positive change for tribal farmers and local communities.

Integrated Assessment of Land-based Interventions for Strategic Mitigation and Economic Sustainability

IORA, in partnership with the Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation, is undertaking a study titled Integrated Assessment of Land-based Interventions for Strategic Mitigation and Economic Sustainability. This national-level assessment aims to identify region-specific, scalable land-based mitigation (LBM) solutions that support inclusive climate action.

In 2023-24, IORA conducted fieldwork in Meghalaya to gather primary data and develop a regional case study. This contributed to the broader evaluation of over 75 LBM projects across India, assessing their long-term effectiveness in delivering ecological and socio-economic outcomes.

The upcoming phase of the study will focus on the Indo-Gangetic Plains, with in-depth assessments of interventions in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and western Bihar. These evaluations will provide actionable insights on the ecological, environmental, and community-level impacts of land-based interventions and support the replication of successful models.

To further this agenda, IORA launched the LBM Dialogue Series, a dedicated platform bringing together experts and stakeholders from policy, finance, and implementation domains. The inaugural session, held on July 30, 2024, sparked critical discussions on scaling LBM strategies, addressing key opportunities and challenges.

Through these initiatives, IORA aims to drive nature-positive, scalable climate action while contributing to broader goals of economic resilience and biodiversity conservation.

Forest Ecosystem Valuation for Enhancing Ecosystem Services and Human Well-being

IORA undertook a comprehensive economic valuation of Meghalaya's forest ecosystems, covering reserve forests, sacred groves, community reserves, and village forests, with an estimated annual economic value of ₹19.14 lakh crore. The assessment highlights the critical contribution of these ecosystems to ecological stability and local livelihoods.

Using globally recognised frameworks, including the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA), Total Economic Value (TEV), TEEB, and IPBES, along with advanced ecological modelling through InVEST, IORA evaluated ecosystem services across provisioning, regulating, cultural, and supporting categories.

The study also reviewed key state initiatives, including the Green Meghalaya programme and the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) scheme, and provided actionable recommendations to strengthen the integration of ecosystem service valuation into policy and conservation planning.

Based on extensive field visits and community consultations across Meghalaya, the assessment offers evidence-based insights to improve programme effectiveness, support sustainable forest management, and enhance the long-term delivery of ecosystem services.

Together, these initiatives are designed to catalyse scalable, nature-positive climate action while contributing to long-term goals of economic sustainability and biodiversity conservation.

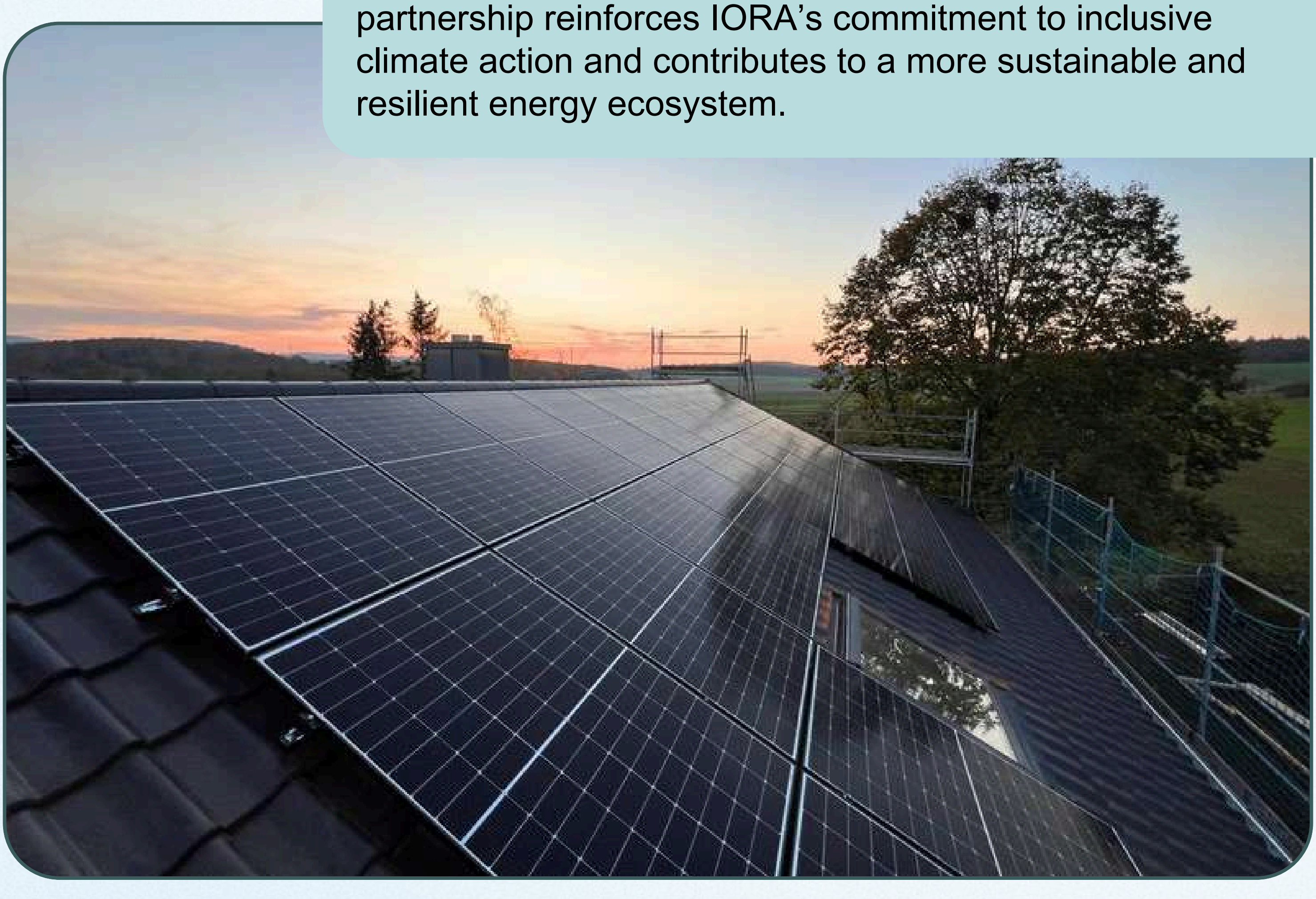
Distribution of Energy Efficiency Lighting and Cooking devices

IORA has partnered with Pahal Financial Services Pvt. Ltd. to implement a nationwide initiative expanding access to clean energy solutions among underserved communities. The programme focuses on distributing solar appliances and induction cooktops, with the dual objective of reducing environmental impact and improving household well-being, particularly for women.

By enabling a shift from conventional energy sources to cleaner, more reliable alternatives, the initiative supports emissions reduction while enhancing everyday living conditions at the household level.

The programme also contributes to broader development outcomes, including livelihood opportunities, strengthened local economic resilience, and improved energy access for marginalised populations.

By advancing equitable access to renewable energy, the partnership reinforces IORA's commitment to inclusive climate action and contributes to a more sustainable and resilient energy ecosystem.



Carbon Finance and Natural Climate Solutions

Developing Carbon Sink in Rajasthan and Gujarat, in Partnership with Vedanta

IORA is serving as the Project Management Consultant to Vedanta Resources Limited for the development of carbon sink initiatives across more than 850 hectares in Rajasthan and Gujarat. Under this initiative, Cairn Oil & Gas, Vedanta's energy division, is undertaking large-scale plantation activities, planting 3.5 lakh trees over 700 hectares in Barmer, Rajasthan, and establishing a 190-hectare mangrove plantation in Surat, Gujarat.

These efforts extend beyond carbon sequestration, contributing to biodiversity restoration, strengthening local ecosystems, and supporting global climate objectives. IORA is responsible for conducting baseline assessments, facilitating community engagement, and implementing a robust monitoring framework to ensure the project's long-term impact and sustainability.

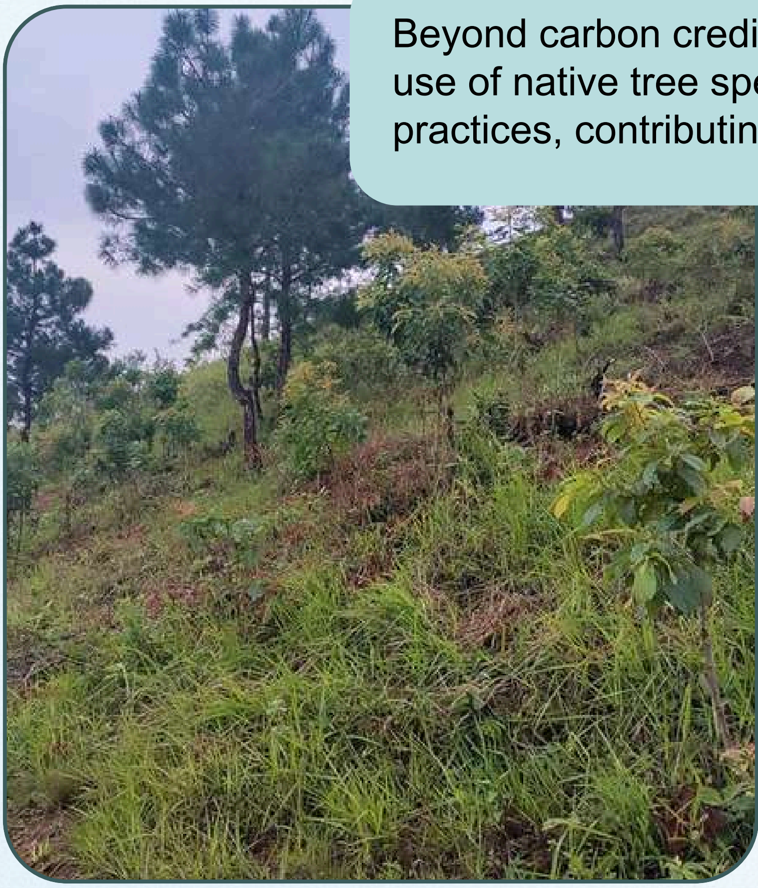
This initiative positions land restoration as a critical climate action strategy while simultaneously generating ecological and socio-economic benefits for surrounding communities.

MegCare - Meghalaya Carbon Agroforestry for Community Resilience and Ecosystems

MegCare is a pioneering initiative promoting sustainable agroforestry across Meghalaya, led in collaboration with the Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA) and Acorn (a Rabobank project). The program incentivises farmers to adopt agroforestry practices through carbon credits, while simultaneously improving soil health, increasing incomes, and enhancing biodiversity.

Under the project, Acorn certifies carbon removal units, which are sold to corporates working toward environmental targets. Farmers receive 70% of the revenue generated from these sales, ensuring equitable benefit-sharing. IORA is leading the implementation of plantation and agroforestry activities, managing project coordination, carbon credit development, and stakeholder engagement to ensure adherence to global environmental standards. A dedicated state team of over 50 field associates has been deployed to support farmers throughout their agroforestry transition. The team's close collaboration with local communities ensures that the initiative delivers sustained environmental and socio-economic benefits.

Beyond carbon credit generation, MegCare promotes the use of native tree species and sustainable farming practices, contributing to enhanced ecological resilience.



Consultancy for Identification, Prioritization, and Carbon Financing of Urban and Rural Trees Outside Forests (TOF) Expansion Opportunities

IORA is a key implementation partner in the Trees Outside Forests in India (TOFI) program, a joint initiative by USAID and CIFOR-ICRAF aimed at increasing tree cover by 2.8 million hectares across seven states: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh.

The program supports India's climate targets and promotes sustainable land use practices through large-scale tree-based interventions.

As part of this initiative, IORA is working with Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to identify and design financially viable Public Good Leaning TOF projects in urban areas.

Each selected project will undergo rigorous assessment to ensure its alignment with climate goals and investment potential. One project per state will be prioritised for implementation, contributing to the creation of greener urban spaces.

In parallel, IORA is leading efforts to unlock carbon financing opportunities within TOFI's land-use schemes through a structured three-phase consultancy:

1. Carbon Scoping Study
2. Carbon Feasibility Study
3. Investment Case Development

Following extensive consultations with stakeholders, IORA is tasked with selecting the most suitable models for carbon financing and developing them into comprehensive carbon projects, amongst 5 key tree-out-grower models identified under TOFI in line with international carbon market standards.

IORA is utilising its expertise in land-use carbon project financing under the Verified Carbon Standard to assist TOFI in creating a sustainable carbon credit pathway.

UPC Bioenergy Carbon project in the Philippines

IORA's global presence continued to grow through our involvement in the UPC Bioenergy Carbon Project on Negros Island, Philippines. This forward-looking initiative promotes sustainable wood production, enhances carbon sequestration, and supports the transition to cleaner energy alternatives through the use of wood briquettes.

Our recent feasibility assessment laid a strong foundation for the upcoming baseline study, offering valuable insights into land use patterns, local energy practices, and stakeholder dynamics. As the project advances, it is poised to contribute significantly to climate resilience, livelihood enhancement, and improved natural resource management in the region.

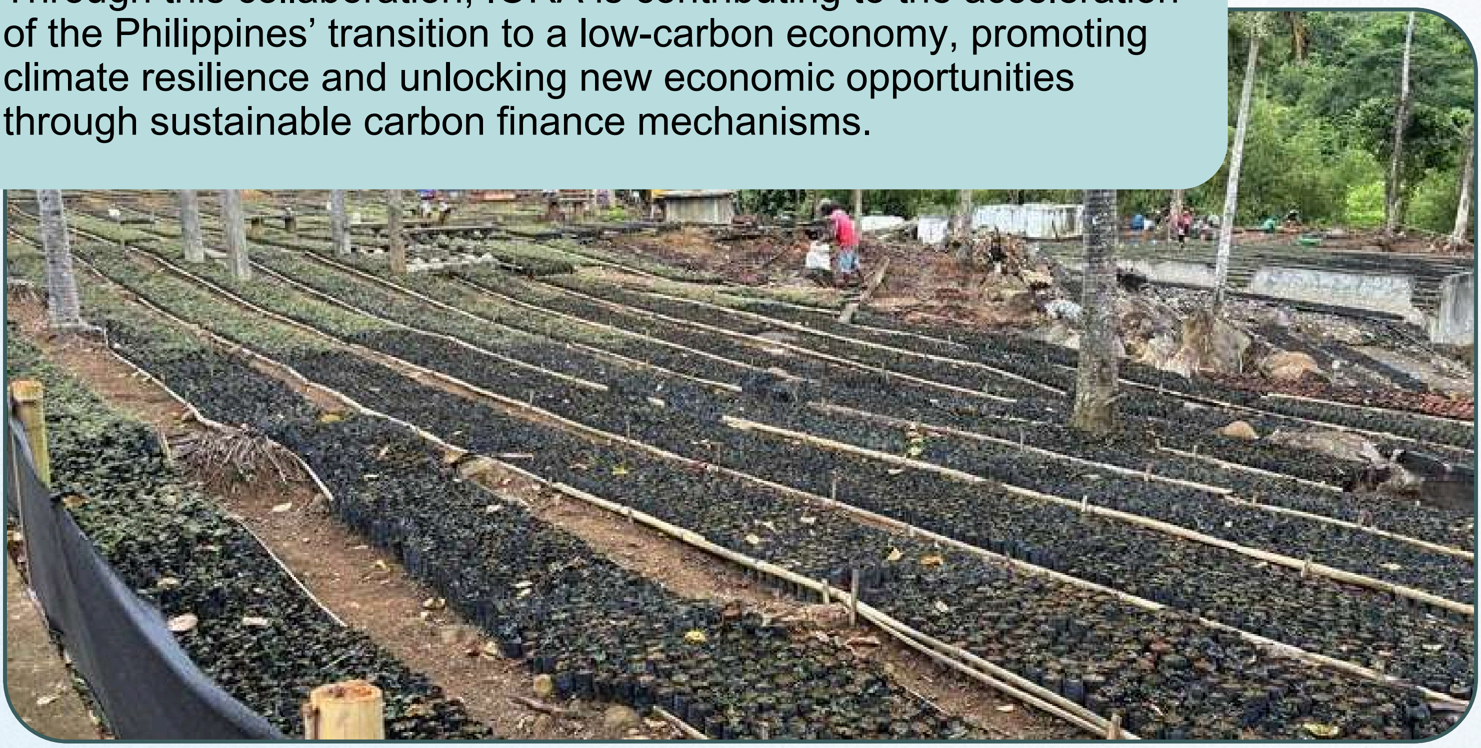
Development of Bioenergy Carbon Finance Pilot and a National Carbon Market Strategy for the Philippines

IORA is partnering with UPC Bioenergy on a strategic initiative to support the Philippines in developing a Bioenergy and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) Carbon Finance Pilot alongside a comprehensive National Carbon Market Strategy. This pioneering effort seeks to contribute to the country's carbon neutrality goals while laying the foundation for a robust, internationally aligned carbon market framework.

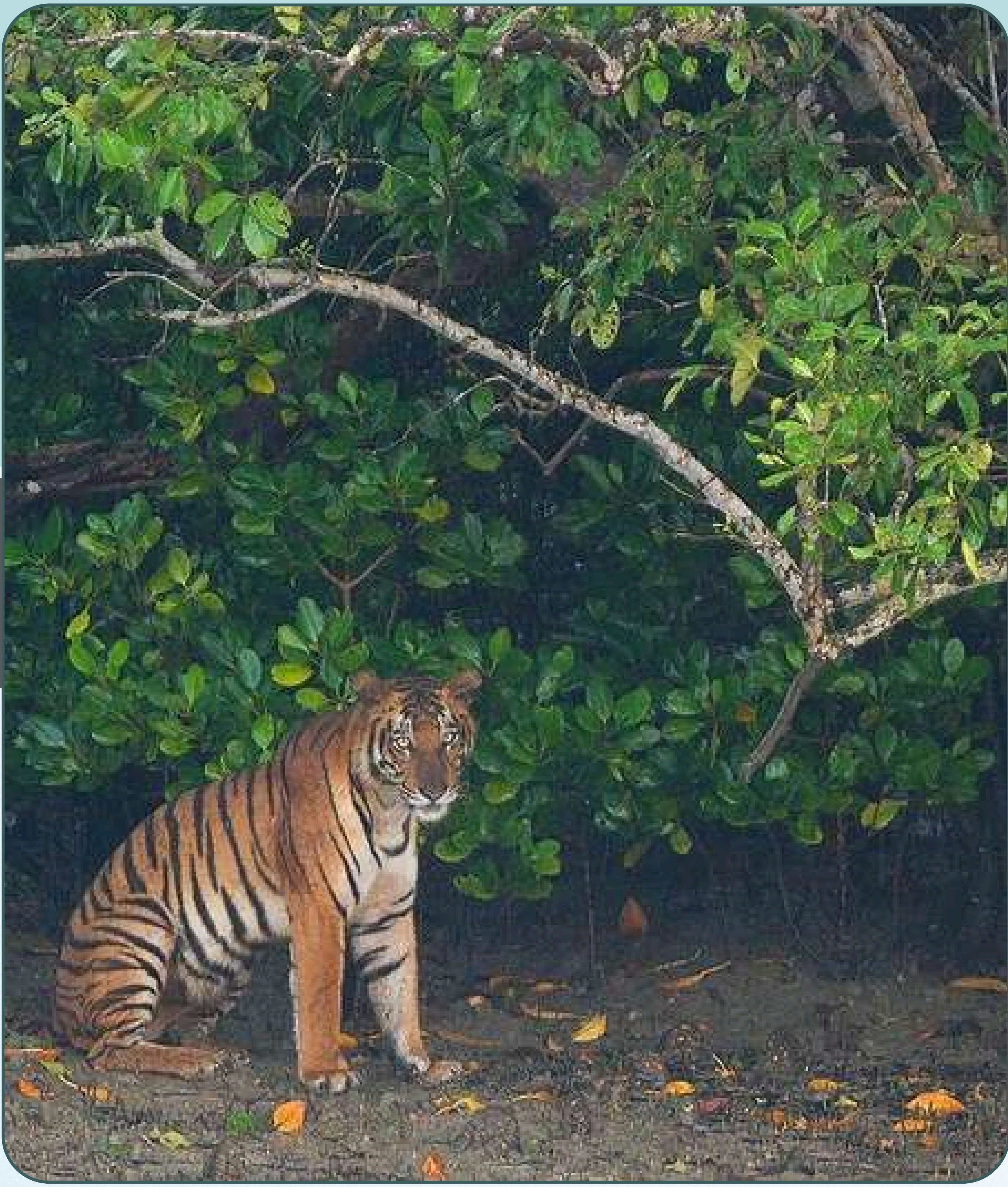
As part of this engagement, IORA is leading a pre-feasibility assessment involving advanced remote sensing analyses and carbon stock evaluations to design a scalable bioenergy and NbS project. The outcomes will inform the development of a carbon finance strategy that incorporates emerging mechanisms under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement and the Joint Crediting Mechanism, both areas in which IORA is also providing strategic inputs.

A central component of the project is the creation of a national carbon market strategy that aligns with global standards and facilitates the export of carbon credits, particularly to the Japanese market. Simultaneously, the initiative is working to develop market instruments that will attract investment into sustainable energy and NbS projects.

Through this collaboration, IORA is contributing to the acceleration of the Philippines' transition to a low-carbon economy, promoting climate resilience and unlocking new economic opportunities through sustainable carbon finance mechanisms.



Climate Policy, Governance and Advisory



Designing Climate Incentives through the 16th Finance Commission: Assessment of Options

IORA is undertaking a strategic study to support the integration of climate action into India's fiscal planning framework. The 16th Finance Commission presents a critical opportunity to explore the intersection of environmental sustainability, development priorities, and financial devolution.

This assessment seeks to inform the development of a devolution formula that incorporates environmental, fiscal, and developmental parameters—expanding upon the scope addressed by the 15th Finance Commission. Moving beyond a forest-centric approach, the study will include evidence-based recommendations that cover a wider range of ecosystems, including wetlands, coastal zones, and grasslands.

IORA's methodology includes in-depth data analysis, expert consultations, and regional stakeholder engagement to address both financial and environmental challenges. Pilot studies in select regions will be conducted to test and refine proposed strategies, ensuring their feasibility and effectiveness on the ground. Once validated, the findings will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) and the Finance Commission for review and feedback.

This initiative represents a significant step in enhancing India's climate finance architecture and accelerating the country's progress toward its national and international climate commitments.

Acceleration and Expansion of PES in India

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Sundarbans - Benefits of Cooperation Revisited

IORA contributed to updating the 2018 report on the India-Bangladesh partnership for the sustainable management of the Sundarbans mangrove ecosystem. The updated study presents revised data on the blue economy, ecosystem service valuation, and developments under bilateral memorandums.

Funded by the World Bank, the initiative underscores the importance of cross-border collaboration in addressing shared challenges such as climate change resilience, disaster management, and sustainable resource use. The report highlights both the benefits of cooperation and the significant risks of inaction.

Using a multi-method approach - literature review, stakeholder interviews, and greenhouse gas estimations, the study offers a comprehensive overview of the partnership's progress.

Analysis of India's Green Credit Programme: Opportunities for Water and Sustainable Agriculture

IORA is advancing the alignment of the CORE (Carbon Offsetting Rice Emissions) Project with India's Green Credit Rules, 2023, positioning sustainable agriculture within emerging environmental markets. The project is being implemented across 3 states - Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Haryana, supporting smallholder farmers, particularly women, in adopting climate-resilient practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Through this initiative, IORA is developing mechanisms to enable financial incentives for farmers adopting climate-smart cultivation and post-harvest practices, while working closely with policymakers, practitioners, and farmer groups to integrate agriculture into the Green Credit framework.

In parallel, IORA is undertaking a comprehensive study to assess how the Green Credit Rules can effectively incentivise sustainable practices in agriculture and water management. The study will result in a detailed report with policy recommendations to strengthen the application of Green Credits within the sector.

Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the project contributes to transforming rice cultivation systems, while advancing climate resilience, gender inclusion, and long-term sustainability in Indian agriculture.

Policy Advocacy, End-line Carbon Budgeting Exercise and end-of-project knowledge creation and dissemination for Model Eco-village project

IORA is leading a key consultancy for GIZ India's Model Eco-Village Project, which aims to transform rural communities in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab into sustainable, eco-friendly models. The project focuses on core areas such as clean water access, waste management, and carbon emissions reduction across four villages. As part of this engagement, IORA will be documenting the project's impact, building a robust knowledge base, and advocating for policy changes that can support the replication and scaling of the eco-village model across India.

A critical component of this consultancy involves conducting an end-line carbon budgeting exercise to quantify the carbon emission reductions achieved through project interventions. This follows the mid-line assessment conducted in the previous year and will provide evidence of the effectiveness of eco-village strategies in addressing climate goals at the rural level.

Beyond technical assessments, IORA is facilitating stakeholder engagement at both local and national levels. Through capacity-building workshops, communication materials, and social media outreach, the project's successes and lessons learned are being widely disseminated to promote dialogue around rural sustainability.

This initiative serves as a replicable model for low-carbon rural development, with the potential to shape future eco-village strategies and policy frameworks across India.

From Local to Global - Creating a Model for Eco Village

Marking a significant milestone in our collaboration with GIZ India and Hindustan Unilever (HUL), IORA completed the end-line assessment for the From Local to Global, creating a Model for Eco Village project. The study evaluated the performance of key sustainability interventions across selected villages in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, providing a comprehensive comparison with the previous year's baseline.

The assessment captured measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, along with improvements in waste management, water conservation, and energy use, reinforcing the transformative potential of integrated rural development.

The findings were showcased at the World Sustainable Development Summit 2025, highlighting how data-driven approaches can guide and scale effective eco-village models across India. The project exemplifies the role of rural communities in advancing India's climate and sustainability goals.

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Technical Assistance for the Climate Finance Project of State Bank of India

India’s largest public sector bank, the State Bank of India (SBI), is advancing its climate-resilient investment strategy through a strategic initiative funded by the French Development Agency (AFD). This initiative is aligned with SBI’s long-term vision to integrate climate adaptation into its core investment processes, while supporting India’s broader sustainability commitments.

In collaboration with Espelia and Actus ESG, IORA is delivering critical preparatory technical assistance to support the development of the adaptation component of SBI’s climate finance framework.

As part of this effort, IORA is helping define robust mechanisms to identify and appraise climate adaptation investments. Key contributions include the development of a climate risk mapping tool and a set of verification protocols to ensure that supported investments meet clearly defined climate adaptation criteria.

IORA is also advising SBI on improving institutional capacities to assess adaptation projects and streamline processes, enhancing overall climate finance readiness. This initiative will strengthen SBI's capabilities and AFD's credit line, promoting investments in climate-resilient infrastructure.

By embedding climate adaptation into financial decision-making, this project marks a significant step in aligning India’s financial sector with international climate adaptation frameworks and in building a more resilient and sustainable financial ecosystem.

Scoping Study and Pilot Implementation for Building Sustainability and Climate Resilience in the Tea Sector

In continuation of our partnership with the Assam Climate Change Management Society (ACCMS), Government of Assam, IORA has completed a comprehensive feasibility study for pilot site selection. This was followed by stakeholder consultations with over 20 Small Tea Growers (STGs) across five districts in the state. These engagements have been instrumental in identifying climate-resilient strategies tailored to local agro-ecological and socio-economic conditions.

The initiative focuses on enhancing the climate resilience of Assam's STGs by introducing climate-smart technologies, piloting targeted interventions, and formulating long-term strategies to support the development of a sustainable, high-value tea sector with robust and resilient value chains.

The project aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the tea sector through mitigation and adaptation measures, enhance the adaptive capacity of smallholder tea growers (STGs), and support state and national climate action goals.

Transforming India's Solid Waste Management: A Policy Roadmap for Sustainable Solutions

IORA, in collaboration with the Institute of Governance and Sustainable Development (IGSD), is developing a comprehensive report, outlining a strategic roadmap for transforming India's waste management landscape.

The report will offer an in-depth analysis of the current state of solid waste management in the country, covering key aspects such as waste generation, collection, treatment, and disposal. It will contextualise these findings within national climate targets and global environmental commitments, addressing the sector's growing contribution to greenhouse gas emissions.

Key focus areas of the report include the potential of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), the integration of technological innovations, and the importance of behavioural change in enhancing the effectiveness of waste management systems.

In addition to identifying global best practices, the report will provide actionable recommendations on procurement, governance, regulation, and technology deployment.

By presenting a forward-looking vision, the initiative aims to support the transition towards sustainable, climate-aligned waste management solutions across India.

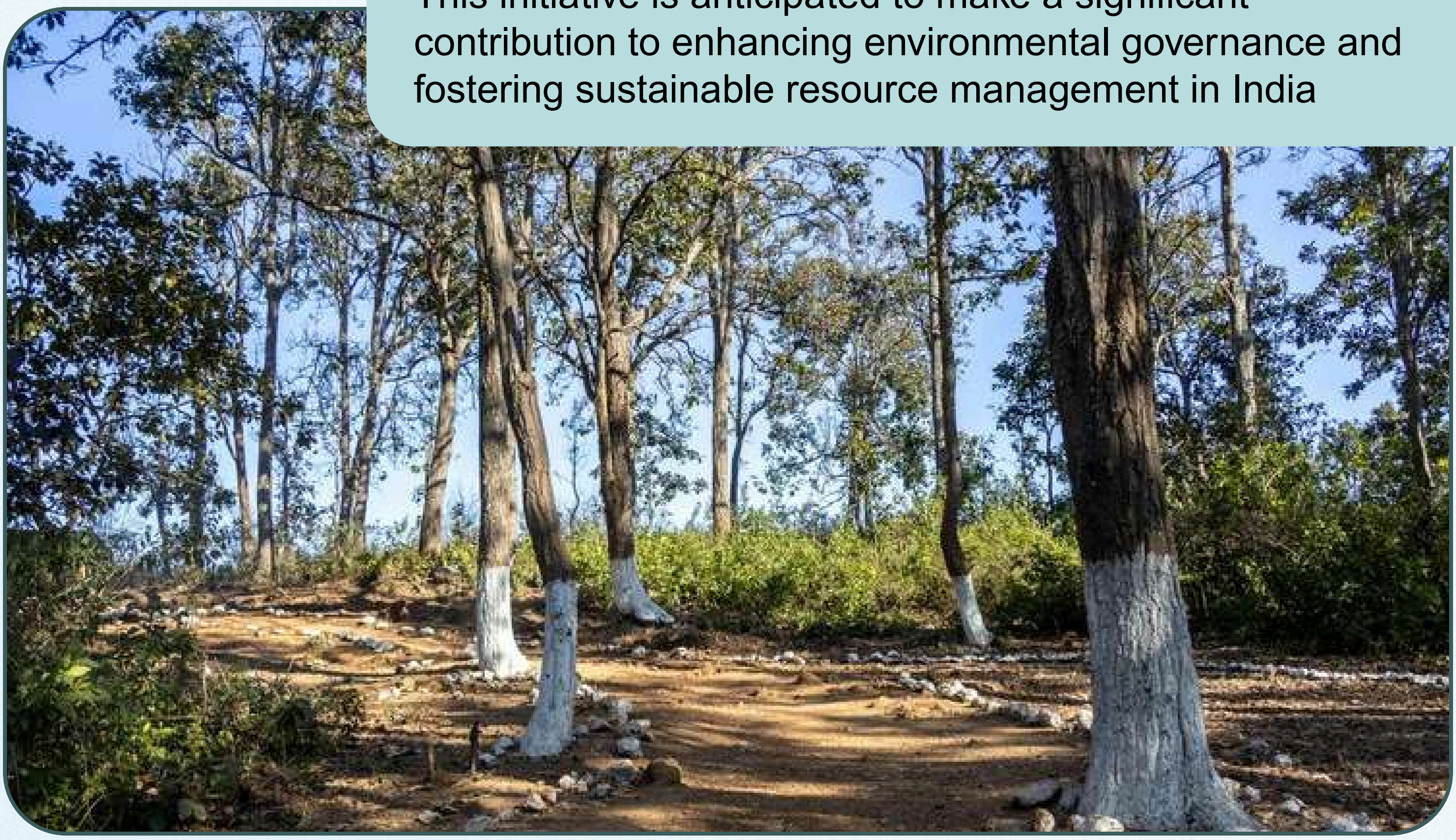
Evaluation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes on Water Resources, Environment, and Forest

IORA is supporting the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog, in a national evaluation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes focused on water, forests, and biodiversity. As part of a multi-partner consortium with KPMG and IPSOS, IORA is leading the assessment of schemes within the Environment and Forests sector, including the National Mission for Green India, Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystems, and Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats.

Using a mixed-methods approach that combines household surveys, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and stakeholder consultations, IORA is generating evidence on scheme performance, implementation effectiveness, and on-ground outcomes.

The findings will assist in shaping future program design by pinpointing implementation gaps and showcasing best practices. Emphasis will be placed on aligning efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and the Global Biodiversity Framework's 30x30 targets.

This initiative is anticipated to make a significant contribution to enhancing environmental governance and fostering sustainable resource management in India



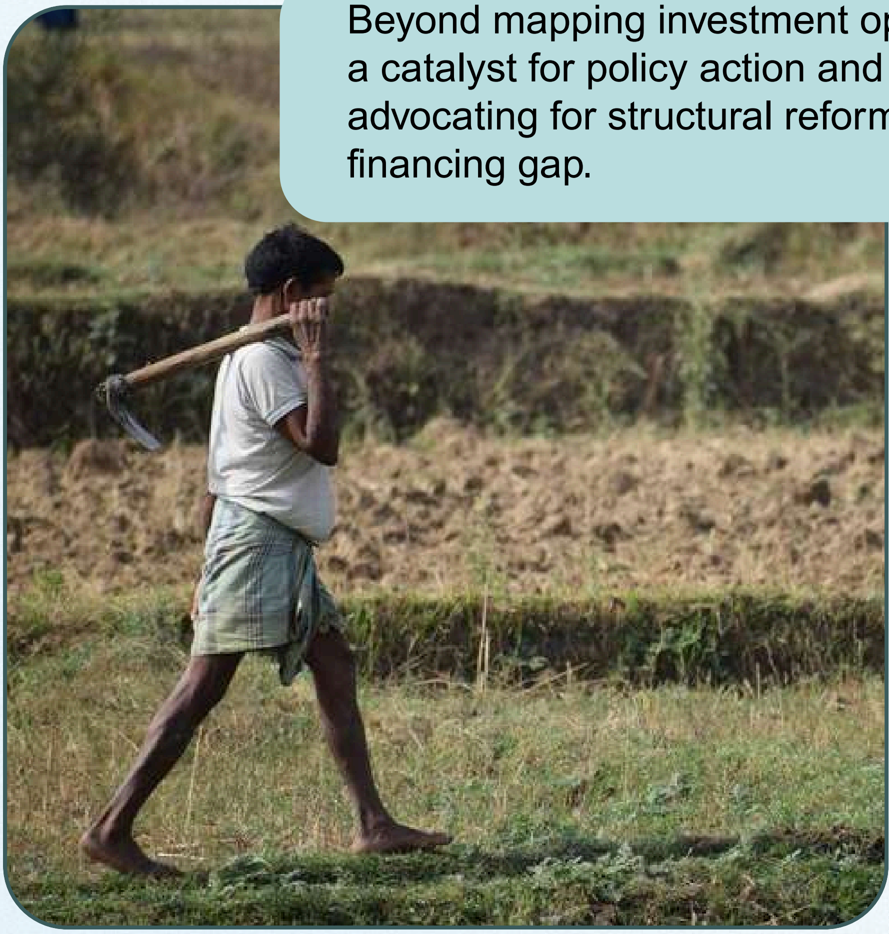
Unlocking Private Sector Investment into Natural Climate Solutions in India

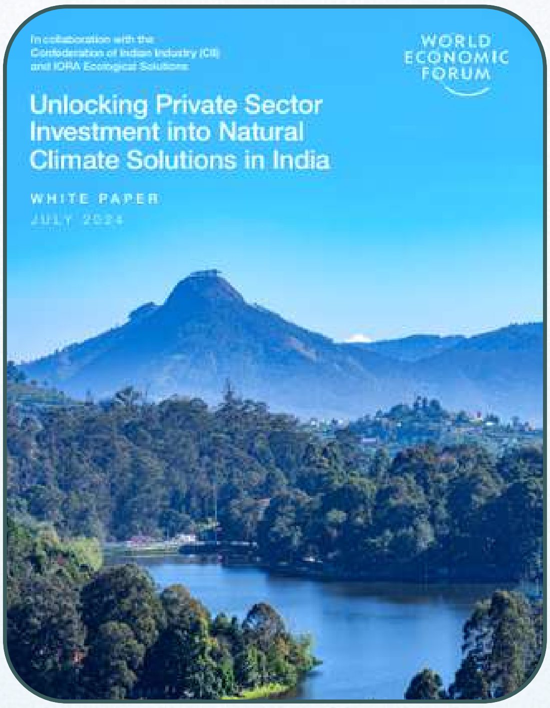
In partnership with the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), IORA co-authored a white paper titled "Unlocking Private Sector Investment into Natural Climate Solutions in India." This publication underscores the critical role of Natural Climate Solutions (NCS) in mitigating climate change while highlighting the significant funding gap that hinders their full potential.

Currently, of the $200 billion invested globally in NCS, only 18% originates from the private sector. This disparity signals an urgent need to scale private sector participation, particularly in countries like India where nature-based interventions can yield up to one-third of the required global greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions by 2030.

The white paper provides a blueprint for mobilizing private finance for NCS in India. It outlines investment pathways, identifies barriers and enabling conditions, and proposes actionable strategies to encourage businesses to integrate NCS into their climate and sustainability portfolios.

Beyond mapping investment opportunities, the study serves as a catalyst for policy action and public-private dialogue, advocating for structural reforms and incentives to bridge the financing gap.





Data Monitoring and Measurement

Development of the BCIP

IORA is contributing to the development of the Climate and Biodiversity Information Platform (BCIP), a pioneering national initiative led by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), in collaboration with the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) and Botanical Survey of India (BSI).

The platform is designed to consolidate India's diverse biodiversity datasets into a unified, accessible, and analytically robust system. IORA is developing an interactive analytical dashboard that integrates over 100 years of biological records from ZSI and BSI with climate and geospatial datasets, offering a comprehensive view of species distribution and ecosystem health across temporal and spatial scales.

A key innovation of the project is the deployment of AI-powered Optical Character Recognition (OCR) to extract and digitise floral and faunal data from historical archives, thereby fast-tracking data mobilisation and enabling deeper insights.
In its next phase, CBIP will be transformed into a Decision Support System (DSS) to guide national conservation efforts. It is envisioned as a centralised digital resource for tracking biodiversity trends, analysing species vulnerability to climate change, prioritising restoration efforts, and informing evidence-based, nature-positive policies.

Development of Nature Finance Portal

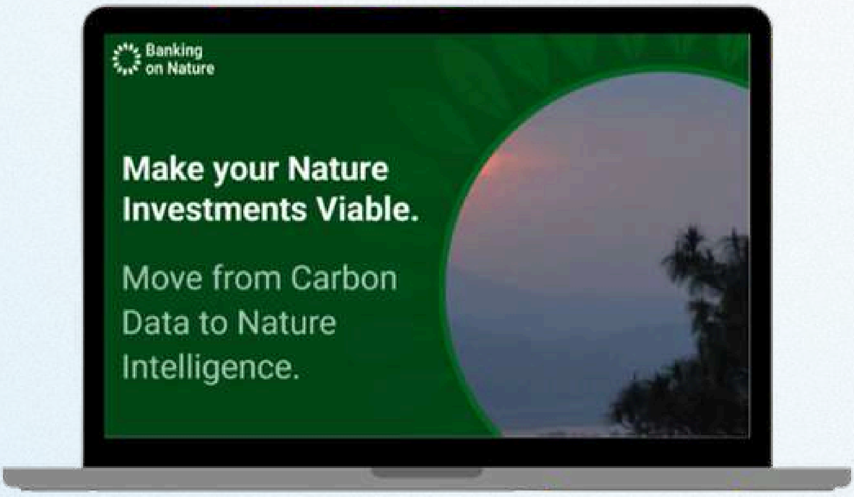
Through the Climate Solutions Partnership, HSBC is collaborating with the World Resources Institute (WRI), Michigan State University (MSU), and Iora Ecological Solutions to engage the financial sector in accelerating investments in Nature-based Solutions (NbS). By leveraging robust data and cross-sectoral collaboration, the initiative aims to enhance the financial sector's capacity to assess, evaluate, and monitor NbS investments that reduce climate risks and support the conservation and restoration of ecosystems.

As part of this effort, a workshop was hosted at HSBC's London headquarters, convening financial sector practitioners and NbS experts to exchange insights on the effective use of metrics and measurement frameworks for evaluating climate and biodiversity outcomes.

A key takeaway from the workshop was the need for practical learning tools tailored to the needs of financial professionals and decision-makers. In response, the project team is developing an interactive website that will serve as a knowledge hub featuring:

- Topical guides and information documents
- Short online courses on good practices in nature investing
- A field-based case study from Meghalaya, showcasing applied measurements and their role in reducing investment risk

This platform will help build sectoral awareness around the importance of investing in nature and promote the use of high-quality measurement tools to de-risk NbS investments, ultimately driving the shift towards a more climate-resilient, nature-positive economy.



Selection of Intervention Landscapes in Uttarakhand under RECAP4NDC

Under the RECAP4NDC (Restore, Conserve, and Protect Forest and Tree Cover for NDC Development) initiative funded by GIZ India, IORA has made substantial progress in supporting forest and landscape restoration efforts in Uttarakhand, in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).

Applying a Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) framework, our team assessed 13 land degradation parameters to identify priority areas for Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR). Based on ecological, socio-economic, and policy-related considerations, seven landscapes were initially shortlisted. Following detailed ground validation across six districts, two landscapes with a combined area of 30,000 hectares were selected for restoration interventions.

These efforts are set to significantly contribute to the restoration of degraded forest landscapes, enhancement of local livelihoods, and support for India's commitments under the National Forest Policy and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

This project reinforces India's role in global climate action while building resilience and ecological health at the landscape level.

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