

# PATHWAYS LINKING BUSINESS AND BIODIVERSITY

July, 2025 | Centre for Business Leadership in Nature Restoration, UN GCNI



## Message from Executive Director, UN GCNI

Welcome to Pathways Linking Profit and Planet, our dispatch from the Centre for Business Leadership on Nature Restoration at the UN Global Compact Network India. This centre's goal is to help Businesses incorporate biodiversity and sustainability into their drivers of growth, arming them with research-backed insights, hands-on trainings and implementation of real-world restoration projects. Through this initiative, we try to put together a curated list of field stories, national and international happenings in the world of Business and Biodiversity Conservation. Our aim is simple: to show that healthy ecosystems and healthy balance sheets grow from the same soil.

Ratnesh Jha

## One Nation, One Mission: End Plastic Pollution, A National Mandate for Business and Biodiversity



On June 5, 2025, World Environment Day, Union Minister Bhupender Yadav launched "One Nation, One Mission: End Plastic Pollution," woven into Mission LiFE's vision. He called on every sector to unite against a waste crisis threatening both land and marine biodiversity. This campaign marks a decisive shift toward safeguarding ecosystems and livelihoods alike.

### India's Plastic Burden

India produces 9.3 million tonnes of plastic waste annually, almost 20 percent of the global total. On farmland, films break down into microplastics that stunt crops and contaminate groundwater leading to public health crisis. In oceans, turtles mistake bags for jellyfish, seabirds choke on caps, and coral reefs suffer from blocked sunlight and disrupted food chains hampering the ecosystem.

## Extended Producer Responsibility framework

Minister Bhupender Yadav underscored that technology and business must go hand in hand. "We need innovations that turn plastic from a problem into an opportunity," he said, urging companies to embrace reuse, recycling, and high-value recovery. India's EPR framework shifts producer accountability across a product's full lifecycle, laying the groundwork for a true circular economy.

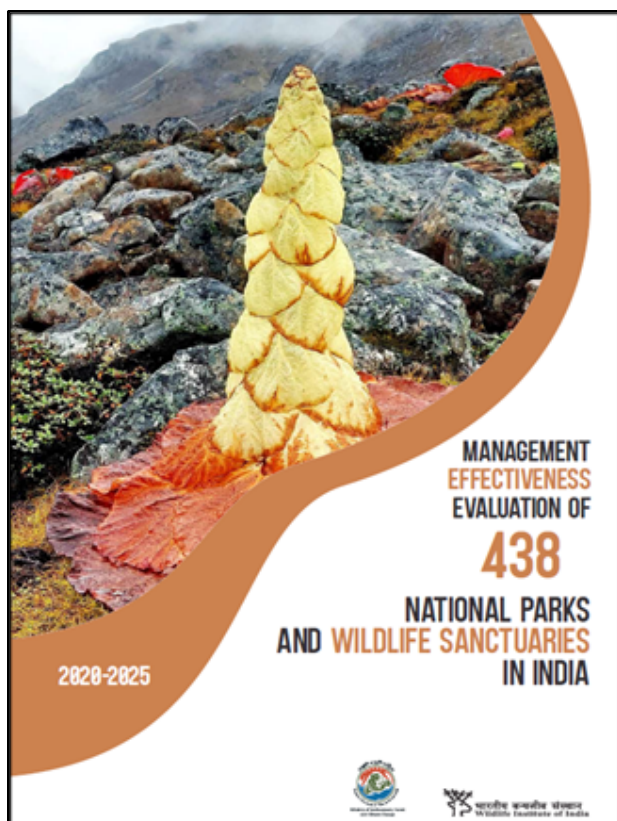
## National Plastic Waste Reporting Portal

A highlight of the launch was the new real-time, online National Plastic Waste Reporting Portal, replacing cumbersome paper trails. By mapping every step, from waste pickers to final disposal. It promises unprecedented transparency. As of December 2024, it had already logged over 1.03 billion tonnes of post-consumer plastic, proving digital tools can drive measurable change.

## Why This Matters to Indian Business?

Healthy soils, clean waterways, and vibrant forests underpin India's agriculture, tourism, and fisheries. By auditing plastic footprints, setting clear timelines to phase out single use plastic, and partnering with certified recyclers via the EPR portal, companies can unlock green finance and bolster brand reputation among eco-savvy consumers.

## India's Conservation Scorecard Reveals Stark Regional Divides, Urging Corporate Stewardship



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Chandigarh led at 85.16 % (“Very Good”) followed by Kerala at 76.22 %, with Karnataka, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh rated “Good.” In stark contrast, Ladakh scored just 34.9 % (“Poor”), exposing critical management gaps in its fragile high-altitude ecosystems.

### MEE Report: A Data-Driven Baseline for Corporate Strategy

State-wise scores give businesses the data they need to align with on-ground realities. Agricultural buyers can prioritise robust forest corridors, while firms near underperforming sanctuaries can fund community patrols or habitat restoration, transforming CSR from generic pledges into targeted biodiversity action.

### Maturing Policy Landscape and Business Opportunities

As lenders factor natural-capital risk and green bonds demand tangible biodiversity outcomes, MEE scores become a trusted metric. Early adopters can mitigate reputational threats, unlock green financing, and secure an edge in sustainability-focused markets.

### Corporate India's Imperative: Championing Ecological Stewardship

Firms must extend stewardship beyond their own footprints, investing in conservation partnerships and sustainable sourcing to safeguard vital ecosystems. This not only strengthens supply-chain resilience but also builds brand loyalty among eco-aware consumers.

The Call for Collaborative Efforts in Safeguarding Natural Heritage Protecting India's natural heritage requires collective action across sectors. By embedding biodiversity into procurement, operations, and community engagement, businesses can help secure both the country's ecosystems and its long-term economic prosperity.

Source: WII

## Reviving Deccan Grasslands Through Unified Action

Established in January 2024, the Gulunche Grass Nursery in Purandar tehsil, Pune district, is India's first facility dedicated to propagating native grasses for ecosystem restoration. It runs proudly with the foundation of four pillars, the Pune District Administration, corporate partners, The Grasslands Trust and ATREE, and a network of local farmers and women. By July 2025, the nursery has produced over 28,000 saplings and maintains a seed bank of 8,000, with 45,000 saplings already transplanted across a five-hectare pilot site. An additional 33,000 grass plugs and seedballs are slated for planting this season. Species such as *Cenchrus ciliaris* and *Dicanthium annulatum* are re-establishing native grasslands, improving soil structure, enhancing water retention and creating habitat for blackbuck, chinkara and pollinators.



Local community members lead seed collection, nursery management and field planting, ensuring that restoration delivers both ecological benefits and income opportunities. Quarterly monitoring shows measurable gains in vegetation density, soil moisture and wildlife presence, underscoring the project's early success.

Gulunche's collaborative model, melding government leadership, corporate funding, NGO expertise and community ownership, it offers a clear blueprint for scaling grassland restoration across India's dry zones.

Source: Hindustan Times



## IBAT Alliance Amplifies Biodiversity Data with Record \$2.5 Million Investment



On 23 June 2025, BirdLife International, Conservation International, IUCN and UNEP-WCMC jointly announced that the IBAT Alliance had secured a landmark \$2.5 million for 2024. More than double the \$1.2 million committed in 2023. These funds are being reinvested into the World Database on Protected Areas, the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas, ensuring that decision-makers worldwide continue to access the most authoritative, science-based data for screening risks, setting targets and tracking progress against the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### Driving Impact Across Sectors

By December 2024, over 200 private-sector organisations had tapped into IBAT's enhanced datasets, directly funding updates that fuel tangible outcomes on the ground.

In 2024 alone, partners identified more than 600 new Key Biodiversity Areas, focusing on underrepresented regions in South America and Africa, updated protected-area records across around 100 territories from the Arctic to the Andes,

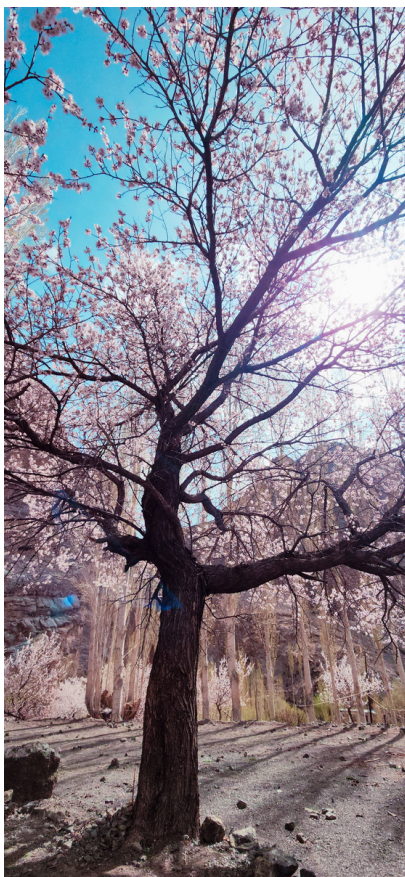
and assessed nearly 1,70,000 species on the Red List. Thanks to these efforts, the Iberian lynx was downlisted from Endangered to Vulnerable.

### Empowering Action and Accountability

"This record investment ensures our datasets continue to evolve, giving decision-makers the tools they need to bend the curve on biodiversity loss," says Ed Ellis, Head of IBAT. Dr Grethel Aguilar, IUCN Director General, adds, "The Red List is the barometer of life, this funding keeps it vital for governments, businesses and scientists." As biodiversity loss poses systemic risks to economies and communities, IBAT's \$2.5 million commitment serves as both a catalyst and a signal. It empowers corporate sustainability teams to refine risk management, conservation practitioners to hone restoration priorities and policymakers to craft evidence-based regulations, bridging ambition with accountability.

Source: IBAT

## The Connected Canopy: Royal Enfield's View

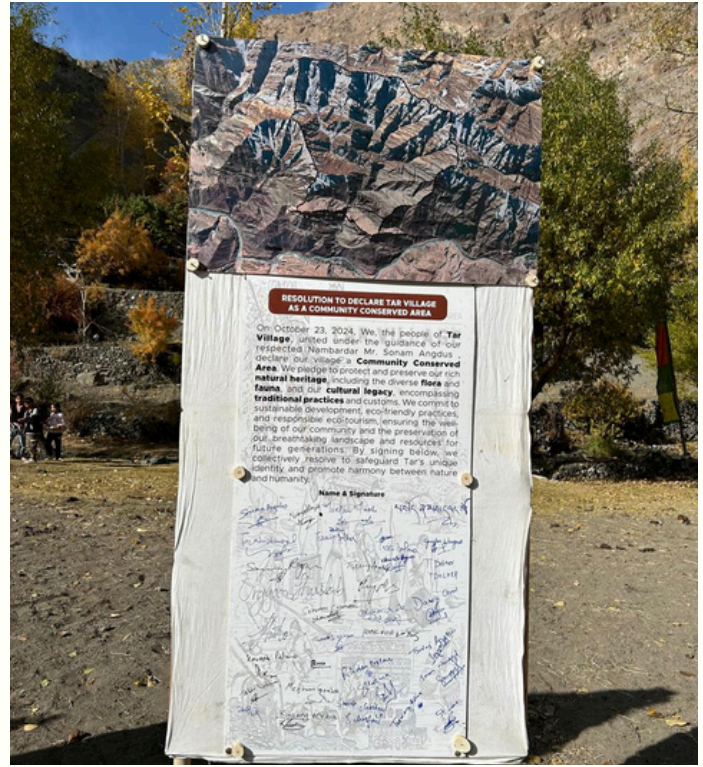


Community-conserved areas (CCAs) are sites of ecological importance that are voluntarily conserved by local communities for their biodiversity values, cultural significance, and ecosystem services. The management of these CCAs is either through customary laws, cultural traditions, or community-led organisations. CCAs are important because a lot of the rich biodiversity thrives outside of conventional protected area networks and the community is the custodian. Studies in Ladakh have revealed that the 477 snow leopards in Ladakh are almost 68% of India's population. This elusive big cat is thriving far beyond protected areas, in landscapes shared with herders, livestock, and travellers. Showing that coexistence is possible, but also fragile and comes with certain challenges. Snow leopards are crucial for maintaining the ecological balance of their high-altitude habitats, acting as both apex predators and indicators of ecosystem health.

As part of RE's Keystone Species project in Ladakh, the Royal Enfield Social Mission in partnership with Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust (SLC-IT), were able to work with the community of Tar village to establish Ladakh's first CCA. This landmark announcement was made on October 23, 2024 which is World Snow Leopard Day. The Snow Leopard is also one of three keystone species, including the Himalayan Brown Bear and the Golden Langur, that Royal Enfield supports in the Himalayas, with a long-term vision of fostering human-animal harmony and encouraging mindful exploration. As a species deeply affected by climate change and having cultural significance, its survival is tied to the health of the entire landscape.



Tar village is situated at an altitude of 3,400 to 4,000 meters and has a unique location, characterized by encircling cliffs, narrow valleys, and rocky terrain shaped by wind and erosion leading to a favourable microclimate. The valleys are fed by snow melt fed streams and springs providing essential water for agriculture and sustaining the sparse vegetation. The region is home to over 100 plant species, many with medicinal properties and supports a diverse range of mammalian herbivores like the Asiatic Ibex. These herbivores, in turn, sustain apex predators like the Snow Leopard and the Golden Eagle.



The CCA at Tar, spanning more than 40 sq.km, is managed by a committee that has representation from village leaders, elders, youth and retired government / army personnel etc to oversee the management of the CCA, ensuring that all decisions are made transparently and sustainably. Tar has also since received the prestigious Best Tourism Village Award for Responsible Tourism, granted by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, in honour of its successful eco-tourism and sustainability efforts. - *Sunil Rajagopal, Lead Sustainability, Royal Enfield*

### Centre Highlights

#### Launch of Three Landmark Publications – Centre for Business Leadership on Nature Restoration, UN GCNI



United Nations Global Compact Network India with support of Refex Group started Centre for Business Leadership on Nature Restoration in Chennai in July 2024. Since its conception the centre is striving to become a knowledge resource for businesses to connect them with on ground biodiversity conservation. UN-GCNI hosted a focused evening to introduce three new reports from its Centre for Business Leadership in Nature Restoration. Generously supported by BVLGARI and partnered with Refex Group, the gathering brought together leaders from government, industry, science and community groups to share practical guidance for embedding biodiversity into corporate strategy and on ground projects. The documents can be accessed by scanning the QR codes below.



- State of the Sector Report 2025: Business & Biodiversity authored by Dr. Somnath Bandyopadhyay, Sakshi Grover, Peeyush Sekhsaria & Pavithra Ganesh
- Case Studies of Corporate-led Biodiversity Initiatives authored by Lakshmi Sruthi Thangallapally & Pavithra Ganesh
- Mapping Opportunities for Corporate Engagement in Critical Ecosystems authored by Ankita Padelkar

This launch was more than a formal release. It demonstrated a shared determination to turn insight into actions. The three reports now stand as practical roadmaps for combining strategic guidance, field-tested models, and ecosystem-specific pathways. It will help businesses integrate biodiversity into every facet of their work.

To access the documents, scan the QR codes.

refex



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## CELEBRATING BUSINESS LEADERSHIP IN BIODIVERSITY

Mr. Achalender Reddy, IFS (Retd.), Chairman,  
National Biodiversity Authority  
CHIEF GUEST



June 18, 2025 | 17:30 Hrs - 19:30 Hrs | Hotel Leela Palace, Raja  
Annamalai Puram, Chennai



Conception: Mr. Suneel Padale

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