

India's top philanthropies come together to launch India Climate Collaborative

Climate change materially affects nearly all sectors - agriculture, forestry & land use, water and energy – and what they are able to achieve. While India's response to climate change has been positive thus far, there is an opportunity to act now and boost efforts.

To do this, the India Climate Collaborative will:

- Connect and strengthen the Indian climate community
- Build a compelling, India-focused climate narrative
- Drive climate solutions that help people and nature thrive

{See Annexure for quotes from Hemendra Kothari, Leena Dandekar, Mridula Ramesh, Vidya Shah, Dr. Ajay Mathur and Aditi Premji}

India, January 22, 2019: In a bold effort to solve India's climate challenge, over ten of the country's foremost philanthropies have come together to found the India Climate Collaborative (ICC). The ICC marks the first-ever collective response by industry leaders such as Ratan N. Tata, Anand Mahindra, Rohini Nilekani, Nadir Godrej, Aditi and Rishad Premji, Vidya Shah, and Hemendra Kothari, among others, for effective action towards a shared climate goal.

Commenting on the launch, **Mr. Ratan N. Tata, Chairman, Tata Trusts**, said, *"Our collective leadership through the ICC will indicate to the world that Indian philanthropy is ready to be a leader in climate action."*

The ICC seeks to build a collaborative platform for diverse voices, innovative solutions, and collective investments. Mandated to amplify and spread local solutions, it will inspire and connect governments, businesses, impact investors, research institutions, scientists, and civil society to work together to solve India's climate crisis with the support of the international climate community. *"Scientific research tells us that the next decade will be critical in dealing with the global climate crisis," said Mr. Anand Mahindra, Chairman, Mahindra Group. "It is clear that the world cannot continue to pursue a business-as-usual approach and nobody can solve the problem on their own. Business, government, and philanthropy must collaborate within and among themselves to drive results quickly and at scale. The India Climate Collaborative can make this happen and I welcome its creation. Together we will find solutions that will make climate action effective and impactful."*

Mr. Nadir B. Godrej, Managing Director of Godrej Industries said, *"There is a lot that businesses can do, and are doing, to tackle the climate emergency at a cost that is not significantly high. Government can play a role in providing incentives and disincentives to ensure lower carbon emissions. We have to look at localised solutions that can solve global problems, and this will need businesses, governments, academia, and individuals to work together to identify and scale up solutions. The role of philanthropy will be to augment these efforts. The ICC can provide a platform for India to lead the way in bringing all these elements together to create a sustainable and successful model for climate work."*

The ICC is currently a 40 + member organisation and growing. They consist of:

Leading government agencies, businesses, scientific institutions and universities: *The Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), the Ashoka Trust for Research on Ecology & Environment (ATREE), the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), The Council on Environment, Energy & Water (CEEW), Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), The Nature Conservancy – India (TNC India), World Resources Institute (WRI), Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), IIT-Delhi, Indian School of Business (ISB), IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative, Shakti Foundation, Dalberg Advisors, Intellectap, Mahindra Group, Wipro, Godrej Industries and HUL Foundation, to name a few.*

Implementors and other non-profits such as *Swades Foundation, Sanctuary Asia Foundation, Mongabay-India, Indian Development Review (IDR), People's Archive for Rural India (PARI), Climate Collective Foundation, SELCO, and the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES)*, amongst many others are also a part of the collaborative.

Global and national collaborative platforms and networks such as the *EChO Network*, *Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN)*, *Dasra*, *Sankalp Forum*, *Forum for the Future*, the *Climate and Land Use Alliance (CLUA)*, and the *Global Advisory for the Future of Food (GAFF)*.

“India’s diverse topography, dependence on agriculture, and rapid industrialization, provides a large opportunity to reflect on the dramatic impact that climate change can have on its economic growth. The discourse on climate change needs to move beyond the international and national arenas into the heartlands of rural India, where its impact has already led to dramatic loss of livelihoods. EdelGive Foundation has continued to invest in solutions that will reduce such losses and build resilient communities. We see ICC as a fantastic platform that can take this goal even further.” said **Ms. Vidya Shah, CEO, EdelGive Foundation**.

India is deeply vulnerable to climate change due to its high dependence on agriculture, long coastline and reliance on fossil fuels. We are already facing the initial effects of climate change with rising temperatures, decreasing rainfall and extreme weather events becoming more common. Unless we act now, India risks deeper, more systemic effects in future – India ranked [highest](#) in climate-triggered deaths in 2018 and is the fifth most vulnerable of 181 countries to the impacts of climate change. Approximately 42% of India’s land area [faced drought](#) in April 2019, worsening the farm crisis. Since 1980, nearly [60,000 suicides](#) in India are attributed to warming temperatures, accounting for almost seven percent of the national upward trend in suicide rates. There has been a 150% rise in air pollution related deaths over the past 20 years and in 2017 alone, India saw [1.2 million deaths](#) due to air pollution. India suffered an economic loss of [\\$37 billion](#) due to climate change in 2018, of which losses due to floods amounted to [US \\$2.8 billion](#).

“Climate change seems to be already upon us. In India, we need to seriously prepare ourselves for all the innovation and the multidimensional action that will be required to continue on our development trajectory in this new environment. We must ensure the economy grows in a way that creates the jobs of the future and protects our natural ecosystems. Climate action is not an either/or,” said **Ms. Rohini Nilekani**.

The ICC will roll out initiatives on the themes of air, water, and land, to cover issues relevant to the Indian climate crisis and to the ICC’s members. In the coming months, the ICC will host a convening of actors to battle air pollution across India, conduct a technical training on climate change for officials from the Government of Rajasthan, and launch research on how philanthropy can help build climate resilient communities.

In 2019, the ICC had hosted a Sustainable Land Use Forum. It showcased the ICC’s strength and approach by bringing together more than 100 partners across sectors to discuss land use strategies to recognize their interlinked impacts on multiple co-benefit areas. It provided a foundation of ideas and pathways for the ICC and its partners to address climate change.

Ms. Shloka Nath, who leads the sustainability portfolio at Tata Trusts, has been appointed the **Executive Director of the India Climate Collaborative**. According to Ms. Nath, *“We have a chance to clean up the air, steward our water supply, as well as bring the clean jobs of the future to India if we act together and invest in the policies, people, and organizations that promote the climate-friendly changes we all need to make. Our response to the climate crisis is going to be a uniquely Indian story.”*

Annexure:

“Given its size and growth potential, a positive climate trajectory for India can significantly impact the future of the planet, and India should play a substantial role in the global debate,” said **Mr. Hemendra Kothari, Wildlife Conservation Trust**, a member of the ICC. *“In the coming years, the planet’s future will be determined by the arc of growth and the manner in which natural resources such as water and forests are safeguarded in countries like India. This is where most of the world’s people are.”*

Mr. Arun Maira, former member of the Planning Commission of India said, *“Climate change has systemic consequences. Mitigation and adaptation to climate change will require cooperation amongst diverse stakeholders and multiple causes. The keys to results are systems thinking and collaborative action.”*

Ms. Leena Dandekar, Founder, Raintree Foundation said, *“The world needs every community to take ownership of their own environment. We need balanced models for human prosperity that respect and restore the interdependency of natural systems. I am glad that thought leaders in India are coming together to push for action on climate and the*

environment. We at Raintree Foundation are looking at the India Climate Collaborative to influence and guide our grassroots projects.”

Dr. Navroz Dubash, Professor, Centre for Policy Research said, “Climate change is a high stakes challenge of India. Climate impacts will almost certainly act as an enormous drag on India’s development and efforts at poverty eradication. But with some foresight India could position itself much better to be competitive in a future low-carbon world because we have not yet locked-in high carbon infrastructure. It is in this context that the creation of the India Climate Collaborative is truly significant. It suggests important Indian voices and actors are standing up and owning the importance of climate change to India’s future. This is a timely effort that deserves full support and participation.”

Dr. Ajay Mathur, Director General, TERI said, “Climate change is happening. We need to both manage the unavoidable impacts of the already-committed climate change, as well as avoid future climate change which can turn us into an unmanageable world. India is at the forefront of innovative approaches to address both climate mitigation and adaptation – especially since we will need to reach out to large parts of the population with enough energy, enough water, and ensure that they have enough resilience. This needs new approaches, and Indian philanthropy is crucial to helping us find these approaches”

Ms. Aditi Premji said, “Climate change will have a tremendously disproportionate effect on millions of India’s poor. We are at a crucial moment in time where the creation of the ICC is not just a powerful inflection point but a necessary one of collaboration and impact to help further enhance the climate narrative in the country.”

Mridula Ramesh, Founder, Sundaram Climate Institute said, “The India Climate Collaborative is an important milestone and catalyst in India’s journey from climate vulnerability to climate resilience. Our goal is flourishing forests, water bodies, cities, and new jobs and industries – the ICC can help us get there.

Mr. Jagdeesh Rao Puppala, Chief Executive, Foundation for Ecological Security said, “The enormity and urgency of the challenges facing the planet and people today demands transformational change. The complex nature of the problems facing us require the coming together of various initiatives and actors while maintaining a distributed, and pluralistic character. The contours of such a systems change shape the narrative of the India Climate Collaborative. By joining the India Climate Collaborative, we bring the voices of rural men and women as equal partners in determining the future of the planet and the various forms of life it nurtures.”

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The India Climate Collaborative is registered as the Council of Philanthropies for Climate Action.