

Green Transition in New India: Issues and Remedies

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Abstract

Environment plays vital, instrumental and pivotal role in the existence and development of the human society. The world community has been exploiting the environment for speedy development and extremely neglecting the protection and preservation of the environment. Modernization, industrialization and globalization have not only accelerated the process of development but also polluted and destroyed the green environment worldwide including India. The long colonial exploitation and the closed economy adopted in the first four decades after independence have weakened the Indian economy and forced the country to introduce liberalization and privatization in the economic sector for stabilizing and strengthening its economy. This move contributed significantly for the economic development but adversely affected the green environment due to the developmental projects, construction of highways and railways and establishment of large-scale industries. The vision of “New India” undertaken by the government of India goes a long way in preserving, protecting and promoting green environment. Green India is a significant part of the broad vision of New India which facilitates tremendously the process of green transition in India. There have been seen promising ecological developments in last decade. This paper attempts to explore the recent developments in the environmental sector for achieving the goal of Green India. It also finds out the major challenges preventing and obstructing the process of green India domestically and internationally and suggests some key remedies for successfully realizing the goal of Green India. This paper employs normative method in order to collect relevant and reliable data. Secondary data and government reports from different ministries form significant part of this paper.

Keywords: New India, Green India, Green transition, Climate-resilient, Green livelihoods, ecological sustainability.

Introduction

Global politics is subject to flux and World order is a changing phenomenon because state actors are the main actors and their all activities are guided by realism. In this Changing Global Order, the world is grappled with many global issues. Global environmental crisis is one of the most devastating and threatening global issues which is a matter of debate and discussion throughout the world because if it gets complicated it can destroy all world. This problem is exacerbating day by day that is why world community must ponder about environmental protection and take global efforts to resolve environmental problems. India has become one of the world's major economies due to its large domestic market, expanding digital economy, growing infrastructure phenomenal contribution towards United Nation and increasing participation in global trade have strengthened its global position. Strategic Location of India

contributes for maritime security, global trade and Indo-Pacific cooperation. Most of the countries are going behind arm race and large-scale industries for securing their security and economic development which lead to the environmental pollution and destabilise the ecological balance of earth. India has been providing tremendous contribution for preservation and protection of environment and ecological balance domestically and internationally in last One decade. Specifically, under the vision of New India, India has been undertaking several monumental initiatives domestically and internationally for ecological development.

New India

“New India” is a vision of government of India to make India into a powerful prosperous and progressive country, a dream of more than 144 crore of people to transform India into a sustainable and self-reliant country and a movement to bring revolutionary changes in major sectors for successful working of democracy in India. “The vision of “New India” was designed to be achieved by 2022 upon the completion of 75th year of Independence but the emergence of Covid-19 disrupted and dismantled all developments taken place in different sectors and by the way it’s a herculean task to achieve a massive goal within a limited time. India is running in transitional phase since efforts and initiatives are under way it will require more time to realize the dream of India. “New India” has brought sea changes in all sectors but it has facilitated phenomenal and monumental developments in the field of environment to achieve the goal of “Green India”. The vision of “New India” contributes tremendously for green transition in India” (Niti Ayog, 2018).

Green Transition in “New India”: The green transition refers to the shift from a fossil fuel-dependent economy to a low-carbon, resource-efficient, environmentally sustainable, and climate-resilient economy. Green Transition involves changes in transport, agriculture, industries, cities, waste management, energy consumption, and employment with-out getting limited to renewable energy. Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was implemented in both rural and urban area through phase I and phase II in order to eliminate open defecation and manage solid and liquid waste and brought fruitful results towards environmental protection. “GOBARdhan scheme is an initiative undertaken by the Government of India aimed at converting cattle dung and other organic waste into useful resources, such as biogas, bio-CNG and organic manure” (Ministry of Jal Shakti, 2026a). “According to Global Forest Resources Assessment Report released by Food and Agriculture Organization on 22 October 2025, India has achieved a significant milestone in global forest statistics by advancing to the 9th position. India has also maintained its 3rd position globally in the annual net gain of forest area. India ranked 5th among the top global carbon sinks, with its forests removing 150 Mt of CO₂ per year during 2021–2025” (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2025a).

“Solar energy capacity surged from 2.82 GW in 2014 to 107.9 GW in 2025. Wind energy Capacity grew from 21.04 GW in 2014 to 51.05 GW in 2025. Nuclear energy capacity increased from 4.78 GW to 8.78 GW. Solar tariff dropped by 65% from rupees 6.17/kwh 2014-15 to 2.15/kwh in 2024-25. The number of Ramsar sites increased from 26 in 2013 to 85 in 2024” (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2025b).

“A total of 524 projects has been sanctioned under Namami Gange Programme and 355 projects have been completed by April 2026”. (Ministry of Jal Shakti, 2026b) “A total of 262.4 crore saplings was planted till December 2025 under the campaign of Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam launched in 2024 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. According to the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023, Forest cover alone covers 7.15

lakh sq. km (21.76 percent), while tree cover accounts for 1.12 lakh sq. km (3.41 percent) of the country's geographical area. India's mangrove covers also significantly increased from 4,628 sq. km in 2013 to 4,992 sq. km in 2023. India has played vital role in the field of wild life conservation. According to the All-India Tiger Estimation, the number of Tiger Reserves increased from 46 to 58 between 2014-25 while the tiger population rose from 2,226 in 2014 to 3,682 in 2022. Under project cheetah, the number of cheetahs has now increased to 53 in 2026, marking a significant conservation milestone. Lion numbers also increased by over 70 per cent, from 523 in 2015 to 891 in 2025 under project lion. There are 22,446 wild elephants in India and Elephant Reserves increased from 26 in 2014 to 33 in 2025–26. The number of leopards increased to 13,874 leopards in 2022, from 12,852 in 2018 in India. India has strengthened and expanded its recycling ecosystem. India has successfully recycled 196.97 lakh MT plastic waste through 2,986 recyclers, 69.37 lakh MT battery waste through 520 recyclers, 122.29 lakh MT tyre waste through 579 recyclers, 28.75 lakh MT E-waste through 386 recyclers and 0.19 lakh MT used oil through 103 recyclers. Total waste processed stands at 417.57 lakh MT through 4,574 registered recyclers as of March 2026" (Ministry of Environment, Forest and climate Change, 2026a).

"As of 31 January 2026, India's total installed power capacity stands at 520,510.95 MW. which comprises 248,541.62 MW from fossil fuels and 271,969.33 MW from non-fossil sources. The non-fossil component includes 8,780 MW of nuclear energy and 263,189.33 MW of renewable energy. As per renewable Energy statistics 2025, India stands 3rd in Solar Power installed capacity, 4th in Wind Power capacity and 4th in total Renewable Energy capacity globally.

The National Clean Air Programme was launched in January 2019 with the goal of improving air quality across 130 cities. Sixty-four cities recorded 20% reduction and 25 cities achieved 40% reduction "New India" also shows strict adherence to multilateral agreements such as Paris agreements, Montreal protocol, United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change and direct its activities in accordance with guidelines of above regulatory mechanism. India is a key driver of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with NITI Aayog serving as the nodal agency to coordinate progress at national and state levels. NITI Aayog monitors performance across all 17 Goals, fostering competitive and cooperative federalism among States and Union Territories. According to the SDG India Index 2023–24, India's composite score improved to 71, rising steadily from 66 in 2020–21 and 57 in 2018, reflecting sustained national progress. India provides phenomenal contribution towards climate stability, biodiversity conservation and sustainable development for present and future generations" (Ministry of Environment, Forest and climate Change, 2026b).

"The National Coastal Mission has been strengthened by the government of India for costal conservation. The Mission focuses on sustainable coastal management and climate adaptation. 18 beaches of India have received the prestigious international Blue Flag certification by 2026. The National Marine Turtle Action Plan, launched in 2021, provides a coordinated framework for conserving marine turtles and their habitats along India's coastline. 7,979 turtle hatchlings were safely released with an impressive 96.7% hatching success rate, reflecting healthier coastal and marine ecosystems" (Ministry of Environment, Forest and climate Change, 2026a).

India is spearheading International Solar Alliance which focuses on solar energy, renewable energy cooperation, affordable clean energy and climate action among member countries. India has announced nearly US\$1.4 billion in line of credit for 27 solar projects in 15 developing countries in 2018. PM KUSUM Scheme for Small and middle-income Farmers and PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana for Indian citizen are operating in the domestic sphere for development of Solar and non-renewable energy. The

initiative aims to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and contributes to the global fight against climate change

“National Action Plan on Climate Change is working continuously since 2008 for preservation and protection environment in India which has core eight missions such as National Solar Mission, National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency, National Mission on Sustainable Habitat, National Water Mission, National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem, National Mission for a Green India, National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture, National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change” (Ministry of Science and Technology, 2024). “Panchamrit commitments were also announced at COP26 which includes 500 GW of non-fossil energy capacity by 2030, Meeting 50% of energy requirements from renewable sources by 2030, reducing total projected carbon emissions by 1 billion tonnes by 2030, reducing the carbon intensity of the economy by 45% by 2030, achieving Net-Zero Emissions by 2070” (Ministry of Environment, Forest and climate Change, 2022).

“Global Biofuels Alliance is an international multi-stakeholder initiative launched by the govern of India in 2023, during India's G20 Presidency which unites major biofuel producers and consumers to accelerate the global transition toward net-zero emissions” (Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, 2024).

“International Big Cat Alliance was an inter-governmental international body launched by India in 2023, to mark 50 years of India's Project Tiger Which came into force in 2025 with an aim to Conserve seven major big cat species worldwide such as Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar, and Puma” (Ministry of Environment, Forest and climate Change, 2025d). “Mission LiFE is an India-led global mass movement launched in 2022 that encourages individuals and communities to practice mindful resource utilization instead of destructive consumption” (Niti Ayog, 2022). “The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), was a multi-Stakeholder Global partnership launched by the honourable Prime Minister of India at the United Nations Climate Action Summit, in New York on 23rd September, 2019 to promote the resilience of infrastructure systems for climate and disaster risks, thereby ensuring sustainable development” (Ministry of Home Affair, 2019).

Challenges

Vision of “Green India” faces domestic and international challenges which obstructs protection of ecological balance in India. These challenges have been enumerated below. Some challenges appear inside the territory of India while implementing ecological initiatives for preservation and protection of environment as well as realizing the vision of “Green India”. The followings are the domestic challenges problematizing environmental preservation and protection.

Inadequate Financial Resources

“Afforestation and restoration activities get limited by insufficient fund because Forest restoration requires different works such as land preparation, nurseries, saplings, planting, soil and water conservation, and other activities. Lack of funds reduces the scale of these programmes. Maintenance of plantations also get affected by insufficient funds.

Adequate Funding plays crucial role not only in the plantation of trees but also in the protection and maintenance of trees for several years. Without adequate funds, watering, protection from grazing, and replacement of dead saplings may be neglected, resulting in a low survival rate of trees. Effective monitoring requires trained staff, field surveys, technology, and regular evaluation are required for effective monitoring of trees. Financial shortages can weaken monitoring. Planned activities may not be

successful with insufficient funds. Mission's objectives may not be fulfilled timely” (Ministry of Finance, 2021).

Land availability and land-use conflicts

Land is necessary for multiple purpose such as afforestation, restoration of degraded forests, and expansion of tree cover etc. Sometimes, same land may also be required for many purposes viz agriculture, infrastructure, mining, industries, and settlements and it creates conflicts between developmental and environmental objectives. Many times, available land remains small, scattered, or fragmented which reduces ecological effectiveness. Conflicts among different stakeholders such as government agencies, farmers, local communities, industries, and infrastructure authorities causes delay in afforestation and restoration projects.

Poor survival rate of plantation

“Forest restoration, carbon sequestration and ecosystem improvement are heavily affected by poor survival of plantation. Large number of Plantation is not enough for afforestation. Survival and subsequent growth are also more important for long-term success. High mortality of trees also reduces carbon sequestration. Failure of plantation Wastes financial and administrative resources. The recent CAG report reflects that monitoring was deficient in 14 states. No State, except Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, conducted any assessment of carbon sequestration during 2015-2025” (CAG, 2026).

Climate Change and Extreme weather

“Rising temperature is not conducive for survival of plantation and causes water stress and make it difficult for newly planted saplings to survive. Erratic rainfall and prolonged draught causes plantation mortality. Waterlogging, physical damage to young plants, and soil erosion are caused by extreme rainfall. Biodiversity and ecosystem are badly affected by change in rainfall and temperature” (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change”. 2026c).

Limited community participation

“Community Participation is indispensable for achieving green India mission. When local people are not involved, newly planted trees may be vulnerable to grazing, cutting, fire and other forms of damage. Plantation activities require continuous care, including watering, protection and maintenance. Limited community involvement can reduce this long-term care. Communities often possess knowledge about local species, soil, water conditions and traditional forest management. Ignoring this knowledge can result in inappropriate restoration practices” (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2026c).

Human wildlife conflict

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Remedies

The followings are the remedies for domestic challenges seen in the jurisdiction of India.

Increase Financial Support

“The achievement of the goal of a Green India requires more financial support because environmental conservation and afforestation projects require substantial resources. Adequate funding can contribute for large-scale tree plantation, restoration of degraded forests, expansion of forest and trees. Financial resources play a crucial role for forest departments to maintain plantations, prevent forest fires, control pests, and protect forests from illegal logging. Financial support facilitates the use of GIS mapping, remote sensing, drones, and monitoring systems to track forest health and improve project efficiency. Financial incentives and livelihood opportunities encourage local communities to participate in forest conservation and sustainable resource management. Adequate investment helps restore wetlands, mangroves, grasslands, and other ecosystems that play a vital role in biodiversity conservation and climate regulation. Increased funding supports carbon sequestration projects, helping India reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet its climate commitments. Funds can be used for research on climate-resilient species, training forest personnel, and developing sustainable environmental practices” (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. 2023a).

Strengthen Community Participation

“Community participation plays a vital role in achieving the goal of a Green India because environmental conservation and sustainable development require the active involvement of local people. When communities participate in planning, implementing, and monitoring environmental programmes, they help ensure the long-term success of green initiatives. Local communities actively participate in tree plantation drives, protection of forests, and prevention of illegal logging. Their involvement increases forest cover, improves biodiversity, and enhances carbon sequestration. The Green India Mission specifically emphasizes the role of Gram Sabhas, Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs), and Self-Help Groups in forest restoration and conservation. Community members possess valuable local knowledge about forests, water bodies, and land resources. Their participation helps in the sustainable management of watersheds, groundwater, and common resources, reducing environmental degradation and improving ecological balance. Community-based programmes create awareness about issues such as pollution control, waste management, water conservation, and climate change. Increased awareness encourages environmentally responsible behaviour among citizens. Community participation is a cornerstone of Green India because it combines local knowledge, collective action, and environmental stewardship. By engaging citizens in afforestation, resource management, conservation, and environmental awareness programmes, India can achieve sustainable development and strengthen its response to climate change” (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2023b).

Enhance Environmental Awareness

“One of the crucial factors for achieving the vision of a Green India is Environmental awareness. Individuals, communities, and institutions can be encouraged to adopt environmentally responsible behaviours. Environmental awareness educates the people in the field of conservation of natural resources, reduction of waste, and adoption of sustainable practices. Environmental awareness motivates people to save water and energy, use public transport, and minimize plastic consumption. Community involvement is essential for protection and promotion of the environment. Environmentally educated people can play

vital role in practicing waste segregation, recycling, and proper disposal of waste, helping reduce air, water, and soil pollution. Awareness about climate change encourages the adoption of renewable energy, energy-efficient technologies, and low-carbon lifestyles, reducing greenhouse gas emissions. People who understand the importance of forests, wildlife, and ecosystems are more likely to support conservation efforts and avoid activities that harm the environment. Environmentally aware citizens can advocate for stronger environmental policies and hold governments and industries accountable for environmental protection. Awareness encourages consumers to choose eco-friendly products and services, creating market demand for sustainable production practices. An informed and environmentally conscious population is key to achieving long-term ecological sustainability” (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2025c).

Improve Forest Governance

“Effective Forest governance plays decisive role in achieving the goal of Green India because it ensures the sustainable management and protection, and restoration of forest resources. Effective Forest governance can prevent illegal logging, encroachment, and overexploitation of forest resources through Strong laws, monitoring systems, and enforcement mechanisms. Afforestation and ecological balance can also be maintained through effective forest governance. Carbon dioxide can be absorbed and stored from the atmosphere by well-managed forests thereby mitigating climate change. Effective governance also contributes significantly for protection of the wildlife habitats and preservation of plants and animal species. The stability and resilience of ecosystem can be also maintained and promoted through healthy forest. Forest-dependent communities such as tribals and indigenous people benefit from sustainable forest management practices which improves rural livelihoods with protection of natural resources. Participatory approaches such as Joint Forest Management (JFM) must be adopted in forest governance which involve local communities in forest conservation and decision-making. Prevention of soil erosion, improvement of water retention, and maintenance of watershed health can be found in well governed forests. Effective forest governance will definitely go a long way in protecting forests, conserving biodiversity, combating climate change, supporting sustainable livelihoods, and ensuring the long-term health of ecosystems”. (Forest Survey of India, 2024).

Promotion of Renewable Energy

“Renewable energy contributes tremendously for realization of the dream of Green India by minimizing environmental degradation, improving energy security, and supporting sustainable development. Solar, wind, hydro, and biomass come under the renewable energy and generates electricity with little or no carbon emissions which reduces climate change and air pollution. Greater use of renewable energy reduces reliance on coal, oil, and natural gas, which are major sources of environmental pollution of environment and depletion of natural resources take place due to excessive use of coal, oil, and natural gas promoting use of renewable energy will definitely reduce your dependence on natural gas, oil and coal which may protect the environment as well as natural resources. The use of renewable energy generates environmentally sustainable source of power on a long-term basis which enables our future generations to meet their energy needs without resorting to depletion of natural resources. People can be employed in the manufacturing process, installation work, operational work, and maintenance of technologies. Renewable energy like solar power, can generate electricity in remote and rural areas which can improve their living standard without hampering the natural environment” (Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, 2025).

Encourage Sustainable Agriculture

“The vision of Green India can be successfully achieved by encouraging sustainable agriculture because it promotes eco- friendly farming practices that preserve natural resources and maintain agricultural productivity. The agricultural productivity can be improved by reducing chemical use, crop rotation and applying organic manure which contribute for soil fertility and prevention of soil erosion. Sustainable agriculture minimizes the soil, water and air pollution to great extent therefore it facilitates the protection of ecosystems and human health. water wastage can be prevented through drip irrigation, rainwater harvesting and efficient water management. Reduction of the use of chemical substances in the agriculture, agroforestry, and carbon sequestration in soils, can minimize greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change problem. Biodiversity can be supported and protected through mixed cropping, agroforestry, and integrated pest management by creating habitats for beneficial insects, birds, and other organisms. sustainable agriculture contributes tremendously for enhancement of farmer’s incomes and long-term food security” (Madhu and Jinger, 2025).

Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation

“Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation helps achieve a Green India by ensuring that environmental programmes, policies, and projects are implemented effectively, transparently, and accountably. Regular monitoring helps identify gaps and delays in environmental programmes, enabling corrective action and better implementation of green initiatives. Evaluation assesses whether financial, human, and natural resources are being used effectively, reducing wastage and improving outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation help measure progress in areas such as afforestation, biodiversity conservation, pollution control, renewable energy adoption, and climate change mitigation. Monitoring and evaluation systems can detect issues such as low survival rates of planted trees, poor waste management practices, or ineffective conservation measures, allowing timely intervention. Transparent reporting of environmental outcomes increases public confidence and encourages community participation in sustainability initiatives” (Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2026).

Improve Inter-Agency Coordination

“When different government ministries, departments, agencies, research institutions, local bodies, and other stakeholders collaborate with each other in order to achieve environmental and sustainable development goals that is called inter agency collaboration. Climate change, deforestation, water scarcity, and pollution are interconnected environmental issues so in order to deal with these issues, coordination and cooperation among different ministries are essential. Joint planning enables better allocation of funds for afforestation, watershed management, and renewable energy projects. Different agencies can share data and expertise to track environmental indicators, forest cover, biodiversity, and carbon emissions. Best practices and technological innovations can be exchanged among Research institutions, universities, and government agencies for sustainable development” (Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2026).

Support Green Livelihoods

“Green livelihoods connote activities that generate employment and income as well as contribute for environmental conservation and welfare of people. Supporting green livelihoods is an important component of achieving a Green India. The forests, water, and land resources are responsibly used in green livelihood activities such as agroforestry, sustainable agriculture, ecotourism, and non-timber forest product collection. Environmental degradation can be reduced and supports ecosystem conservation can be supported by green livelihood. Providing alternative income opportunities decreases dependence on activities such as illegal logging and unsustainable extraction of forest resources. This helps protect biodiversity and increase forest cover. Renewable energy, waste management, organic farming, forestry,

and environmental services creates jobs and improves rural livelihoods as well as sustainable development. Green livelihoods go a long way in facilitating economic empowerment of rural and forest-dependent communities” (NITI Aayog, 2025).

Encourage Private Sector Participation

“Private sector has to play a crucial role in achieving the goals of Green India. Because alone government sector cannot bring fruitful results in environmental sector. Active role of both the sectors can accelerate the process of realization of Green India. Investment, innovation, technology, and managerial expertise can be brought by private sectors in environmental initiatives. Investment can be made by the private company in afforestation, renewable energy, waste management, and conservation projects. Through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, companies can support tree plantation drives, biodiversity conservation, watershed management, and ecosystem restoration” (NITI Aayog, 2026).

Conclusion:

The green transition in New India represents a shift towards a development model that combines economic growth, energy security and environmental sustainability. India attaches great importance to the protection of both environment of the country as well as global environment. India has been undertaking and implementing domestically and internationally drastic and strenuous programmes for realizing the dream of Green India and sustainable India. India has achieved outstanding results in the field of renewable energy and it will definitely achieve its target by 2030. Considerable and substantial development have been seen in all sphere of environment in India. However, the transition requires continued investment in renewable energy, green technologies, sustainable transport, energy efficiency, forests and green industries. It must also ensure that the benefits of the transition reach all sections of society while maintaining affordable and reliable energy. India's long-term strategy aims to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070, making the green transition an important pillar of the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. Thus, Green Transition in New India is not merely an environmental necessity but a pathway towards a cleaner, inclusive, resilient, self-reliant and sustainable India, where the development and environmental protection can progress together. New India through its landmark initiatives strengthens and streamlines India's position in global context and signifies the rise of India in undertaking global responsibility and leadership.

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