

Civil Society Inputs for COP30 - A Bharat's Perspective:

Extant Pathways of Climate Adaptation and Resilience for Global South

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Authorship and Acknowledgements

Authorship

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This Policy Paper builds upon the continuum of deliberations initiated under **Bharat's G20 Presidency and the Civil20 LiFE Working Group**, carrying forward the values of *Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE)*, *Sahakarita* (cooperation), and *Sumangalam* (collective well-being). It reflects the shared commitment of Bharat's civil society to advance a *civilizational and cooperative framework for climate action* at the global stage.

Executive Summary

Context and Rationale

As the world prepares for COP30 in Belém, Brazil, Bharat stands at a historic crossroads — where its ancient worldview of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* ("the world is one family") intersects with modern climate governance.

The **Pre-COP30 Civil Society Virtual Dialogue** convened national networks, cooperatives, and practitioners to articulate Bharat's collective narrative for climate action. Participants emphasized that ecological responsibility in Bharat is not a new concept but a living tradition — expressed through *LiFE* (*Lifestyle for Environment*), *Bhumi Suposhan* (soil nourishment), *Devrai* (sacred groves), and *Sahakarita* (cooperation).

Civil society's key message: **climate resilience is a moral, cultural, and cooperative enterprise**, not merely a technical or financial undertaking.

Key Policy Insights

1. Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE):

Embedding ecological responsibility in daily life through regenerative livelihoods that combine tradition and innovation.

2. Practicing Biodiversity:

Recognizing community custodianship — *Devrai*, *Van Panchayat*, and sacred landscapes — as vital complements to formal conservation systems.

3. Adaptation, Cooperation and Investments:

Strengthening cooperative networks, simplifying adaptation finance, and measuring resilience through community-owned indicators.

4. Civil Society's Narrative and Lexicon:

Developing a Global South vocabulary of sustainability (*Sumangalam*, *Anubhūti*, *Samagraata*) to re-center climate policy in responsibility and reciprocity.

Core Policy Recommendations

| Theme | Priority Actions |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Governance | Establish a <i>National Civil Society–Government Climate Partnership Platform (NCSCPP)</i> to institutionalize dialogue and co-design adaptation policy. |
| LiFE & Regeneration | Create a <i>National Registry of Regenerative Livelihoods</i> ; integrate LiFE values into curricula and public campaigns. |
| Biodiversity | Recognize <i>Community Conserved Areas</i> and implement culture–nature mapping in State Biodiversity Action Plans. |
| Adaptation Finance | Introduce <i>Civil Society Adaptation Windows</i> within NAFCC and state funds; pilot <i>Results-Based Adaptation Monitoring Frameworks (RBAMF)</i> . |
| Cooperatives | Establish <i>District Climate Cooperative Resource Centres (DCCRCs)</i> for compliance, quality, and digital market access. |
| Knowledge & Lexicon | Form a <i>Civil Society Climate Knowledge Consortium (CSCKC)</i> and promote a <i>Global South Lexicon Initiative</i> to integrate cultural terminology into COP outcomes. |

Vision:

In this decade, Bharat will articulate and institutionalize a Bharatiya Framework for Sustainability — a collectively built foundation rooted in its civilizational wisdom and worldview of harmony. This framework will guide Bharat's sustainable development journey.

1. Context and Rationale

1.1. A Defining Moment for Global Climate Action

The 30th Conference of the Parties (COP30), to be held in Belém, Brazil, comes at a pivotal time for humanity's collective response to climate change. The COP30 Presidency has underscored six thematic axes — transitioning energy, stewarding biodiversity, transforming food systems, building resilient infrastructure, fostering human and social development, and unleashing enablers like finance, technology, and capacity building. Its tone is distinctively *human-centric*, recognizing that climate action is not only scientific or technical, but fundamentally a **human and civilizational challenge**.

For Bharat, this framing resonates deeply. The idea that climate action must begin with human conduct — with *jeevan shaili* (lifestyle) shaped by *jeevan drishti* (worldview) — lies at the heart of our civilizational ethos. The ancient dictum "**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**" (the world is one family) captures a moral imagination that positions ecological harmony and collective well-being as central to governance. COP30 thus provides an opportunity for Bharat and the Global South to reassert these shared values as the foundation for sustainable transformation.

1.2. Bharat's Civilizational Ethos: From LiFE to Regeneration

The Government of India's **Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE)** movement, introduced during COP26 and carried forward under the C20 process, is a manifestation of this ethos. It calls for a cultural and value-based transformation in environmental governance, shifting from a rights-based to a responsibility-based approach.

Bharat's civil society organizations (CSOs) have been at the forefront of localizing this vision. Across villages, cooperatives, and self-help groups, community practices have long embodied ecological responsibility — from sacred groves (*Devrai, Orans, Dharadi Pratha*) that conserve biodiversity to traditional agricultural systems like **Bhumi Suposhan**, which regenerate soil vitality through reciprocity between humans and land.

This *living tradition of sustainability* offers a counter-narrative to extractive development. It demonstrates that modern technology and traditional wisdom need not be in conflict; rather, their integration provides a pathway for **regenerative economies** that ensure both livelihood and ecological balance.

1.3. Civil Society as Custodians of Lived Knowledge

The COP30 Presidency's call to recognize communities not as passive victims but as *leaders of care and regeneration* aligns with the lived realities of Bharat's civil society networks. From **women-led self-help groups (SHGs)** to **farmer cooperatives** and **grassroots innovators**, these networks are repositories of *Anubhūti* — lived knowledge arising from perception, inference, comparison, and collective testimony, as articulated in the *Nyāya* tradition.

This embedded, experiential knowledge has shaped sustainable practices for centuries — be it community-managed irrigation in Rajasthan's Latoria, sacred forestry traditions in the Northeast, or soil-restoration models emerging from Maharashtra's Bhumi Suposhan movement. Civil society's contribution lies in translating these lived experiences into quantifiable adaptation outcomes and replicable policy inputs.

However, documentation and institutional recognition of such efforts remain limited. Most adaptation projects under NAPCC or SAPCC frameworks still depend on formal indicators and economic assessments that overlook intangible community capacities. Hence, a **new lexicon of climate resilience** is needed — one that recognizes social, spiritual, and cultural dimensions as legitimate sources of adaptation capital.

1.4. Policy Alignment and Institutional Frameworks

Bharat's adaptation architecture already provides an enabling environment for civil society participation. The **National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change (NAFCC)**, implemented through NABARD as the national entity, supports state-level projects integrating climate adaptation with livelihood generation and ecosystem restoration. Complementary frameworks such as **MGNREGS, PMKSY-Watershed, NRLM with approximately 84 lakh Self Help Groups** have also created climate-resilient assets — ponds, check dams, and plantations — while generating local employment.

Yet, the full potential of these schemes remains underutilized due to fragmented implementation and limited recognition of community-led innovations. Global studies, including the **GIZ "Adaptation Made to Measure" guidebook** and **Logical Framework Approach** with defined targets and indicators of several projects emphasize the need for *results-based monitoring* that captures adaptation outcomes beyond infrastructure — encompassing behavioural change, institutional learning, and ecosystem recovery.

By integrating such frameworks with localized indicators derived from community systems — for instance, soil health under Bhumi Suposhan, or cooperative-led biodiversity indices — Bharat can pioneer a hybrid adaptation measurement model that combines scientific precision with cultural authenticity.

1.5. Towards COP30: The Case for Civil Society Leadership

As the Global South prepares to shape the COP30 outcomes, Bharat's civil society ecosystem stands as a bridge between grassroots realities and global negotiations. Its strength lies in its ability to translate moral imperatives into practical frameworks — connecting *value systems* to *policy systems*.

The collective experiences emerging from local adaptation models — whether the **Badri Kedar Cooperative in Uttarakhand** promoting women-led MAP cultivation, or the **Subhiksha multistate cooperative network** supporting over 6,000 farmers in Karnataka and Kerala — reaffirm that decentralized action can complement national and international commitments.

In this spirit, the **Pre-COP30 Civil Society Dialogue** reasserted that Bharat's climate action narrative must be both civilizational and cooperative — drawing strength from community institutions, rooted in the principles of equity, sustainability, and shared responsibility.

The challenge and opportunity before policymakers, therefore, is to institutionalize this partnership — to ensure that **civil society becomes an integral part of climate governance**, not merely as implementers of projects, but as **co-authors of policy** and **custodians of a moral imagination** that sees the Earth not as a resource, but as a shared home.

2. Key Policy Insights

2.1 Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE): From Ecological Consciousness to Regenerative Livelihoods

A. Embedding Ecological Responsibility in Daily Life

The principle of *Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE)* draws from Bharat's civilizational worldview that perceives human well-being and planetary well-being as interdependent. *Jeevan drishti* (life vision) shapes *jeevan shaili* (lifestyle), making ecological responsibility an ethical duty rather than a policy compulsion.

As articulated in the **C20 LiFE Working Group Policy Brief (2023)**, the shift from a *rights-based* to a *responsibility-based* sustainability framework represents a paradigmatic transformation in global environmental governance. It introduces *Sumangalam* — collective well-being — as a universal guiding principle that transcends transactional approaches to sustainability.

Civil society organizations in Bharat have been the principal catalysts for grounding LiFE at the local level. Through behavioural campaigns, grassroots innovations, and revival of traditional practices, they have illustrated how simple, conscious lifestyle choices can cumulatively create large-scale environmental impact. These actions — ranging from reducing chemical dependency in farming to conserving water through community structures — represent the "*micro-movements of transformation*" that define Bharat's contribution to climate action.

B. Regenerative Livelihoods: Linking LiFE to Economic Systems

Beyond individual behavioural change, Bharat's civil society emphasizes that *LiFE must translate into livelihoods*. Regenerative systems — social, economic, and institutional — form the operational fabric of ecological lifestyles.

Across the country, numerous initiatives demonstrate this approach:

- The **Bhumi Suposhan movement** revitalizes soil health through indigenous knowledge, cow-based bio-inputs, and crop diversification. It redefines the farmer's role from producer to *nurturer of the Earth*, reflecting a deep reciprocity between human action and natural cycles.
- The **Nandurbar Compendium on Livelihoods** documents dozens of community-led regenerative models that combine traditional seed diversity, localized water systems, and non-chemical inputs — demonstrating scalability across agro-climatic zones.
- The **ACCESS Livelihoods Compendium (2022)** showcases how local collectives have innovated climate-resilient value chains for crops, medicinal plants, and artisanal crafts, illustrating that LiFE principles can anchor viable economic systems.

These examples reveal that regeneration is not a return to the past but a renewal of values — creating livelihoods that enhance, rather than exploit, ecological capital.

However, such models are often dismissed as isolated "pockets of innovation." To counter this perception, systematic **documentation, quantification, and fiscal mapping** of these regenerative initiatives are essential. Data on geographic spread, production scale, and community impact must be consolidated to form a *National Registry of Regenerative Livelihoods*. This would serve as an evidence base for replication across Bharat and the Global South.

Call for Action:

Establish a **national-level database and mapping framework** for regenerative systems — integrating case studies, fiscal models, and sustainability metrics to inform policy replication.

C. Integrating Traditional, Cultural, and Modern Technological Practices

The evolution of LiFE also lies in blending traditional ecological knowledge with modern innovation. Bharat's cultural practices — from *Van Poojan* (worship of forests) and *Beej Poojan* (seed festivals) to water-harvesting traditions like *Johads* and *Kunds* — represent indigenous mechanisms of adaptation and resource management. These rituals and customs carry implicit ecological wisdom, ensuring continuity of biodiversity and community stewardship.

Modern technological tools can amplify the impact of these practices. For instance:

- **Digital cooperatives and GIS-based resource mapping** can strengthen localized monitoring of natural resource regeneration.
- **Remote sensing and forest inventory technologies** (as reported in the *India State of Forest Report 2023*) can help assess carbon sequestration potential of community-managed landscapes.

Civil society organizations, therefore, urge a *coexistence paradigm* — where technology is a facilitator, not a substitute, for traditional practices. This approach resonates with the **GIZ "Adaptation Made to Measure"** framework, which highlights that results-based monitoring in adaptation must integrate cultural dimensions and behavioural indicators.

Call for Action:

Institutionalize "**Technology-with-Tradition**" **partnerships** that integrate indigenous knowledge systems with modern adaptation tools — ensuring both innovation and continuity.

D. Addressing Climate-Induced Livelihood Distress

The LiFE framework also compels policymakers to view **distress migration** and **resource degradation** as outcomes of disrupted ecological relationships. Climate-induced livelihood distress, particularly in tribal and hilly regions, has forced communities to abandon traditional occupations. Civil society organizations highlight that restoring natural resource bases — through soil, water, and forest regeneration — is both an adaptation and mitigation strategy.

For example:

- In tribal belts like Nandurbar and Dahod, kitchen garden and agroforestry models have mitigated outmigration while improving nutrition.
- In Himalayan ecosystems, the cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) under the **Badri Kedar Women's Cooperative** has diversified incomes, reduced pressure on forests, and regenerated degraded land.
- **MGNREGS** works in drought-prone Madhya Pradesh have created climate-resilient assets such as check dams and micro-irrigation systems, directly contributing to local adaptation capacity.

These initiatives affirm that **adaptation begins with livelihood security**. Local institutions — cooperatives, SHGs, Gram Sabhas — must be positioned as anchors of LiFE implementation, enabling the transition from reactive mitigation to proactive regeneration.

Call for Action:

Recognize **community-based natural resource regeneration** as a national adaptation priority, and classify associated programmes (LiFE, MGNREGS, NRLM, NAFCC) as *climate adaptation investments* in budgetary frameworks.

2.2 Practicing Biodiversity: Reclaiming Custodianship and Continuity

A. Local Community Leadership in Conservation

Biodiversity conservation in Bharat has always been a community-driven enterprise, rooted in reverence rather than regulation. Long before global conventions on biodiversity were drafted, Indian communities had institutionalized protection systems through **sacred groves (Devrai/Devarakadu/Orans)**, *Totemic traditions*, and *Dharadi pratha* — practices that integrated ecology with culture, spirituality, and livelihood across the length and breadth of Bharat.

The **Community Conserved Areas Directory of India (CCA Directory)** records thousands of such local conservation efforts — from the Bishnois' protection of blackbuck and khejri trees in Rajasthan, to the Khasi's sacred forests in Meghalaya, and the Van Panchayats of Uttarakhand that collectively manage over **120,000 hectares of high-altitude pastures and forests**.

Such traditional systems are not just relics of the past; they are *living institutions of adaptation*. They regulate grazing, ensure watershed protection, maintain seed diversity, and create microclimates that buffer against heat and drought.

Call for Action:

Recognize and formally integrate **Community Conserved Areas (CCAs)** and traditional forest governance systems under the national and state biodiversity frameworks. Enable financial and technical support through convergence with NAFCC, CAMPA, and MGNREGS for community-led ecosystem restoration.

B. Blending Traditional and Modern Conservation Practices

Bharat's biodiversity heritage thrives where traditional knowledge and modern science work in complementarity rather than competition. The paper "*Integrating Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Practices for Biodiversity Conservation in a Modern World*" emphasizes that indigenous ecological knowledge (TEK) — gained through centuries of observation and adaptation — offers critical insights into species behavior, seasonal dynamics, and ecosystem resilience.

Traditional festivals such as *Beej Poojan* (seed worship), *Van Poojan* (forest worship), and *Bhumi Suposhan* (soil nourishment) embody this integration. **Bhumi Suposhan**, re-establishes the ancient relationship of *Mata Bhumi, Putro Aham Prithivya* — "the Earth is Mother, I am Her child" — framing soil fertility as both a moral and scientific responsibility.

These examples reveal that cultural continuity itself is a conservation strategy.

Call for Action:

Institutionalize **Culture-Nature Interfaces** in biodiversity policy — mandating inclusion of cultural heritage mapping and traditional ecological knowledge in every State Biodiversity Action Plan (SBAP) and SAPCC review.

C. Strengthening Government–Community Partnerships

Despite policy commitments under the **Forest Rights Act (FRA)** and **Biodiversity Act (2002)**, implementation gaps persist. Many **Community Forest Resource (CFR)** rights remain unrecognized or weakly supported. Civil society networks report that communities often lack technical capacity or financial backing to operationalize conservation plans.

However, examples of collaborative models show promise:

- **Devrai and Van Panchayat systems** in Uttarakhand demonstrate effective community–government co-management of forests.
- **Subhiksha Multistate Cooperative Society** unites over 6,800 farmers across Karnataka and Kerala, functioning as a “cooperative of cooperatives” that integrates biodiversity conservation with organic and transitional farming systems.
- In Manipur and Nagaland, tribal federations manage biodiversity hotspots through *customary councils* that work alongside state forest departments under a shared framework of mutual accountability.

The need now is to institutionalize these collaborations as **formal partnerships** within the biodiversity governance architecture, with co-financing from central schemes and local revenue models.

Call for Action:

Establish **joint government–community biodiversity management platforms** at district and state levels to operationalize Community Forest Resource rights, monitor ecosystem health, and ensure livelihood convergence under LiFE and NAFCC frameworks.

D. Quantifying the Value of Traditional Knowledge and Ecosystem Services

Conservation success depends not only on protecting biodiversity but also on quantifying its contribution to climate adaptation, health, and local economies. The **Securitization and Biodiversity study on the Western Ghats (2025)** argues that communities in the Global South often resist the “securitization” of biodiversity by external authorities, asserting their own adaptive measures and collective custodianship.

Similarly, the **Traditional Knowledge Systems for Biodiversity Conservation** report by Deep Narayan Pandey notes that local traditions—such as temple forests, sacred cliffs, and agroforestry systems—constitute a *decentralized security mechanism* for biodiversity. These are not just cultural expressions; they deliver quantifiable ecosystem services:

- Groundwater recharge and soil fertility enhancement,
- Carbon sequestration and microclimate stabilization,
- Pollination and pest control, and
- Sustainable biomass and non-timber forest production.

Integrating these ecosystem services into national and state adaptation accounting systems will ensure that traditional knowledge is rewarded as a **climate-positive contribution**.

Call for Action:

Develop **localized Natural Capital Accounting (NCA)** mechanisms that include ecosystem services generated by community-conserved areas, traditional forests, and agroforestry systems in India’s National Adaptation Communication (NATCOM).

E. Reimagining Biodiversity Policy through the Global South Lens

Bharat’s biodiversity frameworks must also help shape the **Global South discourse** on ecological sovereignty and cultural resilience. The “*Parampara*” collection and “*Traditional Knowledge for Sustainability*” papers emphasize that biodiversity is not a static “stock” to be guarded, but a **living continuum** of interactions between humans, species, and ecosystems.

This view challenges the Global North's model of fortress conservation, which isolates nature from society. The Global South can offer an alternative — a **coexistence-based lexicon** that links biodiversity conservation with cultural dignity, livelihoods, and spiritual responsibility. Bharat's contribution, therefore, is not only in protecting biodiversity but also in **restoring meaning** to it — framing it as a shared moral enterprise between humanity and nature.

Call for Action:

Promote a **Global South Consortium on Cultural Biodiversity** under COP30, led by India, to exchange community-based models, traditional conservation technologies, and cultural heritage frameworks for biodiversity stewardship.

2.3 Adaptation, Cooperation, and Investments: Building Systems of Resilience

A. Community-Driven Adaptation Models

Adaptation is no longer a technical add-on to climate policy — it is the heart of climate justice for the Global South. Bharat's civil society has long practiced *community-driven adaptation (CDA)*: decentralized, experiential, and embedded in local socio-ecological contexts.

Local adaptation actions can be measured effectively when viewed through the lenses of vulnerability reduction, adaptive capacity, and institutional resilience. This aligns with the **GIZ "Adaptation Made to Measure"** framework, which defines adaptation as *the enhancement of human and ecosystem resilience through locally designed, measurable interventions*.

Civil society experiences across Bharat demonstrate the power of this approach:

- **Watershed and landscape restoration** in Rajasthan and Maharashtra, led by Tarun Bharat Sangh and Gram Sabha networks, have turned drought-prone regions into water-secure ecosystems.
- **Climate-resilient farming** under the **Bhumi Suposhan** framework has revived soil fertility and reduced dependency on chemical inputs.
- **MAP-based agroforestry** in Uttarakhand, driven by the Badri Kedar Women's Cooperative, integrates gender equity with adaptation and ecosystem regeneration.

These models collectively affirm that *adaptation succeeds when designed and owned by communities*. The key task before policy is to scale these decentralized solutions without diluting their local character.

Call for Action:

Institutionalize **Community Adaptation Frameworks (CAFs)** under SAPCCs and NAPCC, mandating that at least 30% of adaptation budgets flow directly to Gram Sabha and community-led initiatives, with participatory monitoring indicators based on vulnerability, livelihoods, and ecosystem health.

B. Strengthening Cooperative Networks for Climate Resilience

As highlighted by Subhiksha Multistate Cooperative Society, "*cooperation is climate adaptation in practice*." Cooperatives transform individual vulnerability into collective security by pooling risk, resources, and resilience.

Bharat's cooperative ecosystem already constitutes a powerful adaptation infrastructure:

- There are **8.42 lakh cooperatives** across India, involving over **290 million members**, contributing to financial inclusion, food security, and rural prosperity.
- The **Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS)** network is being digitized (67,930 PACS approved for computerization, ₹752.77 crore allocated) — providing the backbone for climate finance disbursal and transparent record-keeping.
- **Multipurpose cooperatives** in agriculture, dairy, fisheries, and forestry now serve as value-chain integrators — connecting producers to consumers in sustainable markets.

These institutions embody the "**Sahkar se Samriddhi**" ethos — cooperation for shared prosperity. As climate risks escalate, cooperatives can serve as *resilience hubs* that integrate financial inclusion, capacity building, and adaptive value chains.

However, two systemic challenges persist:

1. **Lack of localized quality assurance systems** for organic and indigenous produce, and
2. **Weak institutional capacities at the block and district level** to navigate compliance, technology, and finance frameworks.

Call for Action:

Establish **District Climate Cooperative Resource Centres (DCCRCs)** within existing cooperative clusters to:

- Build technical and compliance capacity in regional languages,
- Facilitate climate adaptation financing through NABARD and NAFCC, and
- Support quality, certification, and digital marketing systems rooted in indigenous value frameworks.

C. Climate Finance and Indigenous Investment Systems

Financing adaptation is both the biggest gap and the greatest opportunity for the Global South. Despite multiple global commitments, *less than 10% of total climate finance reaches local actors* — a statistic reaffirmed by the World Bank and by India's civil society networks.

Bharat's adaptation financing ecosystem, anchored by the **National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change (NAFCC)**, offers a model of alignment between government and community priorities. Implemented by **NABARD** as the National Implementing Entity, NAFCC has financed **over 30 state projects** integrating water security, agroforestry, livestock management, and ecosystem restoration.

For instance:

- Climate-resilient agriculture in Himachal Pradesh and Odisha,
- Spring-shed rejuvenation in Meghalaya,
- Integrated farming in Kerala's coastal wetlands, and
- Eco-village models in Manipur.

Each project demonstrates that **decentralized adaptation funding** can yield measurable ecosystem and livelihood benefits. However, the challenge lies in scaling — simplifying application processes, broadening eligibility for civil society consortia, and ensuring transparency in fund utilization.

Civil society networks also advocate for the creation of **indigenous financial ecosystems** — community-led funds, cooperative credit pools, and micro-insurance systems that can bridge the last-mile finance gap. These indigenous mechanisms are rooted in trust, mutuality, and social capital — qualities often missing in global financial structures.

Call for Action:

Reform the NAFCC framework to include "**Civil Society Adaptation Windows**" — enabling registered cooperatives, SHG federations, and panchayats to directly access small-to-medium adaptation grants, with simplified due diligence protocols and community-based evaluation.

D. Quantifying Adaptation and Co-benefits

Climate policy has traditionally emphasized mitigation (carbon reduction) over adaptation (resilience-building). However, *adaptation must be measurable to be visible*. Quantifying adaptation is crucial for accessing global finance and influencing future Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Quantification should extend beyond infrastructure outputs to capture co-benefits. Such quantification should include:

- Reduction in distress migration,
- Improvement in soil carbon and water retention,
- Increase in community assets and biodiversity cover, and
- Enhanced adaptive capacity of women and vulnerable groups.

Existing programmes like **MGNREGS**, **NRLM**, and **LiFE** can be reclassified as adaptation measures by quantifying these benefits. The **SPRF 2025 paper on MGNREGS and Climate Change** has already documented climate co-benefits of drought-proofing and afforestation works in Madhya Pradesh — reduced migration, improved incomes, and enhanced water security.

Call for Action:

Integrate **Results-Based Adaptation Monitoring Frameworks (RBAMFs)** across all flagship schemes (MGNREGS, NRLM, PM-KUSUM, etc.) to assess adaptation co-benefits using quantifiable indicators of ecosystem health, gender empowerment, and local economic resilience.

E. Towards a Global South Framework for Resilient Cooperation

Civil society leaders argue that adaptation and cooperation must converge into a new international framework rooted in the Global South's developmental ethos — emphasizing justice, equity, and shared learning. Bharat can spearhead this shift by linking its cooperative ecosystem with international adaptation alliances.

A proposed "**South-South Resilience Alliance**" could:

- Facilitate mutual recognition of traditional knowledge systems in adaptation policy;
- Create decentralized platforms for data sharing, monitoring, and joint funding; and
- Develop regional adaptation standards for livelihoods, biodiversity, and resource management.

Such a framework would position Bharat not just as a national actor but as a *civilizational bridge* — connecting moral leadership with pragmatic climate cooperation.

Call for Action:

Establish a **South-South Resilience Alliance** under India's leadership during COP30, integrating cooperative networks, civil society alliances, and local government partnerships for joint adaptation research, finance, and implementation.

2.4 Civil Society's Narrative and Lexicon for COP30

A. Reclaiming the Civilizational Narrative in Climate Discourse

The **COP30 Presidency's call** to view climate change as a *human challenge* — not merely scientific or technocratic — resonates profoundly with Bharat's worldview. As articulated in the **Concept Note of the Civil Society Dialogue**, Bharat's civil society recognizes that *people are not passive victims but active custodians of care, resilience, and regeneration*.

This perspective emerges from *Anubhūti* — the Bharatiya mode of knowing that integrates direct perception, inference, comparison, and shared testimony — where knowledge arises from lived experience, not abstraction. It frames climate action as a moral and relational pursuit, not an economic transaction.

Thus, civil society's narrative at COP30 must go beyond the vocabulary of carbon and consumption. It must offer a **civilizational lexicon of sustainability** grounded in *Dharma* (responsibility), *Sahaj Jeevan* (natural living), and *Samagraata* (wholeness) — where ecological balance and social equity are inseparable.

Call for Action:

Integrate Bharat's *Anubhūti-based epistemology* and lived community practices into the official COP30 narrative through civil society representation, ensuring that policy frameworks reflect the ethical and experiential dimensions of adaptation.

B. From "Stakeholder" to "Custodian": Redefining Civil Society's Role

The current global climate architecture often positions civil society as an *implementing partner* or *observer* rather than a co-creator of knowledge. However, as the **Community-Driven Climate Adaptation India** study demonstrates, local NGOs, cooperatives, and Gram Sabhas are not peripheral actors but **institutional pillars** of decentralized resilience.

Civil society in Bharat acts simultaneously as:

- **Knowledge broker**, translating local wisdom into policy language;
- **Capacity builder**, training communities in adaptive and regenerative practices;
- **Accountability agent**, ensuring that policies reach the most climate-vulnerable groups; and
- **Custodian**, preserving the moral-ecological fabric of communities through cultural continuity.

This shift — from being seen as “beneficiaries” to *co-authors of resilience* — calls for policy recognition.

Call for Action:

Institutionalize **Civil Society Climate Missions** under the MoEFCC and MoRD to document, quantify, and mainstream grassroots adaptation initiatives as part of India’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) review and COP30 submissions.

C. Rebuilding the Lexicon: Towards a Vocabulary of the Global South

Language determines perception — and perception shapes policy. The global discourse on sustainability still draws heavily from Euro-American frameworks: “carbon neutrality,” “mitigation hierarchy,” “loss and damage,” and “ecosystem services.”

Bharat’s civil society instead offers a *living lexicon* — terms like *Sumangalam* (universal well-being), *Bhumi Suposhan* (nourishing the earth), *Van Poojan* (forest reverence), *Devrai* (sacred grove), and *Jeevan Shaili* (way of living). These are not metaphors but **operational categories** for climate ethics, with tangible behavioral and ecological outcomes.

Similarly, **T.C. James’ RIS Discussion Paper - International Discussions on Indigenous People and India** clarifies that India rejects the settler-indigenous binary. All people of Bharat are indigenous, bound by shared ecological lineage and responsibility. Therefore, the lexicon of “indigeneity” must evolve from identity politics to *universal ecological belonging*.

Call for Action:

Advocate for a **Global South Lexicon Initiative** under COP30 — coordinated by Bharat’s civil society and think tanks — to document culturally grounded sustainability terms and frameworks from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, enriching global climate governance.

D. Interdisciplinary and Perpetual Knowledge Systems

Civil society’s strength lies in its ability to link disciplines and time scales — blending anthropology, ecology, economics, and spirituality into actionable insights. The Pre-COP30 deliberations called for a “**perpetual, interdisciplinary, collective effort**” for research, strategic planning, and monitoring of adaptation outcomes.

Such systems require:

- A **National Repository of Civil Society Climate Actions**, capturing both qualitative narratives and quantitative metrics;
- **Collaborative think-labs** connecting universities, cooperatives, and local institutions; and
- **Interdisciplinary fellowship networks** to mentor next-generation practitioners in value-based climate governance.

The results-based adaptation frameworks must include social and cultural indicators — not just physical outputs.

Call for Action:

Establish a **Civil Society Climate Knowledge Consortium (CSCKC)** — linking academic institutions, think tanks, and CSOs — for long-term documentation, data synthesis, and policy translation of adaptation and LiFE initiatives.

E. Building People-to-People Bridges in the Global South

As Bharat leads the Global South dialogue at COP30, civil society can serve as the connective tissue between nations with shared realities — of resource stress, cultural diversity, and moral-ecological worldviews.

Partnerships through South-South cooperation can focus on:

- Exchange of community adaptation methodologies and local technologies;
- Joint capacity-building for data and documentation;
- Development of regional funds for locally led adaptation; and
- Collective advocacy for *moral justice frameworks* in global negotiations.

The **Western Ghats securitization study** demonstrates how communities in the Global South resist top-down conservation by asserting *collective custodianship* over their ecosystems — a model that can guide Global South solidarity in policy and practice.

Call for Action:

Create a **Global South Civil Society Forum for Climate Resilience**, convened annually alongside COP, to co-create policy narratives rooted in cultural and ecological continuity.

F. Policy Language as Moral Compass

Ultimately, policy language is not just communication — it is orientation. The shift from “control” to *care*, from “extraction” to *reciprocation*, and from “growth” to *balance* represents not merely semantics but a transformation of worldview.

Civil society urges that the COP30 Presidency and India’s national climate framework adopt this “**Ethical Lexicon of Sustainability**”:

- **Sumangalam** – collective well-being as the goal of policy
- **Sahakarita** – cooperation as the mode of governance
- **Bhumi Suposhan** – soil as a living entity
- **Anubhūti** – experiential knowing guiding science
- **Samagraata** – holistic coherence across sectors

Call for Action:

Endorse the inclusion of *Sumangalam* and *Anubhūti-based frameworks* in India’s official COP30 submissions as conceptual anchors of the civil society’s contribution to global climate ethics.\

3. Policy Recommendations

Overarching recommendation (cross-cutting)

Create a National Civil Society–Government Climate Partnership Platform (NCSCPP) to coordinate the recommendations below, validate community evidence, and channel finance, data and technical support for locally led adaptation and LiFE initiatives.

- **Why:** Civil society must be a co-author of policy rather than a peripheral implementer; a formal platform institutionalises partnerships and simplifies access to national and international funds.
- **What to do:** Set up NCSCPP as a joint secretariat (MoEFCC / NITI Aayog) with seats for national CSO federations, cooperative bodies, NABARD, and state climate cells.
- **Lead / Support:** MoEFCC (lead), NITI Aayog, NABARD, Ministry of Rural Development, state environment departments.

3.1 Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE)

1. Integrate LiFE values into national programmes and curricula

- **Why:** Value-based behaviour change scales when supported by institutions (education, extension, public campaigns). C20 LiFE policy guidance demonstrates the potential of curricular and youth engagement.
- **What to do:** Mandate LiFE modules in school curricula (NCERT) and vocational training; fund state LiFE peer-trainer programmes; launch a national LiFE public campaign with measurable targets (waste reduction, water use, organic area).
- **Lead / Support:** MHRD/Ministry of Education, MoEFCC, NCERT, State Education Departments, CSO networks.

2. Establish a National Registry of Regenerative Livelihoods

- **Why:** To counter the narrative that regenerative/local models are isolated “pockets”, and to create an evidence base for scaling.
- **What to do:** Create a registry that maps initiatives (Bhumi Suposhan, community seed hubs, regenerative cooperatives), includes fiscal and ecological metrics and provides case documentation for replication. Use the registry to inform NDCs and COP submissions.
- **Lead / Support:** NCSCPP secretariat (host), MoEFCC, NABARD, CSO consortia.

3. Technology-with-Tradition Fund

- **Why:** To operationalise ‘technology as facilitator’ not substitute.
- **What to do:** Small competitive grants for projects that explicitly pair indigenous practices (e.g., Bhumi Suposhan) with enabling tech (GIS mapping, low-cost sensors, post-harvest tech). Pilot via DCCRCs (see 3.3.8).
- **Lead / Support:** DST, MoEFCC, Ministry of Agriculture, CSO–university partnerships.

3.2 Practicing Biodiversity

4. Formal recognition and support for Community Conserved Areas (CCAs) and Community Forest Resource (CFR) operationalisation

- **Why:** Large tracts of biodiversity are effectively conserved by communities (e.g., sacred groves, Northeast community forests). Recognition unlocks finance and technical support.
- **What to do:** Fast-track CFR claims processing; create a state-level CCA support fund for governance plans, patrolling, and livelihood linkages; align CAMPA/NAFCC convergence for CCA restoration.
- **Lead / Support:** MoEFCC, State Forest Departments, Tribal Affairs, NCSCPP, local Gram Sabhas.

5. Mandate culture–nature mapping in State Biodiversity Action Plans (SBAPs)

- **Why:** Traditional practices (Beej Poojan, Van Poojan) are conservation actions; mapping ensures they are part of formal strategy.
- **What to do:** SBAP guidelines to include intangible heritage mapping and TEK inventories, with funds for community documentation and local guard-ship stipends.
- **Lead / Support:** CBD Cell (MoEFCC), National Biodiversity Authority, State Biodiversity Boards, local CSOs.

6. Natural Capital Accounting for community ecosystems

- **Why:** Quantifying ecosystem services from CCAs and agroforestry will make community conservation visible in adaptation accounting.
- **What to do:** Pilot NCA methodologies in 3 landscapes (one each in central India, Northeast, and Western Ghats) and incorporate results in NATCOM and state adaptation reports.
- **Lead / Support:** MoEFCC, Ministry of Finance (statistics wing), academic partners, NABARD.

3.3 Adaptation, Cooperation and Investments

7. Create “Civil Society Adaptation Windows” within NAFCC / Nodal State Funds

- **Why:** Current finance mechanisms are complex for small community bodies; NAFCC portfolio shows many successful local projects but scaling requires easier access.
- **What to do:** Allocate a defined percentage (e.g., 20%) of NAFCC/state adaptation funds to community proposals (SHGs, cooperatives, Gram Sabhas) with simplified application and community-based evaluation.
- **Lead / Support:** NABARD (implementing), MoEFCC, State Climate Cells.

8. District Climate Cooperative Resource Centres (DCCRCs)

- **Why:** Cooperatives are resilient hubs but need capacity (quality systems, grading, digital marketing) to scale climate-resilient value chains.
- **What to do:** Establish DCCRCs (one per district cluster) to support certification, aggregation, compliance in regional languages; DCCRCs will help funnel NAFCC/other funds to cooperatives.
- **Lead / Support:** Ministry of Cooperation (lead), NABARD, State Cooperative Departments, CSO federations.

9. Mainstream Results-Based Adaptation Monitoring Frameworks (RBAMF)

- **Why:** Adaptation must be measurable to attract finance and to be included in NDCs; co-benefits (reduced migration, soil carbon) need standard indicators.
- **What to do:** Develop RBAMF templates for flagship schemes (MGNREGS, NRLM, PM-KUSUM, LiFE pilots) that capture both quantitative and qualitative adaptation co-benefits. Build capacity at block/district level for participatory M&E.
- **Lead / Support:** MoRD (MGNREGS), MoHUA (where relevant), MoEFCC, Ministry of Rural Development.

10. Launch a South-South Resilience / Civil Society Alliance at COP30

- **Why:** To institutionalise knowledge sharing, mutual recognition of TEK and cooperative finance pathways among Global South nations.
- **What to do:** Use COP30 to announce a South-South Resilience Alliance with seed funding, exchange programmes, and a shared database of community practices. NCSCPP to coordinate India's contribution. Establish co-ordination with UN organisations in the Global South such as ICIMOD.
- **Lead / Support:** MEA (diplomatic lead), MoEFCC, NCSCPP, select CSO networks.

3.4 Civil Society’s Narrative and Lexicon for COP30

11. Civil Society Climate Knowledge Consortium (CSCKC)

- **Why:** Perpetual, interdisciplinary evidence is needed to translate Anubhuti and community practice into policy language.

- **What to do:** Fund a consortium (universities + CSOs + think-tanks) to document, standardise and publish methodologies for Indigenous indicators (LiFE metrics, Bhumi Suposhan soil indicators). Outputs feed NDCs and NATCOM.
- **Lead / Support:** MoEFCC (funding support), ICSSR/UGC, leading universities, CSO networks.

12. Adopt an Ethical Lexicon in Official COP30 Submissions

- **Why:** Policy language shapes international negotiation trajectories; India's value lexicon (Sumangalam, Bhumi Suposhan etc.) offers an alternate framing favouring equity and cultural continuity.
- **What to do:** Include a short annex in India's COP30 submission that defines and operationalises key civilisational terms and links them to measurable programme actions (e.g., LiFE targets, CCA support). NCSCPP to co-author.
- **Lead / Support:** MEA, MoEFCC, NCSCPP.

Implementation guidance (practical steps)

1. **Pilot + Scale:** Pilot 8-12 interventions across different eco-regions in Year 1 (registry, DCCRC, NAFCC windows, RBAMF pilots).
2. **Capacity & Language:** Prioritise training materials in regional languages through DCCRCs.
3. **Monitoring & Reporting:** Use RBAMF outputs for inclusion in NATCOM and COP30 side-events.
4. **Budgeting:** Encourage line ministries to identify reprogrammable slots in existing schemes (MGNREGS, NRLM, NAFCC) to fund pilots in Year 1.

4. Conclusion

The **Pre-COP30 Civil Society Dialogue** reaffirmed that climate action in Bharat is not an imported agenda — it is a continuation of a civilizational ethos that has, for millennia, upheld the harmony between humanity and nature. The discussions and recommendations that emerged from this dialogue are not limited to a preparatory exercise for an international conference; they represent a collective call to **reclaim the moral vocabulary of sustainability** and to rebuild governance frameworks around the principles of care, cooperation, and continuity.

Bharat's civil society — farmers, cooperatives, women's groups, tribal councils, scholars, and youth — are not peripheral actors in the climate discourse. They are the **living custodians of adaptation**. Their work in restoring soils, conserving forests, reviving traditional seeds, and reimagining livelihoods already embodies what the world now calls "climate resilience." Policy must catch up with this lived wisdom.

The way forward therefore lies in three intertwined pathways:

1. **Re-centering Values:** Recognizing *LiFE* not merely as a campaign but as a way of being; positioning *Sumangalam* — collective well-being — as the goal of policy; and ensuring that *Anubhūti* — experiential knowing — guides how we measure progress.
2. **Institutionalizing Partnerships:** Civil society and government must act as **co-authors of climate governance**, through shared platforms such as the proposed *National Civil Society-Government Climate Partnership Platform (NCSCPP)*, cooperative adaptation networks, and knowledge consortia. Only participatory governance can translate Bharat's moral strength into measurable, scalable results.
3. **Global South Solidarity:** COP30 offers an opportunity for Bharat to lead a **South-South Resilience Alliance**, uniting nations with shared cultural and ecological roots to advocate for justice, equity, and indigenous innovation in global negotiations. This is not only strategic diplomacy — it is moral leadership.

As Bharat approaches COP30, it can present not just policies but a **philosophy of coexistence** — one that views the planet not as a commodity to be managed, but as a family to be cared for. This philosophy — rooted in *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* — can reshape global climate action by placing responsibility before rights, regeneration before extraction, and cooperation before competition.

If these principles are embedded in our national policies and international posture, Bharat will not merely contribute to the global dialogue; it will lead it — morally, intellectually, and practically.

This is the spirit with which Bharat's civil society enters COP30: not as observers, but as custodians of the Earth's shared future.

5. Annexes

Annex 1 | Participating Institutions and Networks

Organizing Partners

- **YOJAK Center for Research and Strategic Planning for Sustainable Development**
- **Indian Social Responsibility Network (ISRN)**
- **Paryavaran Sanrakshan Gativedhi (PSG)**
- **Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Policy Research and International Studies (AIPRIS)**

Annex 2 | Speakers and Thematic Session Leads

| Theme | Key Focus Areas | Speakers |
|---|--|--|
| Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) | Livelihoods and regenerative systems | Shri Radhe Shyam Yadav (Sadhguru Foundation, Dahod) |
| | Traditional, cultural and modern technological practices for sustainable lifestyles | Shri Harsh Chavan (Shivganga, Jhabua) |
| | Embedding ecological responsibility in daily life | Shri Ashish Tiwari (ICIMOD) |
| Practicing Biodiversity | Local community leadership in conservation (Totem, Devrai model, sacred groves, commons) | Shri Aman Singh (KRAPAVIS, Alwar) |
| | Blending traditional and modern conservation practices | Shrimati Jui Pethe (REEDS) |
| | Strengthening government–community partnerships | Dr. B K Tiwari, Retired Professor (North-Eastern Hill University) |
| Adaptation, Cooperation and Investments | Community-driven adaptation models | Shrimati Suruchi Bhadwal (Program Director, TERI) |
| | Strengthening cooperative networks for climate resilience | Shri Ananda Aa Shri (Subhiksha Multi-State Co-operative); Shrimati Sudha Kothari (Chaitanya) |
| | Global financing frameworks for resilience | Anirban Ganguly (Expert, Donor Agencies); Dr. Yogesh Gokhale (AIPRIS) |
| Civil Society's Narrative and Lexicon for COP30 | Positioning civil society voices at the global stage | Shri Santosh Gupta (ISRN) |
| | Building solidarity for community-led climate action | Shrimati Surabhi (Paryavaran Sanrakshan Gativedhi) |
| | Shaping terminology and narratives that reflect Bharat's context | Dr. Gajanan Dange (YOJAK) |

Annex 3 | Source Documents and References

Primary Event Documentation

1. *Concept Note – Civil Society Dialogue for COP30* (2025)
2. *Day 1 and Day 2 Dialogue Proceedings* (2025)

Core Policy and Analytical References

1. *C20 LiFE Working Group Policy Brief* (2023)
2. *National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change Portfolio Report – NABARD* (2024)
3. *GIZ* (2013). *Adaptation Made to Measure – Second Edition*.
4. *Role of MGNREGS in Dealing with Climate Change* (GoI 2022).
5. *RIS Discussion Paper No. 272: T. C. James* (2022), *International Discussions on Indigenous People and India*.
6. *Community-Driven Climate Adaptation in India* (Project Report 2025).
7. *ACCESS Development Services* (2022). *Livelihoods India Compendium: Climate Resilient Livelihood Models*.
8. *Cooperatives Building a Better Tomorrow* (Ministry of Cooperation 2024).
9. *India State of Forest Report – Executive Summary* (2023).
10. *Community Conserved Areas Directory of India* (2022).
11. *Integrating Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Practices for Biodiversity Conservation* (UNESCO 2021).
12. *Paramparā: Traditional Knowledge for Sustainability* (IGNCA 2015).
13. *Bhumi Suposhan: Commemorative Publication of the Nationwide Bhumi Suposhan and Samrakshan Abhiyan - Context and Essentials* (2018 – Dange & Velankar).
14. *Securitization and Biodiversity in the Global South – Western Ghats Case Study* (2025).

Annex 4 | Glossary of Key Civilizational Terms

| Term | Meaning / Policy Relevance |
|---|---|
| Anubhūti | Experiential knowing; basis for community-validated knowledge systems and policy indicators. |
| Bhumi Suposhan | Nourishment and reciprocation with the Earth; framework for soil- and ecosystem-based adaptation. |
| Devrai / Oran | Sacred groves managed by local communities; cornerstone of participatory biodiversity governance. |
| LiFE – Lifestyle for Environment | National movement for responsible consumption and pro-planet behaviour. |
| Sahakarita | Cooperation; cooperative institutions as instruments of resilience and equity. |
| Samagraata | Holistic integration of ecological, social, and economic well-being. |
| Sumangalam | Collective prosperity and well-being; guiding moral principle for adaptation and climate finance. |
| Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam | “The world is one family” – philosophical foundation for Global South cooperation. |

Annex 5 | Abbreviations

| Acronym | Full Form |
|-----------------|---|
| CAF | Community Adaptation Framework |
| CAMPA | Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority |
| CCA | Community Conserved Area |
| CSCKC | Civil Society Climate Knowledge Consortium |
| DCCRC | District Climate Cooperative Resource Centre |
| LiFE | Lifestyle for Environment |
| MGNREGS | Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme |
| MoEFCC | Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change |
| NAFCC | National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change |
| NAPCC | National Action Plan on Climate Change |
| NCSCPP | National Civil Society–Government Climate Partnership Platform |
| PMKSY-Watershed | Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana – Watershed Component |
| RBAMF | Results-Based Adaptation Monitoring Framework |
| SAPCC | State Action Plan on Climate Change |
| SHG | Self-Help Group |
| TEK | Traditional Ecological Knowledge |