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**THE HINDU**



**The Indian EXPRESS**

# **SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT EDITORIALS**

**5th June 2026**

## **TOPICS:-**

- 1. Funding India's climate future, a trillion-dollar question**  
(GS Paper III Environment)
- 2. A national environmental survey whose time came**  
(GS Paper III Environment)
- 3. The power of mangroves over seawalls**  
(GS Paper III Environment)

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# 1. FUNDING INDIA'S CLIMATE FUTURE, A TRILLION-DOLLAR QUESTION

*(GS Paper III Environment)*

This editorial 'Funding India's climate future, a trillion-dollar question' was published in The Hindu on 5th Jun 2026, highlights India's climate-finance gap and the institutional architecture needed to mobilise capital at scale.

## **Financing Gap and Domestic Mobilisation**

- India needs ₹162.5 trillion by 2030 for its Nationally Determined Contributions, while achieving net-zero by 2070 may cost \$10.1 trillion.
- Decarbonising steel, cement, power and road transport requires \$467 billion additional capex during 2022-30, with green steel and cement needing regulatory incentives.
- Developing economies need \$5-6 trillion for climate action by 2030, while the missed \$100-billion Paris promise and Baku NCQG of \$300 billion by 2035 remain inadequate.
- The RBI estimates India needs additional annual investment of at least 2.5% of GDP for green finance till 2030, making domestic mobilisation essential.
- India issued \$55.9 billion in green, social, sustainability and sustainability-linked debt by 2024, an 186% rise since 2021, led by clean energy and transport.

## **Regulatory Architecture and Banking Reform**

- India has green bonds, sovereign green bonds, blended finance and transition finance tools, but lacks taxonomy, guarantee architecture, liquidity mechanisms and cheaper brown-to-green incentives.
- The RBI Climate Finance Directions require banks to integrate climate risk into lending and risk management, while green loans can qualify under Priority Sector Lending.
- Priority Sector Lending can reshape bank behaviour because for every ₹10,000 crore in loans, banks must ensure ₹4,000 crore of PSL.
- The RBI should extend green-bond collateral flexibility and design differentiated capital requirements, making brown lending more capital-intensive and green lending easier.
- A full climate stress-test framework should assess climate exposure in bank portfolios, including flood risk in Bihar, with the same rigour as credit risk.

## Taxonomy, Blended Finance and Adaptation Needs

- A climate-finance taxonomy is foundational because it verifies green claims, classifies PSL eligibility, prevents greenwashing and guides investors.
- The proposed Climate Finance Taxonomy and Green Steel Taxonomy can standardise sustainable investment and strengthen investor confidence.
- Blended finance remains underused, though public or concessional funds can de-risk private capital for green bonds, climate funds and blended finance models.
- A \$100-million public first-loss guarantee can unlock \$500 million private co-investment in solar, offshore wind, green hydrogen or climate-resilient agriculture.
- Adaptation finance is neglected because State-level needs in Odisha, Vidarbha and the Himalayas lack borrowing capacity and institutional access to national finance.
- Tamil Nadu and Kerala show that State climate plans are possible, but States and municipalities need access to green debt markets.

## Immediate Reform Priorities

- India must finalise and enact the Climate Finance Taxonomy, as it is the most leveraged action for credibility and capital mobilisation.
- The RBI should move from enabling to mandating green finance through capital requirements, mandatory climate stress tests and expanded PSL targets including adaptation.
- A State Climate Finance Facility, backed by the Union, NABARD and international sources, can give States and municipalities real access to green debt.
- Sovereign green bonds should be scaled and embedded in the SLR framework to deepen the domestic market and attract foreign capital.

## BEYOND EDITORIAL

### Making Climate Finance Verifiable

- Carbon integrity: Climate finance must be tied to real emission cuts, not labels alone, as CCTS 2023 needs verified credits to avoid accounting-led greenwashing.
- Outcome linkage: Green investment should be assessed through measurable results such as lower emissions, cleaner production, renewable capacity and avoided losses, as in India's Sovereign Green Bonds framework.
- Transition discipline: Financing for steel, cement and transport must follow credible pathways, especially as CBAM pressure makes low-carbon exports commercially important.

- Anti-greenwashing guardrails: Investors need clear disclosures, third-party verification and penalties, as SEBI's BRSR Core pushes assurance-based ESG reporting.
- Carbon market credibility: India's carbon credit system must ensure additionality, permanence and transparency, otherwise carbon credits may lose investor trust and environmental value.
- Sectoral benchmarks: Green finance should use sector-specific thresholds for power, industry, transport and buildings, as green taxonomy needs different standards for each sector.
- Trust-based mobilisation: Climate capital will scale faster when regulators, investors and citizens can verify that every rupee produces credible outcomes, not just green-labelled assets.

## 2. A NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY WHOSE TIME CAME

*(GS Paper III Environment)*

This editorial 'A national environmental survey whose time came' was published in The Hindu on 5th Jun 2026, highlights the need for a credible Environmental Survey of India to unify fragmented data and strengthen evidence-based environmental policymaking.

### **Environmental Crisis and Data Blindness**

- India faces visible environmental damage, as the Yale School survey found most respondents experiencing heat waves, agricultural pests, power outages, water pollution, droughts and water shortages.
- Official evidence shows deep ecological stress, with nearly half of 870 river-monitoring stations recording toxic heavy metals and air pollution reducing average life expectancy by about three years in 2022.
- The Desertification Atlas estimates 29.7% land degradation, yet India lacks a comprehensive understanding of the state of its environment.
- Environmental governance remains underfunded and fragmented, with only 0.07% of the annual budget going to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

### **Limits of Existing Reporting**

- Current official reports list schemes such as NAP and REDD+, but say little on State-wise deforestation, biodiversity loss, livelihood impacts and preparedness for future environmental challenges.

- Plantation figures often obscure fund use, environmental compliance and uncomfortable global assessment findings, creating knowledge gaps behind impressive restoration claims.
- India does not lack environmental data, but lacks a system to aggregate evidence from governments, researchers, private actors and field-based sources into one credible platform.

### **Case for an Environmental Survey of India**

- The proposed EnvSI should aggregate evidence, conduct independent audits, issue actionable assessments and grade environmental performance.
- EnvSI must provide an honest account of environmental reality, not merely document what has been lost but identify what can still be protected.
- A credible survey needs statutory mandate, functional autonomy and protected tenure for an expert-led body.
- Its methodology should combine quantitative indicators with livelihood assessments, using cross-verified datasets and rigorous analysis.

### **Governance Value of EnvSI**

- EnvSI can prevent further degradation, moderate climate disasters and build resilience through coordinated action and better resource use.
- It can support climate targets, unlock climate finance and align economic development with conservation.
- It can protect tribal rights, traditional knowledge and displaced communities while strengthening commons governance through recognition of ecological interdependence.
- The Economic Survey offers a template for an expert-led independent report that presents inconvenient truths and alerts policymakers to necessary reforms.

## **BEYOND EDITORIAL**

### **Ecology Needs Accountable Federalism**

- Federal comparison: EnvSI should enable State-wise ecological assessment, like EPI-style rankings, so governance becomes measurable beyond scattered claims.
- District dashboards: Local indicators on air, water, forests, waste and land degradation, like NCAP city dashboards, can help districts act early.

- Fiscal linkage: Environmental outcomes can be tied to grants and incentives, as the 15th Finance Commission linked urban grants with air-quality improvement.
- Independent verification: Third-party audits by IITs, universities and NEERI-like institutions can prevent official reporting from becoming self-certified compliance.
- Public accessibility: Open data through portals like Bhuvan and PARIVESH can help citizens, courts and media track ecological change.
- Outcome ranking: States should be judged by measurable gains in pollution control, biodiversity and resilience, not just schemes like NAP or REDD+.
- Accountable federalism: EnvSI can make ecology a cooperative federal task where the Centre sets standards and States deliver verifiable outcomes.

### 3. THE POWER OF MANGROVES OVER SEAWALLS

*(GS Paper III Environment)*

This editorial ‘The power of mangroves over seawalls’ was published in The Hindu on 5th Jun 2026, highlights the need to recognise ecosystem-based adaptation as a core coastal resilience strategy.

#### Coastal Risk and Seawall Dependence

- India’s 11,000-km coastline faces sea-level rise, saline intrusion, intensified cyclones and storm surges, threatening fragile ecosystems and nearly 250 million people.
- Coastal adaptation spending remains tilted toward seawalls, groynes, embankments and tetrapods, though these are costly, maintenance-heavy and may shift risks elsewhere.
- Coastal States spent ₹2,641 crore on hard measures in the last decade, while the National Coastal Mission budget fell from ₹195 crore in 2022-23 to ₹50 crore in 2024-25.
- Kerala’s armouring shows that hard infrastructure can protect selected sites but worsen erosion damage in adjacent coastal stretches.

#### EbA as an Untapped Climate Asset

- Ecosystem-based Adaptation uses biodiversity and ecosystem services to reduce

climate risks while sustaining fisheries, agriculture and tourism.

- India's mangroves, seagrasses, coral reefs and wetlands act as natural buffers, making India a global hotspot for coastal EbA.
- In the Sundarbans, over 18,000 women restored 4,600 hectares of mangroves, reducing Cyclone Amphan's impact and supporting honey collection and crab farming.
- EbA remains marginal because fragmented mandates, weak monitoring and preference for visible infrastructure projects hide ecosystem-based programmes within broader sectoral schemes.

### **Classification and Measurement Gap**

- Overlapping terms such as Nature-based Solutions, Ecosystem-based Coastal Adaptation and Eco-DRR create uncertainty over what qualifies as EbA.
- Many restoration and conservation projects deliver adaptation gains, but their climate outcomes are rarely assessed or recorded separately.
- Weak classification undercounts India's coastal EbA portfolio, limiting its visibility in planning, finance and Global Goal on Adaptation reporting.
- Clear categories can help identify, monitor and evaluate adaptation outcomes while reflecting socio-economic benefits in coastal policy and finance.

### **Policy Mainstreaming**

- The Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes restores 540 sq km of mangroves, yet lacks formal recognition as an EbA programme.
- India must move from scattered projects to a coherent adaptation policy that recognises, measures and scales ecosystem-based coastal defence.
- Operationalising EbA as a core climate-development strategy can position India's natural capital as a resilient and equitable defence line.

## BEYOND EDITORIAL

### No-Build Zones as Climate Adaptation

- Risk zoning: Coastal resilience must identify no-build zones, erosion-prone stretches and high-risk settlements, as NCCR found about 33.6% of India's coast under erosion.
- Managed retreat: In severely vulnerable areas, planned relocation may be safer than repeated seawalls, as Odisha's cyclone shelters showed during Phailin 2013.
- CRZ enforcement: Strong CRZ 2019 implementation is essential because mangrove restoration loses value if construction continues in fragile coastal zones.
- Settlement planning: Housing, tourism and port projects should follow shoreline-change data, as NCSCM maps track erosion, accretion and vulnerable coastal stretches.
- Nature-buffer integration: Mangroves, wetlands and dunes must be treated as planning infrastructure, as CRZ norms recognise them as ecologically sensitive areas.
- Livelihood safeguards: Coastal zoning should protect fisherfolk access, boat-parking and net-mending spaces, since erosion directly reduces coastal livelihood security.
- Adaptation realism: India needs a shift from defending every coast with concrete to deciding where to protect, restore, regulate and retreat through shoreline management plans.