



# ECOBUZZ

A BUZZ TO THE GREEN FUTURE!!

RIO SUMMIT 1992  
21 KEY AGENDAS

OCTOBER'2025  
EDITION

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*Greetings from Faculty of Law, GLS University!*

After a successful series on Sustainable Development Goals, I am very happy to learn that for the next EcoBuzz series we explore the five basic elements of nature –the *panchamahabhutas* – which inhere the properties of earth (prithvi), water (jala), fire (tejas), wind (vayu) and space (akasha).

Reconnecting to the nature outside of us can help us reconnect to our true, inner nature. When we spend more time outside in the elements, we start to rebalance ourselves physically, mentally and energetically.

The current edition of EcoBuzz shall focus on the element “Prithvi” – the Earth. It’s surprising just how easily we can lose connection to the earth. Spending long periods indoors, driving cars and fixating on screens all creates a disconnection between ourselves and the earth. The longer we’re disconnected from the earth and the outside world, the more we forget our interconnected role within nature. Thus, the more we tend to focus on ‘I, me, my’ – the ego.

Our Mother Earth is currently dealing with a wide range of issues, despite efforts in recent decades to address environmental challenges. Due to the terrifying pace at which the Environment is being exploited the legal framework for addressing environmental issues at the global and domestic levels seems inadequate without the collective effort of the human-kind.

I feel happy that the students have decided the ‘MOTHER EARTH’ as the theme for this month's EcoBuzz and our constant efforts towards a green and clean Earth, will continue to raise awareness on the alarming issues that the mother Earth is facing.

Let’s come together for organised actions with the sole objective of saving mother earth while thriving to keep it alive, green, and clean.

Regards,  
Dr. Mayuri H. Pandya  
Dean, Faculty of Law, GLS University

## ECOBUZZ TEAM

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# National Updates

## Approval of revised definition: Aravallis on Hold:

On Oct 8, 2025, the Haryana government has approved a revised definition of what constitutes the Aravalli hills and ranges, limiting the classification to landforms that rise at least 100 metres above the surrounding terrain and are composed of ancient rock formations dating back a billion years or more. The change is expected to significantly narrow the area that is legally recognised and protected as part of the Aravalli range. As a result, numerous smaller hills, ridges and foothill formations may fall outside the ambit of statutory safeguards, a move that signals a major regulatory shift with far-reaching consequences for conservation and land-use governance.

On Oct 9, 2025, the Supreme Court of India has stayed the proposed Aravalli Zoo Safari project in Haryana, a large-scale plan that envisaged the development of tourism and safari infrastructure across nearly 10,000 acres of the Aravalli hills. The interim order reflects judicial concern over the conversion of fragile hill ecosystems into high-impact infrastructure projects. By halting the project, the Court has underscored the need for caution in balancing claims of development and eco-tourism with ecological preservation, effectively postponing potential environmental damage arising from extensive construction in a sensitive landscape.

## Melting Himalayas:

On Oct 15, 2025, a recent consultation and report on the western Himalayan region has warned of an alarming decline in glacier reserves, estimating losses of nearly 70 per cent. The findings have prompted calls for an Integrated Himalayan Action Plan, emphasising stricter land-use regulation, disaster-resilient planning and ecosystem-based adaptation measures. Reported by The Times of India, the assessment draws attention to the accelerating impacts of climate change on mountain ecosystems and underlines the urgency of adopting coordinated, long-term strategies to safeguard the ecological stability and resilience of the Himalayan massifs.

# State Updates

## Afforestation for the Chief Minister's inauguration:

Gujarat's portion of Aravalli range, spanning hilly areas, benefits indirectly from the extended 'Aravalli Green Wall' project that emphasizes afforestation to combat degradation from mining and urbanisation; the state accounts for 15.8% of degraded land in this range.

In October 2025, Gujarat advanced sustainable development efforts through the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference in Mehsana where chief minister Bhupendra Patel inaugurated initiatives including over 7100 MoUs for North Gujarat highlighting promotion of clean energy in arid, mountainous terrains.

## Initiatives taken:

Efforts aligned with broader 2025 campaigns like urban forests and 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' tree-planting, enhancing biodiversity and soil stability in mountain-adjacent ecosystems. Such initiatives foster public participation and environmental stewardship, integrating conservation goals with social awareness and long-term landscape resilience.

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# GREEN JUSTICE

## ➤ Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra v. State of Uttar Pradesh (1985–87)

Popularly known as the Dehradun Limestone Quarrying Case, this case dealt with uncontrolled mining in the Mussoorie hill region. The Supreme Court found that limestone quarrying caused serious environmental degradation, landslides, and water scarcity. Applying the principles of ecological balance and sustainable development, the Court ordered closure of harmful mines, holding that environmental protection must take priority over economic benefits.

## ➤ Hinch Lal Tiwari v. Kamala Devi (2001)

The case concerned illegal allotment and construction over a village pond (talab). The Supreme Court held that natural resources like ponds, lakes, hills, and open lands are meant for public use and help maintain ecological balance. Such resources cannot be converted for private or commercial purposes. The Court ordered restoration of the pond, affirming that environmental protection is part of the right to life under Article 21.

## ➤ N.D. Jayal v. Union of India (2004)

The case concerned the Tehri Dam project in the fragile Himalayan region. The Supreme Court held that development projects in ecologically sensitive mountain areas must strictly comply with environmental clearances, safety norms, and sustainable development principles. While allowing the project to continue, the Court emphasized that environmental protection and human safety cannot be compromised for economic development and directed continuous monitoring to prevent ecological harm.

## ➤ Kinkri Devi v. State of Himachal Pradesh (1988)

The case involved unscientific limestone mining in the hill regions of Himachal Pradesh. The Himachal Pradesh High Court held that reckless mining in fragile mountain areas causes landslides and permanent ecological damage. Applying principles of environmental protection and sustainable development, the Court ordered closure of illegal mines, affirming that ecological balance and public safety must prevail over commercial interests.

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One who practices moderation in diet, rest, actions, and sleep, whose activities are balanced, experiences less suffering and lives a life aligned with sustainability and well-being.

# GREEN LAWS

## 1. Environment (Protection) Act, 1986

This Act is the primary umbrella legislation for environmental protection in India and plays a crucial role in safeguarding fragile mountain ecosystems. It empowers the Central Government to regulate industrial, infrastructural, and developmental activities in ecologically sensitive mountain regions. Under this Act, restrictions may be imposed on mining, hydropower projects, tourism activities, and road construction in hilly areas to prevent landslides, deforestation, and ecological degradation. The Act also provides the legal basis for declaring Eco-Sensitive Zones in mountainous regions, thereby ensuring sustainable development while protecting natural habitats.

## 2. Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is vital for protecting mountain forests by restricting the diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes without prior approval of the Central Government. Forests in mountainous regions help prevent soil erosion, floods, and landslides. The Act ensures that developmental activities such as highways, dams, and tourism infrastructure in hill areas undergo strict scrutiny. By regulating deforestation, the Act promotes ecological stability and supports sustainable mountain development.

## 3. Biological Diversity Act, 2002

The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 aims to conserve biological diversity, promote sustainable use of biological resources, and ensure fair benefit sharing. Mountain ecosystems are rich in endemic and rare species, making this law particularly significant. The Act protects traditional knowledge of indigenous mountain communities and prevents over-exploitation of biological resources. It contributes to conservation-based development while maintaining ecological balance in mountainous regions.

## 4. Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 provides legal protection to wildlife and their habitats, many of which are located in mountainous regions such as national parks and biosphere reserves. The Act restricts construction, human interference, and commercial activities in protected areas. By conserving wildlife habitats and corridors, the Act helps maintain ecological balance and protects fragile mountain ecosystems from unsustainable development.

## 5. Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 2006

The Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 mandates prior environmental clearance for large-scale projects such as hydropower dams, mining activities, and infrastructure development in mountainous areas. It requires assessment of environmental risks including landslides, deforestation, water depletion, and displacement of local communities. This legal mechanism ensures that development in mountain regions is environmentally sustainable and socially responsible.

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# "From Peaks to People: Ensuring a Sustainable Future for Mountain Ecosystems"

-Krishnapriya Salvi

Mountains are among the planet's most important yet vulnerable ecosystems. Covering over a quarter of the Earth's land surface, they support life far beyond their slopes by providing freshwater, regulating climate, conserving biodiversity, and sustaining livelihoods for millions of people. Sustainable Mountain Development (SMD) recognizes this vital role and seeks to balance the needs of mountain communities with environmental conservation to ensure these ecosystems continue to benefit humanity. Often described as the world's "water towers," mountains supply freshwater to billions of people downstream through rivers fed by glaciers, snowmelt, and rainfall. They are also rich reservoirs of biodiversity, hosting unique plant and animal species that are essential for global ecological stability. For mountain populations, these landscapes are home and workplace, supporting agriculture, forestry, pastoralism, and tourism. Globally, more than a fifth of rural households depend directly on mountain resources for their livelihoods. Mountains further contribute to climate regulation by influencing weather patterns and storing carbon, making them crucial in the fight against climate change. Despite their importance, mountain regions face increasing threats. Climate change is accelerating glacial melt, triggering landslides, floods, and extreme weather events, while biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation are driven by unsustainable land use and resource extraction. These pressures intensify food and water insecurity and deepen poverty among mountain communities, placing both people and ecosystems at risk. Sustainable Mountain Development addresses these challenges by strengthening climate resilience, protecting biodiversity, and promoting sustainable livelihoods such as eco-tourism, green energy, and climate-smart agriculture. Central to this approach is empowering local and Indigenous communities, particularly women and youth, to participate in decision-making and resource management, while valuing traditional knowledge that has long supported sustainable living in harsh environments. Regional and transboundary cooperation is equally important, as many mountain ecosystems and water resources cross national borders and require shared governance. Global efforts such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 15, highlight the need to conserve and sustainably use mountain ecosystems by 2030. Building on the momentum of the International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development in 2022, continued action is essential. Protecting mountains is not only a local responsibility but a global one, as the health of these highland ecosystems is inseparably linked to the well-being of the planet and future generations.

Source: Paulo Pereira et al., Ecosystem Services in Mountain Environments: Benefits and Threats, 177

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### NATIONAL EVENTS

#### 1. Himalayan Conclave 2025 : Indian Himalayan region-2047

The Himalayan Conclave, held from November 13 to 15, 2025, in Almora, Uttarakhand, focused on environmental conservation and sustainable socio-economic growth in the Indian Himalayan Region, with discussions on climate change mitigation and sustainable development.

#### .2 Biodiversity Meet 2025 – Amboli:

A three-day event held from November 21 to 23 in Maharashtra highlighted the rich biodiversity of the Western Ghats, featuring expert sessions, field visits, guided tours, and student competitions, with a focus on Amboli's ecological significance as a designated biodiversity heritage site.

#### 3. Pride of India Expo 2025 (GBPNIHE Participation)

From November 28 to 30, the Govind Ballabh Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (GBPNIHE) participated in a national expo, showcasing initiatives and local products that promote environmental conservation, sustainable development, and eco-friendly practices in mountain regions.

### INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

#### 1. UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 30)

Held in Belém, Brazil, from November 20 to 21, 2025, the event reviewed global climate policy ten years after the Paris Agreement, focusing on climate finance, adaptation, and fossil fuel transition. A key outcome was the adoption of the Belém Package, including the Global Mutirão agreement and a mechanism for a just transition.

#### 2. International Mountain Tourism and Outdoor Sport Conference

Hosted by the International Mountain Tourism Alliance (IMTA) in Guiyang, China, from November 10 to 13, 2025, the event focused on integrating culture, sports, and tourism to enhance quality of life in mountain regions. It emphasized sustainable and responsible tourism frameworks that balance economic development with the protection of mountain ecosystems and cultural heritage.

#### 3. Seminar “Water and Future”

Held on November 28, 2025, in Sant’Anatolia di Narco, Italy, the event marked the UN International Year of Glaciers’ Preservation 2025, focusing on water security and the vital role of mountain glaciers. It highlighted glacier melt as a humanitarian crisis and stressed the need for stronger policies, monitoring systems, and transboundary cooperation.

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## CREATIVE CORNER



THE CARICATURE APTLY SHOWCASES SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT. THE MOUNTAIN RANGES, LUSH FOLIAGE, FLOWING WATER, AND CLEAR SKIES HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MOUNTAIN ECOSYSTEM. THE PRESENCE OF WINDMILLS AND SOLAR PANELS SYMBOLISES THE USE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY, WHICH IS A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTOR TO DEVELOPMENT IN ELEVATED TERRAIN REGIONS. OVERALL, THE PICTURE CONVEYS THE MESSAGE THAT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MOUNTAINS IS POSSIBLE WHEN NATURAL RESOURCES ARE USED WISELY, WITH MOTHER EARTH PROTECTING AND NURTURING ALL FORMS OF LIFE, ENSURING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Source : <https://stock.adobe.com/search/images?k=%22life+on+land%22>

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