

Creative Responses to Sustainability

INDIA GUIDE

Cultural Initiatives Engaging
with Social & Environmental Issues



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Cultural Initiatives Engaging with Social and Environmental Issues
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Preface

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) in partnership with Contact Base is delighted to launch a new Green Guide for India, the 9th in the series Creative Responses to Sustainability.

In an age of urgent ecological reckoning, the arts and culture sectors in India are emerging not merely as a mirror to environmental change, but as a vital force shaping the response to it.

Researched and written by Contact Base, a social enterprise whose pioneering work since 2002 has exemplified the transformative power of art for sustainability, this Green Guide for India brings into focus 17 pioneering organisations working across diverse geographies — from the Himalayan heights of Ladakh, to the coastal ecosystems of Goa, the arid lands of Kachchh and the biodiversity-rich Northeast. Together, these profiles reflect the wide spectrum of creative practices that link culture and climate, traditional wisdom and innovation, rural resilience and urban engagement.

The guide maps key trends shaping the intersection of arts and the environment in India today. These include the strategic use of the arts as a tool for environmental sustainability; the role of artists and cultural actors in fostering community stewardship and dialogue; and the growing movement of using creative practices for education, critique, and advocacy. Whether through thematic artistic interventions that address climate issues or the revitalisation of traditional knowledge to sustain ecosystems and livelihoods, these initiatives collectively articulate a new vision — where art is not peripheral, but central to imagining and building a sustainable future.

At a time when India is navigating critical ecological challenges, this guide offers not only stories of inspiration, but also actionable recommendations. It foregrounds the arts as a catalyst for change, as a platform for intergenerational learning, and as a bridge between local traditions and global conversations. The voices and case studies featured here illuminate the potential of culture to shape policy, shift behaviours, and empower communities — rural and urban alike.

Together, the organisations in this guide — and the practices they represent — remind us that environmental change is not only a scientific or policy issue, but a cultural one. Rooted in India's immense artistic heritage and community wisdom, they offer a powerful model of sustainable development grounded in creativity, collaboration, and care.

This Green Guide for India is both a resource and an invitation: to listen, to learn, and to act — through the arts, for the planet.

Valentina RICCARDI

Director, Culture, ASEF

Singapore, August 2025

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This publication would not have been possible without the commitment and expertise of the team at Contact Base. Our sincere thanks go to Dr Madhura Dutta for her vision and leadership in guiding the research, and to the Contact Base team, Ananya Bhattacharya and Mir Rahemin Rahim for their tireless work in bringing together stories that illuminate the intersection of culture and climate. We would also like to thank Jacqueline Spedding, for her valuable comments and detailed copyediting of the guide.

Special thanks to Kerrine Goh at the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) for her thoughtful coordination, thorough editorial support throughout the development of this guide.

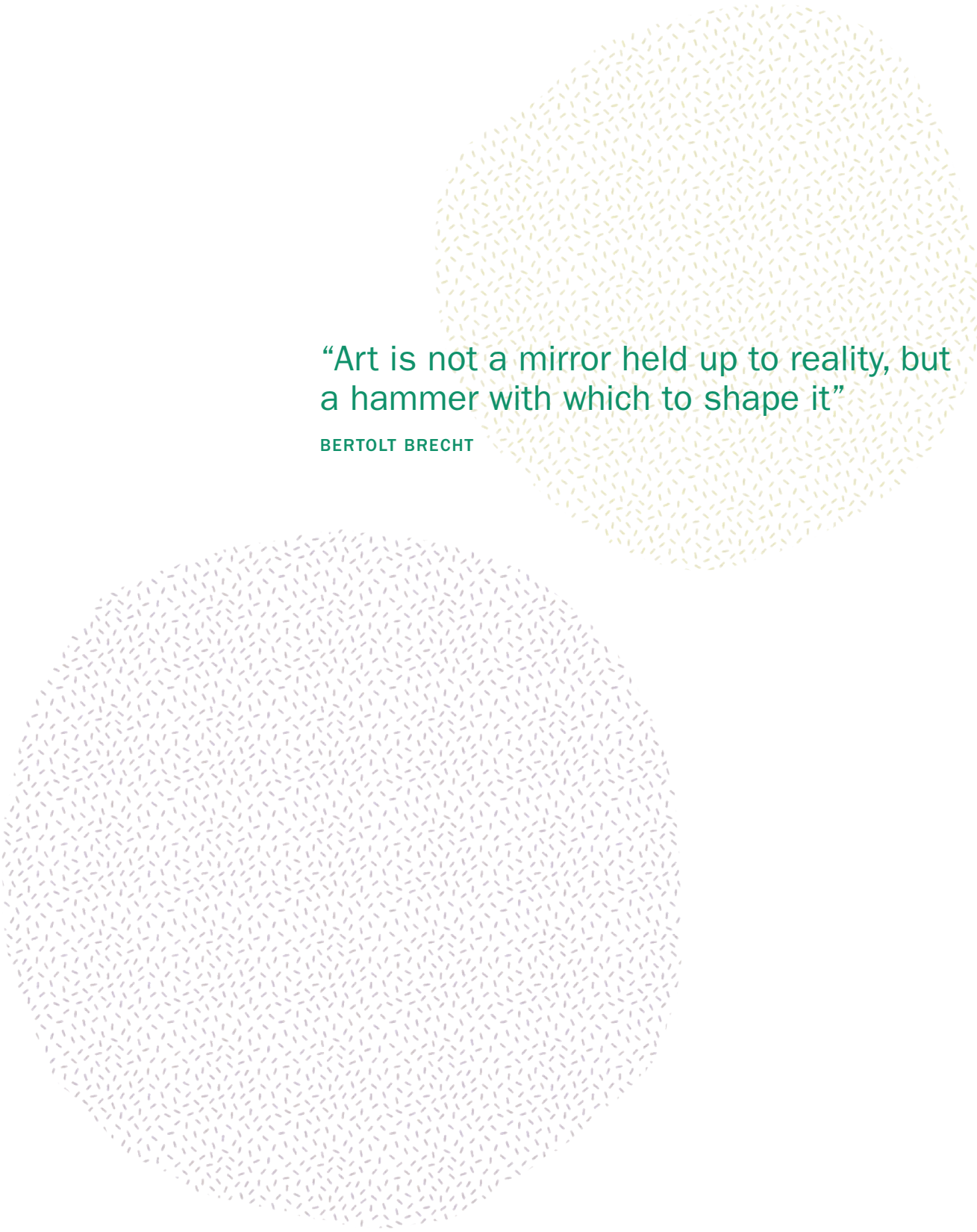
Since 2015, ASEF has been publishing the series *Creative Responses to Sustainability* through its arts website, [culture360.ASEF.org](https://culture360.asef.org). This series of country-specific guides looks at arts organisations and artists' initiatives that address issues of sustainability in their artistic practice in several countries of Asia and Europe. The previous guides focused on Singapore (2015), Korea (2016) Indonesia (2017), Australia (2018), Portugal and Spain (2019), the United Kingdom (2021) with the spin-off in the series on the city of Berlin (2017).

Creative Responses to Sustainability builds on the discussions initiated by the Green Art Lab Alliance (GALA)¹ since 2013 and previously, on ASEF's engagement with the topic of artists and climate change in global dialogues around environmental sustainability through its Connect2Culture programme (2008-2011)². Through this series, [culture360.ASEF.org](https://culture360.asef.org) continues to respond to the existing gaps in the information on arts & culture in Asia and Europe. In doing so, it also contributes to the Agenda 2030, particularly SDG 16.10 (access to information).³

1 Established in 2013, the Green Art Lab Alliance (GALA) is an informal network of 45 cultural organisations across Asia, Europe and Latin America contributing to environmental sustainability through their creative practice. For more information: <https://greenartlaballiance.com/>

2 Download the programme portfolio of Connect2Culture (2008-2011) at: <https://culture360.asef.org/resources/special-dossier-outlines-role-culture-tackling-global-issues>

3 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements: <https://sdg16now.org/report/target16-10/>



“Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but
a hammer with which to shape it”

BERTOLT BRECHT

Introduction



India's cultural landscape is a vibrant tapestry woven with its rich artistic heritage, diverse traditions, and evolving contemporary expressions across visual, digital, and performance arts. There are more than 2,000 ethnic groups, 121 major languages and tens of thousands of minor languages and dialects. Each region has its unique art, craft, music, dance, cuisine, and festivals, reflecting its local traditions. From ancient murals and folk traditions to avant-garde creations, arts in India have long reflected society, capturing contemporary challenges and inspiring change.

Today, this nation of 1.4 billion people faces pressing environmental challenges, from climate change and biodiversity loss to pollution and deforestation. Across the country, artists are not mere observers but are emerging as active agents of change, using creativity to foster climate resilience, ecological conservation, and the well-being of people and nature. As environmental threats grow – from melting Himalayan glaciers and vanishing wetlands to depleting forests and worsening air and water quality – art is emerging as a compelling medium to engage communities, spark dialogue, and drive meaningful action.

This guide explores the evolving intersection of art and environmental stewardship in India, mapping key trends, opportunities, and challenges in a dynamic field. It delves into the diverse ways artistic expression is being harnessed to address ecological concerns – from traditional folk art to contemporary multimedia interventions. By amplifying urgent environmental narratives, advocating policy shifts, and mobilising communities toward sustainable living, artists are playing a pivotal role in shaping a greener, more equitable future. Through the directory of organisations, this guide highlights the transformative power of arts in fostering environmental consciousness, empowering marginalised voices, and driving lasting change.

Objectives

This guide serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, practitioners, and artists seeking to harness the transformative potential of creative expression in building a future in harmony with nature. By providing insights into the creative responses to sustainability from some of the pioneering art organisations in India, the guide aims to:



Build an understanding on how art is being used to address ecological challenges in India



Catalyse cross-disciplinary partnerships through sharing good practice at the nexus of arts and sustainability



Serve as a comprehensive resource providing information about cultural organisations addressing environmental challenges through arts practices

Methodology

The study by Contact Base reflects a mixed approach, combining secondary research and in-depth interviews to analyse the intersection of arts and climate action in India. It began with a thorough review of academic papers, policy documents, and reports from government and non-government organisations to establish a contextual foundation.



Organisations actively engaged in arts-based climate action were identified by searching websites, social media, and databases online. Organisations were shortlisted based on three key criteria:

[Their relevance to arts and environmental action](#)

[Innovation in approach](#)

[Long-term sustainability of their initiatives indicating impact and viability](#)

Semi-structured interviews with key people provided deeper insights into strategies, challenges, and successes. Thematic analysis of these interviews, combined with secondary research, ensured a robust, multi-dimensional understanding of how arts are driving environmental engagement in India.

The directory profiles 17 organisations working in urban and rural areas, spanning India's vast geography – from the Himalayan heights of Ladakh (sāLadakh Biennale) to the coastal ecosystems of Goa (Serendipity Arts Festival), and from the arid Kachchh region (Khamir) to the biodiversity-rich Northeast (Green Hub). Thematically, the directory showcases a rich spectrum of the creative sector: cinema (All Living Things Environmental Film Festival, ALT EFF), land art (sāLadakh Biennale), upcycling (Cartist), architecture (Hunnarshala Foundation's Sankalan, Centre for Alternative Learning), textiles (Khamir's Kala Cotton Initiative), performance art (Artsforward), and storytelling (Living Waters Museum). It reflects a critical interplay of traditional knowledge – evident in vernacular crafts and folk narratives – with contemporary innovation, addressing challenges like water scarcity, pollution, biodiversity loss, and urban sprawl. Together, these organisations illustrate the transformative potential of arts as both a dialogic platform and a practical tool, resonating with global sustainability discourses while rooted in India's unique environmental and cultural contexts.

The list of organisations is not exhaustive but is an attempt to highlight the diversity of work at the intersection of arts and ecology. This research serves as a foundational step, encouraging deeper inquiry by recognising and disseminating the experiences of the featured organisations and their vision for a greener future.

Introducing India

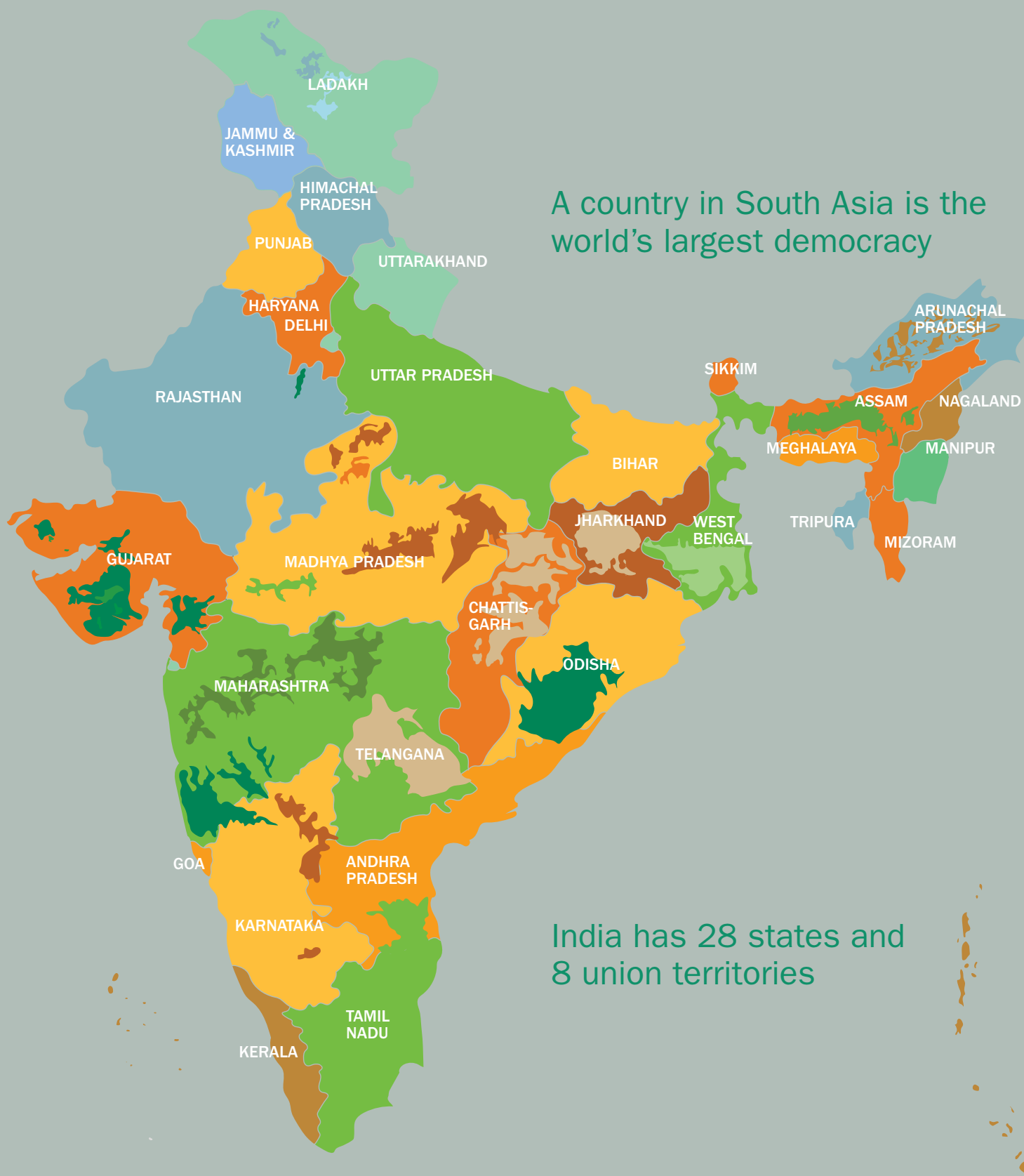
India, a country in South Asia, is the world's largest democracy. It is a rising economic power, a hub for technology and innovation, and a key player in international affairs. India has become the world's most populous country, surpassing China. The population distribution is diverse, with varying densities across different states and territories. Most of the Indian population is rural, but it also has a rapidly expanding urban population. The sheer size of the country has implications for its economy, resource management, and social development.

Geographically, India spans from the towering Himalayas in the north – home to vital river systems like the Ganges and Indus – to the sun-drenched tropical coasts of the Indian Ocean. Along the way, it embraces arid deserts, fertile plains, and verdant rainforests, creating a tapestry of diverse climates and ecosystems.

India's history is a continuum of great civilisations, from the ancient Indus Valley to the Maurya, Gupta, and Mughal empires. Centuries of British colonial rule ended in 1947 with the birth of independent India.

India also has a 5,000-year-old history of world trade, it being part of some of the iconic trade routes of the world, such as Silk Road and Spice Routes. While maritime trade flourished mostly in the Indian Ocean, overland routes also extended northwards through the Himalayas, connecting India with Tibet, Central Asia, and beyond, influencing both commercial and cultural exchanges. This rich historical tapestry has shaped a vibrant legacy of cultural landscapes, diverse traditions, and profound philosophical worldviews.

India has 28 states and eight union territories. India's parliamentary system has a federal structure with unitary features; the President is the head of state, and the Prime Minister is the head of central government. Administratively, it has a three-tier structure where local government has a strong role.



State of Affairs



Biodiversity and Environment

India, classified as a megadiverse country by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, boasts rich biodiversity across forests, wetlands, grasslands, deserts, and marine ecosystems. It hosts four of the world's 34 biodiversity hotspots – the Himalayas, Western Ghats, Indo-Burma region, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.⁴ However, biodiversity faces severe threats from human activity and climate change, driving species loss over the past 150 years. The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) warns that one million species are at risk of extinction.⁵

⁴ International Union for Conservation of Nature, *India*, accessed March 15, 2025, <https://iucn.org/our-work/region/asia/countries/india>.

⁵ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, *The Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: Summary for Policymakers* (Bonn, Germany: IPBES, 2019).

Centre for Science and Environment and Down to Earth's *State of India's Environmental Report 2023* analysed the 2022 report, *Forest Survey of India*, reporting a 0.5% increase in forest cover between 2017 and 2021.⁶ Very dense forests, crucial for carbon absorption, now cover just 3% of India's land. Wetlands are also disappearing, with one-third already lost or degraded, worsening water shortages.⁷ Groundwater depletion, erratic monsoons, and encroachment severely threaten water security.⁸

Pollution

Air pollution cuts the average Indian's life expectancy by nearly five years in 2020.⁹ World Health Organisation ranks 14 Indian cities among the world's 15 most polluted cities.¹⁰ Water pollution is also critical, with 80 per cent of the pollution in the river coming from untreated domestic sewage and industrial effluents.¹¹ About 70% of surface water resource in India may be polluted.¹²

India generates 62 million tonnes of solid waste annually, but only about 25% is processed. E-waste exceeds 1.6 million tonnes per year, and plastic waste remains a major challenge.¹³ However, waste management initiatives promoting segregation, recycling, and sustainability are gaining momentum.¹⁴



Climate Change

India faces rising temperatures, extreme weather, and shrinking green spaces. The *State of India's Environment 2024* report by Centre for Science and Environment and Down to Earth marked 2023 as the hottest year on record, with 318 extreme weather events. Greenhouse gas emissions surged 115% from 1994 to 2019.¹⁵

Climate change threatens agriculture, water, and public health. India bears the world's highest social cost of carbon, with climate-linked GDP losses projected at 3–10% annually by 2100.¹⁶ Himachal Pradesh lost over 4,000 sq. km of snow cover between 2019–21, severely impacting river basins, especially the Sutlej Basin.¹⁷

6 Press Information Bureau, *Increase in Forest Area*, 2024, accessed March 20, 2025, <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseFramePage.aspx?PRID=2002616>.

7 UN Climate Change News, *Wetlands Disappearing Three Times Faster than Forests*, UNFCCC, 2018, accessed March 20, 2025, <https://unfccc.int/news/wetlands-disappearing-three-times-faster-than-forests>.

8 A. Kapoor and M. Anand, *Addressing Groundwater Depletion Crisis in India: Institutionalizing Rights and Technological Innovations*, EAC-PM Working Paper Series, 2024, accessed March 20, 2025, https://eacpm.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Addressing_Groundwater_Depletion_in_India.pdf.

9 Centre for Science and Environment, *CSE Marks World Environment Day with Release of its Annual Compendium of Data, The State of India's Environment 2023: In Figures, Down To Earth*, June 4–5, 2023, accessed March 20, 2025, <https://www.cseindia.org/marks-world-environment-day-with-release-of-its-annual-compendium-of-data-the-state-of-india-s-environment-2023-in-figures-11744>.

10 D. Robinson, *15 Most Polluted Cities in the World*, Earth.Org, 2022, accessed March 20, 2025, <https://earth.org/most-polluted-cities-in-the-world/>.

11 N. Gupta, "Water Contamination: Still a Serious National Challenge," *Times of India*, 2023, accessed March 20, 2025, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/voices/water-contamination-still-a-serious-national-challenge/>.

12 A. Arif, *India's Ebbing Water: Conservation Measures and Impacts of New Amendments*, ADRI, 2024, accessed March 22, 2025, https://www.adriindia.org/adri/india_water_facts.

13 Deepak Kumar Adhara, "E-Waste Generation, Management and Impacts: A Review in Present Indian Scenario," *International Journal for Research in Engineering Application & Management* (IJREAM) 9, no. 8 (2023). ISSN 2454-9150.

14 A. K. Agnihotri, "MSW Management: The Pitable Situation of Municipal Solid Waste Management," TERI, September 14, 2022, accessed March 20, 2025, <https://www.teriin.org/article/msw-management-pitable-situation-municipal-solid-waste-management>.

15 F. Zaidi and S. Raheja, "5% Rise in India's GHG Emissions Since 2016, Driven by Energy & Industrial Sectors," *Down To Earth*, 2024, accessed March 20, 2025, <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/pollution/5-rise-in-india-s-ghg-emissions-since-2016-driven-by-energy-industrial-sectors-94076>.

16 E. Roy, "India May Lose 3-10% GDP Annually by 2100 Due to Climate Change, Says Report," *The Indian Express*, 2021, accessed March 20, 2025, <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-may-lose-3-10-gdp-annually-by-2100-due-to-climate-change-says-report-7350318/>.

17 A. Sangomla and R. Sajwan, "On Thin Ice: Less Snow, High Temperatures Have Upturned Lives in Himalayan Cold Desert," *Down To Earth*, 2022, accessed March 20, 2025, <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/climate-change/on-thin-ice-less-snow-high-temperatures-have-upturned-lives-in-himalayan-cold-desert-81203>.

Loss of Traditional Knowledge

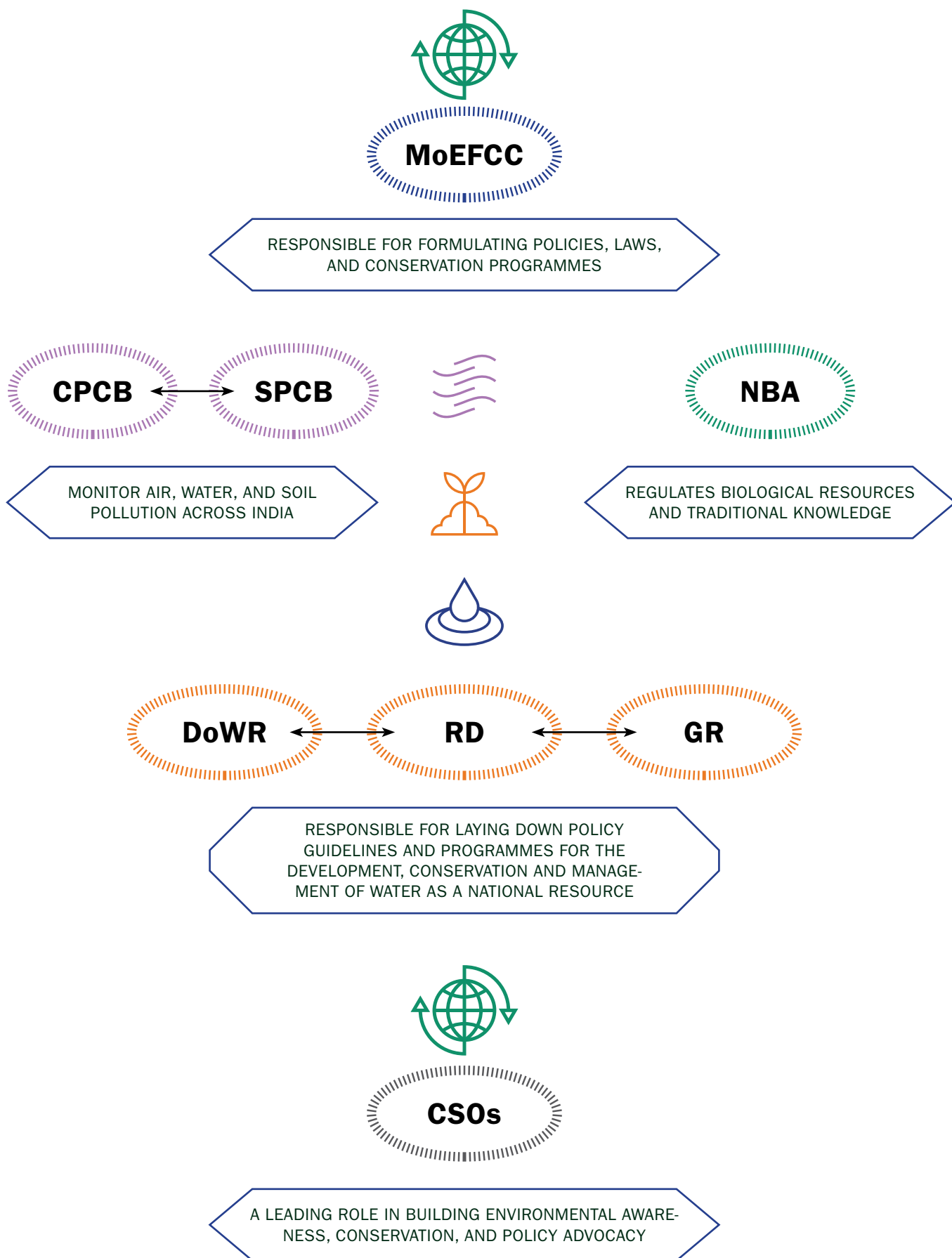
India's predominantly rural society has long upheld sustainability through frugality, Indigenous knowledge, and nature-centric traditions. Practices like harvesting rainwater, using stepwells, living minimal waste lifestyles, and using local resources effectively reflect scientific planning and ecological harmony. Traditional food, medicine, and artisanal crafts further showcase India's deep-rooted commitment to sustainable living. However, these traditional economies have weakened over time, facing fragmented value chains, declining recognition, and market shifts that favour mechanisation. As consumer preferences change, rural practitioner communities and their invaluable knowledge are at risk of marginalisation, threatening both cultural heritage and sustainability.

Global discourse increasingly recognises the vital role of Indigenous and local knowledge in ecological sustainability. Organisations like IPBES highlight traditional knowledge systems as holistic, integrating social and ecological wisdom.¹⁸ Research shows a strong link between local biodiversity stewardship and community well-being, with growing interest in integrating this wisdom into modern climate strategies.

Ecosystem Management

The environment and forests in India are concurrent subjects, meaning both the central and state governments have the power to legislate on these matters, with the central government having a more dominant role in environmental policymaking. Environmental management in India is handled by a combination of government bodies, judicial institutions, and civil society organisations. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is the central authority responsible for formulating policies, laws, and conservation programmes. The Central Pollution Control Board in coordination with state pollution control boards monitor air, water, and soil pollution across India. The National Biodiversity Authority regulates biological resources and traditional knowledge. The Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation is mainly responsible for establishing policy guidelines and programmes for the development, conservation and management of water as a national resource. Civil society organisations play a leading role in building environmental awareness, conservation, and policy advocacy.

¹⁸ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, "Knowledge Systems," accessed March 10, 2025, <https://www.ipbes.net/node/41404>



Art's Role in Environmental Action: Current Trends in India



Art in its myriad forms, has emerged as a powerful force beyond aesthetic expression, to serve as a vital medium for raising awareness, sparking dialogue, and driving meaningful change. Discussions and interviews on arts and the environment in India have revealed recurring themes and strategies that artists and arts organisations employ to drive climate action. By fostering an environmentally conscious and creatively engaged society, these initiatives are catalysing positive transformations and encouraging active social participation in biodiversity conservation, habitat protection, the revival of traditional ecological knowledge, and climate education.

The following sections discuss the conditions and policies giving rise to arts initiatives, trends in the methodologies and strategic approaches adopted by organisations, and the types of thematic interventions observed in India. This analysis is illustrated with on-ground examples.

Arts and Ecology

The intersection of arts and ecology in India is a dynamic yet complex space where creative expression engages with urgent environmental challenges. There is a growing awareness, policy efforts, and grassroots initiatives fostering environmental action and sustainability. India's rich cultural heritage, combined with the power of art to convey ecological issues are inspiring action and mobilising behavioural change. Alongside this, the rising global and national priorities of environmental action and sustainability are enabling ecosystems for arts initiatives to thrive.

It is noteworthy that most of the organisations featured in this guide began their work between 2000 and 2018. While not explicitly stated by the interviewees, this surge in activity may be attributed to a confluence of factors, including growing global awareness of environmental issues, mounting evidence of India's ecological challenges, progressive policy developments, and the country's active participation in international frameworks such as the Conference of the Parties under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the 17 Goals of Sustainable Development. The following sections explore both global and national developments that have shaped the ecosystem for using art in environmental advocacy. Key highlights from this period help provide context for the specific trends and approaches discussed later.

Global Developments



Reaching Consensus: The scientific consensus on climate change solidified during the period of 2000–2018, leading to greater urgency in policy discussions. International efforts, like the Kyoto Protocol and later, the lead up to the Paris Agreement, brought climate change to the forefront of global policy.



Advancing Research: The growing body of research from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change heavily influenced policy and public awareness.



Adopting Sustainable Goals: The United Nations' plan, *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, adopted in 2015, established 17 sustainable development goals, including goals related to climate action, clean energy, and responsible consumption. This framework significantly shaped global sustainability discourse.



Promoting Green Economies: The concept of a “green economy” gained traction, emphasising economic growth that is environmentally sustainable with a focus on renewable energy, waste management, and pollution control.

In general, the environmental problems of increased air, water, and soil pollution, deforestation, and habitat loss became more visible and talked about, owing to increased digital connectivity, raising public concerns. This led to greater global demand for action from various social actors and spurred the formation of organisations dedicated to addressing these concerns. India's score for the sustainable development goals was 71 in 2023–24 as per the latest NITI Aayog status report.¹⁹ There has been significant progress in goals 1 (No Poverty), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 13 (Climate Action) and 15 (Life on Land). Goal 13 (Climate Action) records the highest increase in score from 54 in 2020–21 to 67 in 2023–24 followed by goal 1 (No Poverty) from 60 to 72.²⁰

Informed by the voices from organisations working in the field, it is evident that there are transformative opportunities at the national level. These insights – both practical and visionary – rooted in India's socio-cultural and ecological fabric also align with global sustainability and cultural discourse.

Enabling Environment at a National Level

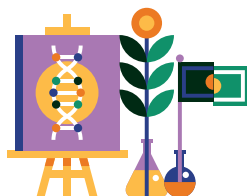


Leveraging Cultural Capital: India's rich cultural heritage and traditional knowledge systems provide a powerful foundation for fostering ecological awareness through art. Nature-inspired storytelling, folk arts, and crafts offer deeply rooted, accessible ways to engage diverse communities and drive environmental consciousness. Grounding artistic initiatives in local traditions helps bridge

linguistic and socio-economic divides, transforming ecological messaging into collective action.



Growing Ecological Awareness: A rising ecological consciousness, particularly among younger generations, has created a fertile ground for engagement. Additionally, the rise of environmental, social, and governance considerations has heightened the corporate sector's commitment to sustainability. This shift presents opportunities to embed eco-art initiatives within corporate social responsibility programmes, merging creative expression with environmental advocacy.



Supporting Cross-disciplinary Synergies: Global priorities increasingly recognise the power of cross-disciplinary eco-art initiatives as climate change necessitates holistic approaches to advocacy and action. Universities and research institutions worldwide are investing in artist residencies that integrate scientific research with creative

¹⁹ NITI Aayog, *SDG India Index 2023–24: Towards Viksit Bharat Sustainable Progress, Inclusive Growth* (New Delhi: Government of India, 2024).

²⁰ Press Information Bureau, "Release of SDG India Index 2023-24: India Accelerates Progress towards the SDGs Despite Global Headwinds," July 12, 2024, accessed March 20, 2025, <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2032857>.

expression, fostering innovative ways to communicate environmental issues. International arts councils and cultural funds are channelling resources into climate-focused artistic collaborations. These interdisciplinary projects – ranging from artisan-designer partnerships to science-informed installations – are bridging the gap between data-driven research and compelling storytelling. This growing support underscores the vital role of the arts in making complex ecological challenges more accessible, engaging, and actionable on a global scale.



Reforming Pedagogy: India's environmental policy framework recognises public awareness and community engagement as essential to conservation, creating space for artistic initiatives. Understanding that ecological restoration extends beyond regulations, government, and civil society, these initiatives harness street art, theatre, music, and

films to inspire action. India's *National Education Policy 2020* emphasises environmental education and promotes arts-integrated learning pedagogies in science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects.²¹ Cross-disciplinary collaborations between artists, scientists, educators, and policymakers are gaining momentum.



Advancing Technology: Digital innovation has transformed ecological storytelling, expanding its reach and impact across languages, geographies, and cultures. Social media, immersive technologies like augmented and virtual reality, and artificial intelligence-powered arts are revolutionising how environmental messages are conveyed, making

them more engaging and accessible. India's expanding digital infrastructure provides a scalable platform for tech-driven eco-art initiatives, bridging geographic and resource constraints. These advancements not only amplify local efforts but also position India's eco-art movement within global sustainability discourses, strengthened by international collaborations and digital exchanges that foster cross-border engagement and knowledge sharing.



Shifting Paradigms: Beyond raising awareness, eco-art initiatives also generate social impact and economic opportunities. By blending traditional skills with contemporary ecological themes, eco-art initiatives create livelihoods for artisans, performers, and digital creators while promoting sustainability. Revitalising marginalised craft practices through

ecologically focused art ensures that traditional knowledge remains relevant in addressing modern environmental challenges. This approach not only strengthens local economies but also aligns with global movements to decolonise environmental narratives, positioning India as a leader in culturally embedded climate action.

²¹ Ministry of Human Resource Development, *National Education Policy 2020* (New Delhi: Government of India, July 2020), accessed March 20, 2025, https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf.

Arts as a Tool: Methodologies and Strategic Approaches for Environmental Sustainability

In India, art plays a crucial role in shaping the public's understanding and responses to ecological crises. The diverse strategic approaches adopted in this guide highlight how the intersection of art, community engagement, and environmental consciousness can contribute to a more just and sustainable world.

Community-based art initiatives are empowering marginalised groups, fostering ecological awareness, and promoting sustainable livelihoods. From public installations and performance art to educational programmes and social critique, artists and organisations are shaping environmental discourse, advocating for systemic change, and inspiring collective action toward a greener future.

Across India, a dynamic network of organisations are harnessing the power of art to address climate change and environmental sustainability, with initiatives that showcase both convergences and unique specialisations. A common thread among these organisations is the recognition of art as a potent tool for cultivating deeper, informed comprehension of environmental sustainability, shifting public perceptions about environmental responsibility, and driving behavioural change. Many initiatives employ art as a catalyst for climate conversations, bridging the gap between scientific data and lived experience.

Storytelling, particularly mission-driven narratives, is a powerful method for connecting local environmental challenges with global concerns.

Organisations are strategically focusing on areas like ecological justice for marginalised communities, practical solutions such as upcycling, and regenerative land art practices to revive ecosystems. Many are also prioritising community empowerment and education, engaging schools and reviving sustainable traditional practices, recognising the importance of cultural knowledge, environmental sustainability and social equity.

Despite varied approaches – from artistic exploration to practical action – these initiatives share the common goal of addressing multifaceted environmental challenges, fostering a dynamic interplay of creativity, activism, community participation, and interdisciplinary collaboration across different contexts and communities in India. The following sections illustrate the approaches and actions undertaken by the different organisations interviewed for this guide.



Audience engagement, Q&A and discussions featured across all ALT EFF 2024 screenings. Image courtesy ALT EFF

1. Arts for Community Stewardship and Sustainability

Art has long been an important tool for empowering communities, particularly marginalised and rural populations. In the pursuit of a sustainable future, community-based art initiatives play a vital role in fostering local stewardship of natural resources and promoting eco-friendly practices. In India, a powerful trend is emerging of communities strengthening their agency in environmental protection and nurturing inclusivity through artistic and creative engagement. All of the organisations interviewed prioritise community collaborations and ownership, mobilising grassroots leadership to advance their missions. They recognise that broad-based sustainable transformation hinges on active public participation and social citizenship. Organisations like ALT EFF champion the concept of feminist ecology, highlighting the intrinsic link between ecological degradation and the marginalisation of

women – both shaped by patriarchy and capitalism – while advocating for women’s empowerment and stronger voices in climate action. Khoj pioneered InContext: Public.Art.Ecology, a series of site-specific residencies to foster ecological awareness and community engagement. sālādh Biennale centres community engagement at the heart of their work, collaborating with local academia, non-government organisations, and farmers to encourage sustainable practices. Disappearing Dialogues’ immersive Wetland Trails showcase the cultural and ecological richness of a region and demonstrate the coexistence of sustainable livelihoods with natural resource management. These initiatives are guided by community-trained youth, fostering local community custodianship and responsibility.

2. Art as a Catalyst for Change

Collaborative projects between rural artisans, environmentalists, and urban designers are revitalising sustainable livelihoods through eco-friendly crafts, organic textile production, and ethical entrepreneurship. Artforms range from traditional and folk arts – such as Indigenous storytelling, crafts, and murals – to mindful modern design applications helping to preserve ecological wisdom while advocating for conservation efforts. By engaging local communities in artistic expression, these initiatives cultivate a deep sense of environmental responsibility and social resilience.



Bonbibir Pala is a traditional folk theatre of the Sundarbans that powerfully advocates for forest conservation, blending myth, morality, and environmental wisdom. Image courtesy Contact Base

²² Contact Base is a social enterprise under the banglanatak dot com umbrella. Contact Base, “Who We Are,” Banglanatak dot com, <https://www.banglanatak.com/who-we-are>.

²³ “Environmental Interventions,” Sankalan, <https://www.sankalan-hunnarshala.org/activities/environmental-interventions>.

²⁴ “About KHAMIR,” KHAMIR, <https://khamir.org/home>.

Contact Base,²² for example, collaborated with forest dwellers in the Sundarbans, harnessing their rich tradition of folklore and drama to instil a sense of urgency about climate change and the need for mitigation and adaptation. Initiatives by Hunnarshala Foundation²³ and Khamir²⁴ essentially combine traditional knowledge and wisdom

with modern design applications for community-centric creative entrepreneurship in sustainable textiles and architecture. Slow fashion movements are at the heart of the textile and handicrafts industries, unique to India, demonstrating innovations and collaborations to produce eco-friendly products. Youth-led grassroots entrepreneurship are catalysing good practices in creative and cultural industries integrating sustainable practices of production and consumption.



The prayer hall at Jetavana, where natural materials and minimal use of Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC) create a serene, energy-efficient space rooted in Buddhist values and harmony. Image courtesy Team Sankalan

3. Art as a Platform for Dialogue on Ecology

Public art installations, performance art, and interactive exhibitions serve as powerful platforms for addressing urgent environmental challenges. By reclaiming neglected urban spaces, these artistic interventions make climate discourse more accessible and engaging. Murals, sculptures, and installations focused on themes such as deforestation, pollution, and climate justice raise awareness and spark meaningful discussions among diverse audiences. Different organisations are using art as a medium of enquiry, conversation and shared learning about climate change and how it is affecting lives and landscapes.

Participatory art projects strengthen dialogue by encouraging communities to share their experiences of change, fostering a collective understanding of sustainability. Several pioneering initiatives illustrate this dynamic intersection of arts and environmental advocacy. The Serendipity Arts Festival brings together different genres of artists and leading thinkers from across India to drive climate conservation through a multidisciplinary celebration of creativity, education, and sustainability. Similarly, the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival held in Mumbai emphasises sustainable art practices by promoting recycling, upcycling, and eco-friendly handicrafts, uniting artisans, artists, entrepreneurs, and the public on a shared platform.

A notable site-specific initiative, the River Festival by KultX, pays tribute to the Hooghly River in Kolkata. Engaging art enthusiasts, young people, and practitioners, the festival raises awareness about the river's historical significance and the urgent need for restoring its various ghats (riverbanks). The Living Waters Museum envisions a world where water related knowledge is universally accessible, endeavouring to bridge the gap between scientific discourse and public engagement. St+art India Foundation facilitates multi-stakeholder to work together and build bridges by engaging local communities, artists, and authorities, ensuring that art becomes a medium of inclusion, enabling people from varied socio-economic backgrounds to connect, collaborate, and thrive.



Kakatta ki Jalkatha Performance at Arthshila Shantiniketan in association with East India Dastangos. Image courtesy Living Waters Museum Archive

4. Art as Social Critique and Vision for a Sustainable Future

Art has long been a powerful medium for challenging dominant narratives and offering alternative perspectives. In the context of a sustainable future, artists are using their work to critique exploitative industrial practices, unsustainable consumption, and environmental degradation. Through provocative imagery, installations, and multimedia storytelling, they expose the consequences of climate inaction while advocating for systemic change.

One such initiative is Chander Haat, an organisation fostering interdisciplinary community-based art practices. Their project, Story of a Canal, explores the shifting ecology and socio-cultural life around the Kalagachia Khal (canal) in Kolkata. Through research, experimentation, and collective artwork, the project highlights the canal's transformation from an essential irrigation source for agriculture to a polluted drain carrying sewage. Such site-specific public artworks serve as powerful social critiques, documenting landscape transformations and habitat degradation. Similarly, Khoj undertakes site-specific residencies on riverbanks and floodplains to explore the impact of pollution, revealing

how ecological shifts are impacting lives. The Serendipity Arts Festival decolonises the concept of sustainability by critiquing the western frameworks marginalising Indigenous and regional knowledge systems, promoting South Asian narratives of sustainability.

Beyond critique, art serves as a visionary tool, presenting hopeful and regenerative solutions through speculative design, eco-conscious architecture, and immersive storytelling. By reimagining possibilities for a sustainable world, artists inspire collective action and drive environmental justice. ALT EFF's film screenings become community touchpoints, promoting joy, connection, and pride while contributing to community education, facilitating grassroots solutions for issues such as marine health and regenerative agriculture. International foundations like the British Council support similar efforts by funding innovative, cutting-edge projects with the potential for widespread impact.

5. Art for Education and Change to Embrace Sustainability



Volunteers join hands to paint public walls of the city with awareness messages part of E.F.I's Wall-E initiative. Image courtesy Environmentalist Foundation of India

Art serves as a powerful educational tool, shaping perceptions, behaviours, and attitudes toward sustainability. Integrating art into environmental education fosters creativity, critical thinking, and emotional engagement, making complex topics like climate change and biodiversity loss more tangible.

Visual storytelling, theatre, music, and digital media communicate ecological issues in ways that resonate with diverse audiences. Interactive workshops and school-based art programmes encourage young people to adopt sustainable habits, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and protecting natural ecosystems. Social art initiatives – including participatory murals, documentary films, scroll paintings, and gamified learning experiences – inspire communities to embrace sustainability,

reinforcing the role of culture in driving long-term behavioural change. By embedding environmental consciousness into artistic expressions, these efforts nurture a new generation of eco-conscious citizens committed to a greener future.

Educational institutions are also integrating sustainability and Indigenous knowledge systems into their curricula. Institutions like CEPT University (formerly the Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology) and 5waraj are working to incorporate traditional wisdom into educational materials. Professor Thakkar from CEPT University's Faculty of Design adds,

“Education today often lacks contextual relevance. By embedding local knowledge into design education, we prepare students to thrive within diverse cultural contexts. These efforts become integral to CEPT's curriculum, fostering a deep appreciation for cultural heritage among future designers.”

- PROFESSOR THAKKAR, THE FACULTY OF DESIGN AT CEPT

Initiatives like Green Hub build capacity through training in filmmaking, editing, and storytelling. By capturing untold stories of land, people, and generational knowledge, the fellowship empowers individuals from remote tribal areas, marginalised communities, and urban spaces to become catalysts for ecological security and positive change.

Print and digital media also play a crucial role in environmental education. Sanctuary Asia, a widely recognised magazine by the Sanctuary Nature Foundation, educates readers on nature conservation through articles and photographic documentation. Its Sanctuary Cub initiative nurtures young naturalists, ensuring a generational impact on environmental consciousness. Beyond publishing, the foundation organises nature festivals, climate workshops, and wildlife tourism guidebooks, fostering a collaborative network for conservation action and policy advocacy.

In addition to these organisations and institutions, individual artists across India are also using diverse creative forms including theatre, photography, fine arts, literature, and even culinary arts, to highlight climate instability, celebrate Indigenous knowledge, and promote environmental stewardship. Their work continues to inspire action, bridging art and sustainability in powerful and innovative ways.



Nature Journal Workshop. Image courtesy Disappearing Dialogues Collective



Seemanta, Green Hub Fellow, during field shoot for a story on traditional farming practices. Image courtesy Green Hub

Thematic Interventions: Art's Engagement with Climate Issues

In an era defined by environmental urgency, art transcends its traditional boundaries, becoming a dynamic catalyst for ecological conservation. This section explores key thematic areas where artistic interventions ignite transformative action. The discussions delve into how art fuels biodiversity conservation movements. These include inspiring collective action, bridging the gap between traditional and Indigenous knowledge and modern science, and unlocking innovative solutions for sustainable resource management and ecological restoration. Revitalising sustainable and “green” traditional creative industries to foster a circular economy is a specialised and expansive field of work in itself.

1. Inspiring Biodiversity Conservation Movements

India's rich biodiversity is fundamental to sustaining human life, driving food security, health, and resilience in the face of natural disasters. Despite its immense ecological and economic value – India's forests alone provide ecosystem services worth an estimated ₹128 trillion annually²⁵ – biodiversity conservation remains underappreciated. Public awareness about its direct impact on human well-being is limited, and biodiversity science is often overlooked in development planning and policy. This disconnect is especially concerning in the tropics, where the world's most diverse ecosystems face increasing threats from habitat destruction, climate change, and unsustainable resource exploitation.

A major challenge in conservation efforts is the lack of public engagement and understanding. Scientific research and policy measures alone cannot ensure sustainable biodiversity management. Without community participation, conservation initiatives risk being ineffective and disconnected from local realities. There is an urgent need to make biodiversity conservation relatable, accessible, and actionable –

25 National Centre for Biological Sciences, *The National Mission on Biodiversity and Human Well-Being: For a Greener, Healthier, and More Sustainable Way of Life*, NCBS News, 2020, accessed March 20, 2025, <https://news.ncbs.res.in/bigger-picture/national-mission-biodiversity-and-human-well-being-greener-healthier-and-more>.



sā - Edition Two - Glacier's Retreat by Stanzin Tsepel. This shows Ladakh's shrinking glaciers, symbolising nature's fragility amid climate change. Image courtesy Gadapa Vishal Kumar

particularly for communities living in and around vulnerable ecosystems. This requires a shift from top-down approaches to grassroot-driven efforts, where local populations play an active role in restoring, protecting, and sustainably managing natural resources.

Art can bridge this awareness gap, making biodiversity conservation more tangible and emotionally resonant. Over the past three decades, India has witnessed artistic initiatives that translate complex environmental issues into compelling narratives, fostering deeper public engagement. Artists and cultural practitioners are using diverse creative forms – murals, theatre, music, cinema, crafts, paintings, storytelling, digital art, and artificial intelligence – to highlight the urgency of biodiversity conservation, climate action, and habitat restoration. Terms such as “eco-cinema” and “eco-theatre,” as championed by Eco Roots Foundation, have gained traction, emphasising the intersection of art and environmental advocacy.

Art can enhance climate literacy by simplifying scientific concepts and policy frameworks while inspiring behavioural change. A wide range of natural resources – including rivers, floodplains, seas, forests, wetlands, mountains, soil, water, air, and wildlife – are being represented in artistic endeavours. Organisations such as Living Waters Museum, Eco Roots Foundation, Environmentalist Foundation of India, ALT EFF, and Artsforward are making scientific knowledge more engaging and regionally relevant by collaborating with communities and schools for climate awareness and action.

Public art projects are tackling pressing issues like deforestation, pollution, climate-induced displacement, and urban ecological degradation, using visual and experiential storytelling to demonstrate their impact. Initiatives focused on sustainable urban regeneration, such as those led by St+art India Foundation, aim to foster responsible citizenship

through public art. Similarly, Sustaina India, founded by the Council on Energy, Environment, and Water in collaboration with internationally acclaimed artists Thukral and Tagra, exemplifies a unique fusion of art, science, and policy to drive climate action through fellowship support to selected creators/ change-makers to realise impact-driven mixed-media and multimedia art projects at the intersection of art, climate science and research. The initiative not only facilitates conversations around art, science, and climate, but also supports material based approaches and solutions, and community-led initiatives generating decentralised climate awareness.



Field research. Image courtesy Disappearing Dialogues Collective

These initiatives are shifting the narrative of climate change from abstract statistics to human-centred stories that highlight the interconnectedness of nature and society. Artistic expression is driving citizen science and education, creating new custodians of biodiversity. For example, Disappearing Dialogues (dD) fosters ecological responsibility in young people and local communities, creating environmental ambassadors by integrating traditional knowledge with contemporary conservation challenges. Nobina Gupta, Founder-Director of dD in Kolkata, underscores the art's role in amplifying local voices:

“Today, community youth confidently articulate their perspectives, serving as speakers on all our public platforms to confront the challenges facing the East Kolkata Wetlands.”

- NOBINA GUPTA, FOUNDER-DIRECTOR OF dD IN KOLKATA

The regenerative land art of sālādh Biennale is another interesting example of using the “whole life cycle of art making,” ensuring each piece aligns with environmental mindfulness generating community led sustainable solutions for protecting local biodiversity.

Mentionable is its 2024 edition where the theme “The Future of Immersive Land Art” introduced dynamic audiovisual performances alongside monumental sculptures. Notable works include Austrian artist Laurent Ziegler’s “Dreamweaver,” crafted from reused parachutes, and Ladakhi artist Stanzin Tsepel’s “Glacier’s Retreat,” highlighting glacial shrinkage with repurposed iron rods and wood.

Eco Roots Foundation’s “Neer, Naari aur Vigyaan” programme engaged 94,000 girls in theatre activities focused on water conservation, emphasising the importance of gender empowerment in environmental stewardship.

A multi-disciplinary approach is increasingly being explored, linking environmental concerns with social justice issues such as resource exploitation, marginalisation, and climate-induced migration. Organisations are applying concepts of ecological justice, feminist ecologies, eco-criticism, and the “ecology of culture” to drive outcome-oriented actions. Khoj integrates artistic testimonies into legal frameworks, advocating for environmental accountability and the revolutionary concept of nature rights.

Manjiri Dube, Head of Programmes at Khoj, provides a nuanced perspective:

“We are not an activist organisation; rather, we aim to explore these issues with the subtlety they demand, inspiring artists to reflect deeply and inviting audiences to engage with equal thoughtfulness. The projects, blending art with ecology, foster critical reflection rather than prescriptive activism.”

- MANJIRI DUBE, HEAD OF PROGRAMMES AT KHOJ

The “ecology of culture” concept describes how human societies interact with their environment, shaping and being shaped by cultural practices and beliefs. Music, for instance, serves as a bridge between traditional narratives and modern conservation awareness. Sukrit Sen, Art and Outreach Coordinator at the Living Waters Museum in Pune, explains:

“Songs from Bengal celebrate the joys of water through fishermen’s lives, while in Rajasthan, they lament its scarcity – showing how art has long captured ecological realities.”

By blending India’s artistic heritage with modern science and technology, the country is fostering a new ecosystem where art is not just a reflection of environmental concerns but an active agent of change.

Festivals, museums, workshops, artist residencies, and youth fellowships are facilitating national and international collaborations, expanding the reach of climate-conscious art beyond borders. This fusion of creative expression and environmental activism is mobilising individuals and communities, transforming conservation from an expert-driven discourse into a collective responsibility.

These efforts align with the National Education Policy and UNESCO Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development, which underscores the transformative role of education in fostering a sustainable future. These initiatives demonstrate that the arts are not merely reflective of environmental concerns but are integral to their resolution. For example, the Serendipity Arts Festival intertwines pedagogy and practice, establishing itself as a laboratory for cultural and environmental innovation. Manjiri, Head of Programmes at Khoj explains “Art is not just aesthetics. It is a profound tool for understanding and reimagining our collective future.”



An Elegy for Ecology, a site specific installation by Sharbendu De at Does the Blue Sky Lie? Image courtesy Khoj International Artists' Association



Atul Bhalla's installation during the Yamuna Project, 2007. Image courtesy Atul Bhalla and Khoj International Artists' Association

To ensure long-term impact, conservation efforts must integrate art-based approaches into development planning and policy. Governments, cultural institutions, and environmental organisations must work together to harness the power of art to shift mindsets, foster climate optimism, and inspire real-world action. With its ability to evoke empathy, spark dialogue, and drive participation, art is becoming an indispensable force in India's movement for biodiversity conservation and a sustainable future.

2. Integrating Traditional Knowledge with Modern Science

India's Adivasi, or Indigenous communities, comprising 8.6% of the population (104 million people), possess invaluable knowledge for biodiversity conservation.²⁶ Their sustainable practices in agriculture, medicine, fishing, textiles, and food systems are deeply rooted in cultural and spiritual connections to the land. Despite global recognition of their critical role – safeguarding 80% of the world's remaining biodiversity²⁷ – these communities face growing threats from globalisation, cultural erosion, inadequate rights protection, and climate change. Urgent action is needed to preserve both their traditions and their ecological wisdom.

Across India, organisations are working to revive and integrate traditional knowledge into climate adaptation, education, and governance. India has a long history of sustainable natural resource management, evident in Indigenous practices that promote environmental harmony. Communities have traditionally demonstrated ecological awareness through rainwater harvesting, stepwells, local food consumption, and minimal waste generation. Traditional industries such as handicrafts and handlooms have operated sustainably for centuries, relying on locally sourced materials and manual techniques with low energy input. However, modernisation has led to the marginalisation of these eco-friendly practices. In response, multi-stakeholder collaborations are working to restore and adapt these sustainable approaches to contemporary life.

Gaurav Shorey, Co-Founder and Member of 5waraj, highlights the need for an Indian-centric sustainability narrative that emphasises the rediscovery of traditional knowledge and empowers marginalised knowledge bearer communities. He eloquently states that:

“We need to start listening and not speaking. Sustainability begins with honouring the wisdom of those who came before us.”

- GAURAV SHOREY, CO-FOUNDER AND MEMBER OF 5WARAJ

5waraj's goal is to generate broad-based awareness and appreciation for community wisdom that has shaped cultures and societies for generations. 5waraj helps custodian communities recognise the value of their own traditional and Indigenous knowledge systems, demonstrating their practical relevance in addressing climate change through research, documentation, and education.

Museums, non-government organisations, and academic institutions are documenting vanishing traditions related to architecture, agriculture, food, handicrafts, coexistence with nature, community resilience, and self-sufficiency. Their efforts reinforce the value of these traditions

²⁶ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, “The Indigenous World 2024: India,” *Indigenous Peoples in India*, accessed March 15, 2025, <https://iwgia.org/en/india/5366-iw-2024-india.html>.

²⁷ World Bank Group, “Empowering Indigenous Peoples to Protect Forests,” accessed March 14, 2025, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2023/08/09/empowering-indigenous-peoples-to-protect-forests>.

by embedding them into learning tools and sustainability policies. For example, the Faculty of Design at CEPT University is mapping and integrating traditional knowledge into modern educational frameworks, including through informative games. One notable work is their exhaustive documentation of vernacular furniture in India, catalogued across Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, and Haryana. These items are geo-tagged, creating an accessible repository for researchers and designers.

Innovative artistic formats are also amplifying Indigenous voices, elevating their ecological wisdom and nurturing “living schools of sustainability” in rural India. Artistic interventions including films, graphic novels, workshops, and folk arts highlight the deep interconnections between culture and sustainability. Folk traditions, such as Sundarbans’ songs about mangrove ecosystems and oral narratives on human-animal coexistence, are being adapted into contemporary art forms to make sustainability more relatable and impactful.

By merging traditional and contemporary practices, these initiatives bring Indigenous ecological knowledge into mainstream discourse. Local wisdom is being embedded into design education and sustainable development models, challenging myths about modern “green” solutions. Indigenous lifestyles, rooted in zero-waste practices and sustainable material culture, offer time-tested, practical responses to today’s environmental challenges.

One organisation leading the way in sustainable architecture is the Hunnarshala Foundation. It has pioneered eco-friendly and disaster-resilient construction techniques based on traditional building crafts, ensuring both local relevance and global applicability. Beyond promoting sustainable models, the foundation trains local young people in these skills, creating sustainable livelihoods. Tejas Kotak, Managing Director of Hunnarshala Foundation’s Sankalan, A Centre for Alternative Learning in Kachchh, Gujarat, explains:

“We deliberately utilise recycled and natural materials, crafting roofs from mud rolls and employing Mangalore tiles salvaged from old houses for waterproofing.”

- TEJAS KOTAK, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF HUNNARSHALA IN KACHCHH, GUJARAT

This approach not only reduces waste but also sustains artisan livelihoods through reclaimed resources, aligning with circular economy principles.

Hunnarshala Foundation’s impact extends from local communities to global stages. Its projects in disaster rehabilitation across India, Indonesia, and Afghanistan, along with capacity-building programmes, underscore the transformative potential of traditional knowledge and creative practices. By promoting artisan entrepreneurship, eco-conscious construction, and climate-responsive design, the foundation sets a benchmark for sustainable development.

By integrating scientific advancements with traditional wisdom, organisations and enterprises are developing climate-resilient solutions, including



Biodegradable crafts



Sustainable and resilient architecture



Water conservation systems



Eco-friendly dyeing techniques

These initiatives are pioneering the importance of preserving traditional knowledge – not just for cultural heritage, but for long-term environmental and community well-being. Strengthening these traditions ensures a future where conservation efforts are informed by those who have lived in harmony with nature for generations.

This ethos is also celebrated by Serendipity Arts Festival through artisan-led craft installations at their festival which reclaims the agency of local craft communities of India. By celebrating handicrafts and local natural materials, the festival attempts to reaffirm the value of the “handmade” in a mechanised world. By situating art as a bridge between local traditions and global challenges, Serendipity Arts Festival invites a re-evaluation of arts’ role in the anthropocene, and invites cultural practitioners worldwide to adopt more ecologically conscious practices that harness the social responsibilities of art.

3. Sustaining Livelihoods and Ecosystems through Traditional Creative Skills

One of the most urgent conversations in climate change discourse today is the transition towards a circular economy. The conventional model of economic progress – focused on profit generation and wealth accumulation – has led to severe environmental degradation, threatening the ecosystems that sustain human life. In contrast, a circular economy prioritises regenerative processes that emphasise resource efficiency, waste minimisation, and ethical production methods. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns) highlights the need for sustainable consumption and production, advocating for waste reduction, responsible business practices, and improved resource management.

India has a deep-rooted tradition of sustainable consumption and production, reflected in its historical prominence in handmade crafts and textiles, which were at the heart of international trade for centuries. These traditional industries align naturally with circular economy principles, operating with low energy consumption, locally sourced materials, and minimal waste generation. Rural artisan communities have long maintained an intrinsic connection with nature, ensuring efficient use of resources through techniques such as natural dyeing, biodegradable materials, and handloom weaving. However, modernisation and mass industrialisation have disrupted traditional value chains, reducing the economic viability of these skills and marginalising artisan communities.



Eco-friendly products handcrafted from natural sabai grass — celebrating sustainable living through traditional artistry. Image courtesy Contact Base

Recognising the cultural, economic, and environmental potential of these traditional practices, organisations and enterprises, both non-profit and for-profit, are working to revive and strengthen these industries. By blending traditional knowledge with modern innovations, stakeholders are developing eco-friendly architectural crafts and sourcing sustainable material for textiles and handicrafts – the age-old creative economies of India. These initiatives not only preserve Indigenous knowledge but also contribute to climate resilience by reducing carbon footprints, fostering local livelihoods, and ensuring dignified work for artisans.

Through strategic collaborations between rural bearers of tradition, designers, scientists, and civil society, traditional skill-based creative enterprises are being repositioned as key players in the global sustainability movement. As the world grapples with overconsumption and resource depletion, revitalising heritage-driven businesses offers a sustainable alternative that balances economic growth with ecological responsibility. Several pioneering initiatives are leading this shift:



Khamir has established a sustainable local value chain, connecting Indigenous cotton farmers and local handloom weavers to produce unique, environmentally sustainable textiles for global markets. This approach not only reduces carbon footprints but also strengthens rural economies and preserves cultural heritage.



Cartist is innovating in upcycling waste, transforming automobile waste into functional and artistic handicrafts using traditional skills, demonstrating how sustainability can be embedded into contemporary design practices.

These efforts highlight how India's rich traditions of craftsmanship can be leveraged for a sustainable future, offering scalable models that merge heritage, environmental responsibility, and economic resilience.



Where comfort meets consciousness — a handcrafted sofa reimagined from discarded automobile parts, blending industrial design with sustainable living. Image courtesy Cartist

Operational Challenges



Despite these positive scenarios, the organisations in this guide face challenges. Some of these are highlighted as follows:



Art's Marginalised Role: India's arts and culture sector operates in a policy vacuum that overlooks the potential of social art in environmental action. Despite the country's rich cultural heritage, there is little institutional recognition or support for climate-focused artistic initiatives such as climate-conscious design, storytelling, and community-based ecological art. While environmental policies emphasise public awareness and community engagement, they lack programmes to integrate social art as a strategic tool for sustainability. This gap stems from a widespread perception of the arts as ornamental rather than instrumental in addressing environmental challenges. As a result, eco-art remains largely fragmented, project-based, and reliant on short-term funding rather than being embedded into long-term sustainability frameworks. The underlying issue is not merely a lack of money but a deeper scepticism – particularly within scientific and policy circles – about art's capacity to affect tangible ecological change, rendering it an undervalued partner in ecological action.



Art's Limited Funding: Art for environmental advocacy faces limited institutional support and funding, as it is often overlooked in favour of scientific or policy-driven approaches. Lack of cross-disciplinary research initiatives and difficulty

in measuring impact creates challenges for securing institutional and philanthropic support. International funding is also restricted by regulatory hurdles like India's *Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act 2010* which limits access to global resources. Financial precarity forces organisations to expend significant energy on advocacy and stakeholder persuasion, diverting resources from executing creative projects.



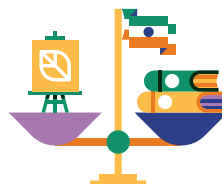
Operational Complexities: The practical challenges of merging art with ecology are as varied as India's ecosystems. High-altitude land art projects contend with extreme weather and material scarcity, while craft-based initiatives struggle with the

depletion of natural resources integral to traditional practices. A critical shortage of professionals who bridge artistic and scientific expertise creates a persistent divide, hindering the seamless integration of evidence-based approaches with creative expression. Additionally, engaging diverse communities – rural artisans, urban audiences, and international collaborators – necessitates overcoming cultural, linguistic, and digital barriers, further complicated by unpredictable climates and limited infrastructure. These challenges highlight the need for adaptive, resilient methodologies capable of navigating both environmental and logistical uncertainties.



Limited Mainstream Engagement: Despite growing climate awareness, many organisations note that environmentally focused art remains a niche pursuit, struggling to penetrate mainstream consciousness. Whether it is through film, recycled sculptures, or participatory installations, reaching

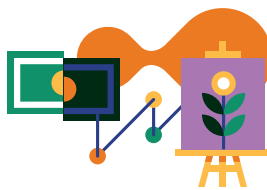
mass audiences – particularly those disconnected from ecological issues – remains difficult. This challenge is compounded by historical inequities, such as the caste-based devaluation of artisans, which undermines the recognition of craft as a vital ecological practice. Shifting societal attitudes to view art as a catalyst for solidarity and action, rather than a peripheral endeavour, is a formidable task that demands both awareness and behavioural transformation at multiple levels.



Balancing Tradition and Innovation: The pressure to modernise eco-art practices for contemporary market relevance risks diluting traditional knowledge and compromising cultural authenticity.

Way Forward

To maximise the impact of social art to address ecological concerns, India needs stronger institutional support, long-term funding models, interdisciplinary collaboration, and deeper policy integration. Bridging the gap between traditional wisdom and contemporary innovation will be key to ensuring that artistic interventions drive lasting environmental protection. This section summarises recommendations on how to strengthen the creative sector and how artists and communities who are working on shaping more just and sustainable societies can be better supported.



1. Reshaping Funding to Recognise Art's Role in Shaping Green Action:

To break the cycle of financial precarity, a multi-pronged approach is essential. Organisations are advocating for multi-year, impact-driven funding models that go beyond project-specific grants to support

sustained operations, education, and research. Collaborative funding networks – those that bridge the public and private sectors – can prioritise long-term ecological and cultural goals over short-term productions. However, this shift requires a fundamental change in perspective among funders, recognising art not as an accessory but as an equal partner in climate action. Achieving this demands compelling storytelling to demonstrate art's tangible and measurable impact.



2. Advocating for, and Integrating, Policy Change:

The way forward hinges on eco-art being embedded within national environmental and cultural policies. A collective push for frameworks that incentivise eco-conscious creativity

– through tax benefits, dedicated grants, or recognition in sustainability agendas – could galvanise systemic support. Platforms like a pan-India eco-art forum could facilitate dialogue between artists, scientists, and

polymakers, fostering a shared language and actionable commitments. This aligns with global calls for interdisciplinary climate strategies, positioning India as a pioneer in policy innovation.



3. Embedding Education as a Cornerstone:

Integrating climate-conscious art into formal and informal education – via science, technology, and mathematics curricula, experiential learning, or public campaigns – can cultivate critical thinking and collective agency. By engaging artisans and artists alongside scientists, educational reform can challenge hierarchical perceptions and empower a new generation of eco-creators. This is already prioritised in the *National Education Policy 2020*. There is a need for toolkits and resources tailored to India's diverse contexts, ensuring accessibility and relevance across urban and rural populations.



4. Centring Community: Sustaining and replicating models demand a participatory ethos, one where communities are active co-creators of solutions rather than merely recipients of them. From craft clusters adapting to sustainable materials to rural festivals showcasing regenerative land art, grounding projects in lived experiences ensures community resilience and ownership. National and international exchanges can amplify these efforts, but the focus must remain on “deep time” thinking – that is, planning with multi-generational horizons to balance growth with sustainability.



5. Synthesising Holism: The challenges facing India's art-ecology nexus – funding deficits, policy neglect, operational fragility, and societal disconnect – reflect systemic tensions between creativity and utility, tradition and modernity. Yet, these constraints are not insurmountable; they are catalysts for ingenuity. The opportunities – rooted in cultural depth, collaborative

potential, and technological promise – suggest a field poised for transformation, where art becomes a vital thread in the fabric of ecological resilience. The way forward demands a radical reimagining of funding as investment in imagination, of policy as a scaffold for interdisciplinary action, and of education as a crucible for collective futures. As India navigates its ecological crises, the voices synthesised in this guide illuminate a path where art is not peripheral but central – a scholarly and practical force for a world in flux.

Directory of Organisations



An Elegy for Ecology, a light box installation by Sharbendu De during air expo '22 at Select CityWalk, Saket, New Delhi, April 2022.
Image courtesy Khoj International Artists' Association

This directory lists some of the most significant creative initiatives in India that engage with environmental issues based on over twenty interviews and conversations, conducted between November 2024–February 2025.

1

FOUNDED:

1997

SECTOR:

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ART

FOCUS:

BLENDING ART WITH
ECOLOGICAL ADVOCACYINTEGRATING INDIGENOUS
KNOWLEDGEUSING ART AS A SOCIAL
CRITIQUE AND A VISION FOR A
SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

THEMATIC AREAS:

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS

WHERE:

NEW DELHI

MORE INFO:

KHOJSTUDIOS.ORG



“We unpack ecological issues with nuance, beyond data, exploring their societal intersections,”

– MANJIRI DUBE, HEAD OF PROGRAMMES

KHOJ

Redefining Art's Role in Ecological Advocacy

Since 1997, Khoj International Artists' Association in New Delhi has reimagined art as a vital tool to address the anthropocene, tackling India's acute challenges of air pollution — Delhi's notorious smog— and river degradation, exemplified by the Yamuna's decline. Its distinctive transdisciplinary approach conceptualised projects like the Yamuna Project (2007), addressing water pollution, and Does the Blue Sky Lie?, a four-year exploration of air quality's bodily impact through public art, exhibitions, and gameplay.

“We unpack ecological issues with nuance, beyond data, exploring their societal intersections,” says Manjiri Dube, Head of Programmes, reflecting Khoj's commitment to expanding what constitutes contemporary art and pedagogy. Off-site residencies like Negotiating Routes (2010–2014) link infrastructure to local ecologies, while staged hearing Landscape as Evidence (2017) and Re: Rights of Nature (2023) have fostered critical dialogue on air pollution, climate change, and ecological restoration by integrating artistic testimonies into judicial formats and blending Indigenous wisdom with modern critique. In a nation grappling with industrial sprawl and environmental neglect, Khoj's global collaborations, such as with the World Weather Network (2022), amplify these efforts, offering sensorial insights into climate shifts. Khoj fosters sustainability through art, reshaping India's ecological narrative with global resonance.

FOUNDED:

2020

SECTOR:

**ENVIRONMENTAL STORYTELLING
THROUGH FILM**

FOCUS:

**USING ART FOR EDUCATION
AND CHANGE TO EMBRACE
SUSTAINABILITY,****ART AS A PLATFORM FOR
DIALOGUE ON ECOLOGY**

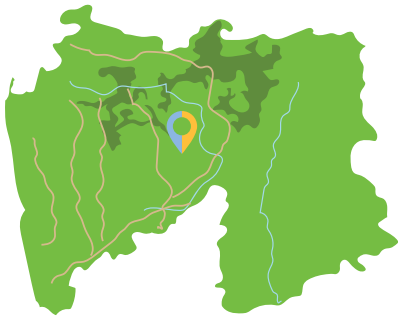
THEMATIC AREAS:

**BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS**

WHERE:

MAHARASHTRA

MORE INFO:

ALTEFF.IN/

ALT EFF 2024 star studded opening night took place at the iconic art-deco Liberty Cinema in Mumbai.
Image courtesy ALT EFF

ALL LIVING THINGS ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL (ALT EFF)

Catalysing Climate Action Through Cinema

All Living Things Environmental Film Festival (ALT EFF) redefines environmental storytelling and cinema by making powerful films accessible across India, fostering dialogue and inspiring action. Through its unique decentralised model, ALT EFF delivers screenings from urban centres to remote rural communities across India and beyond. By offering multilingual programming, the festival tailors content to local contexts, ensuring accessibility and allowing communities to engage with environmental and climate stories that are locally relevant. Rooted in grassroots empowerment, ALT EFF tackles India's pressing environmental challenges, such as coastal degradation, conservation, pollution, and biodiversity loss – among many others – with films that resonate deeply. A Tamil-language film on coastal issues, for instance, galvanised fishing communities in Tamil Nadu. While *Mol*, a documentary on Pune's waste pickers, bridges socioeconomic divides, leading to greater advocacy for waste management reforms. "We don't just showcase films; we create spaces for conversations," says Festival Director and Co-Founder Kunal Khanna, highlighting how these interactions inspire collaboration and change. By transforming cinema into a platform for empathy and resilience, ALT EFF amplifies underrepresented voices, cultivates grassroots leadership, and demonstrates the power of art to ignite global climate action.

FOUNDED:

2015

SECTOR:

**AUTOMOBILE WASTE
UPCYCLING,****PUBLIC ART FESTIVALS**

FOCUS:

**USING ART AS A CATALYST FOR
CHANGE**

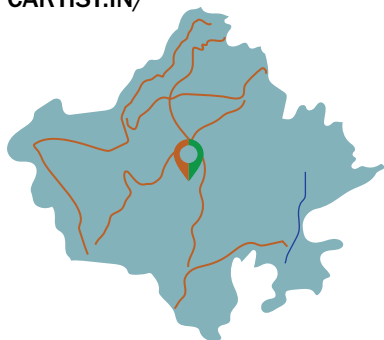
THEMATIC AREAS:

**SUSTAINING LIVELIHOODS AND
ECOSYSTEMS THROUGH
CREATIVE SKILLS,****BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS**

WHERE:

RAJASTHAN

MORE INFO:

CARTIST.IN/

CARTIST

Redefining Sustainability through Automobile Art

Founded in 2015 by Himanshu Jangid in Jaipur, Rajasthan, Cartist is India's leading platform at the intersection of art, automobiles, and sustainability. It transforms automotive waste into functional and artistic creations, tackling issues like pollution and waste management in the automotive sector. Through Project Rebirth, Cartist upcycles discarded vehicle parts into furniture and art installations, blending industrial design with India's cultural heritage. This initiative not only reduces environmental impact but also supports artisan livelihoods.

Cartist promotes ecological awareness through the festivals and the nationwide Cartist Yatra travelling exhibition, using cars as canvases to highlight conservation and resourcefulness. By reimagining waste as a resource, it encourages a collective commitment to sustainability. Sustain by Cartist creates handcrafted designer furniture from old car parts, driving the automobile industry toward a circular economy. Cartist advocates for a shift away from throwaway culture to one focused on upcycling, recycling, and reducing environmental impact, while fostering art and culture through sustainable craftsmanship.

Engineered elegance — an official chair built from repurposed car parts, offering both strength and sustainability in every detail. Image courtesy Cartist



FOUNDED:

2023

SECTOR:

**REGENERATIVE LAND ART
INSTALLATIONS AND FESTIVAL,
COMMUNITY AND
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT**

FOCUS:

**ART FOR COMMUNITY
STEWARDSHIP FOR
SUSTAINABILITY,**

**ART AS A SOCIAL CRITIQUE AND
A VISION FOR A SUSTAINABLE
FUTURE**

THEMATIC AREAS:

**BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS**

WHERE:

LADAKH

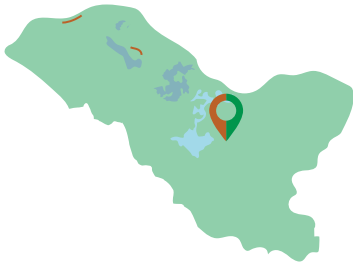
MORE INFO:

SALADAKH.COM

SĀLADAKH BIENNALE

Regenerative Land Art in the Himalayas

sāLadakh Biennale, Asia's highest contemporary land art biennale at 3,600 metres above sea level, redefines ecological engagement through regenerative art in India's Himalayan desert. Founded in 2023, it uses locally sourced, recycled, and biodegradable materials to craft installations – like Glacier's Retreat, addressing Ladakh's glacial shrinkage – merge traditional ecological wisdom with modern creativity. This approach confronts India's climate challenges, notably the rapid warming and resource strain in Ladakh, fostering sustainable solutions. As a form of land art, these site-specific artistic installations in natural landscapes often use local materials to address ecological issues. sāLadakh Biennale exemplifies this practice with regenerative works that engage directly with the Himalayan environment, making climate realities tangible through art. Community workshops and land-art walks empower local youth and farmers, embedding environmental consciousness into daily life. "We are looking at climate, culture, and community ... Ladakh's climate evolves so quickly, it's almost like a window into the future," says Co-Founder Raki Nikahetiya. By bridging local and global perspectives, sāLadakh Biennale inspires climate optimism and resilience, amplifying Ladakh's ecological narrative worldwide.



sā - Edition One - CHU by Philipp Frank, traces Ladakh's terrain, symbolising water scarcity and our shared dependence on it. Image courtesy Philipp Frank





sā - Edition One - by Skarma Sonam Tashi, reflecting on melting glaciers and Ladakh's water crisis, using recycled materials. Image courtesy Rahul Gautam

This approach confronts India's climate challenges, notably the rapid warming and resource strain in Ladakh, fostering sustainable solutions. As a form of land art, these site-specific artistic installations in natural landscapes often use local materials to address ecological issues. sāLadakh Biennale exemplifies this practice with regenerative works that engage directly with the Himalayan environment, making climate realities tangible through art.

FOUNDED:

2012

SECTOR:

**ECO THEATRE,
ECO CINEMA,
COMMUNITY AND YOUTH
ENGAGEMENT**

FOCUS:

**USING ART AS A CATALYST FOR
EDUCATION AND CHANGE TO
EMBRACE SUSTAINABILITY,**

**ART FOR COMMUNITY
STEWARDSHIP FOR
SUSTAINABILITY**

THEMATIC AREAS:

**BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS**

WHERE:

NEW DELHI

MORE INFO:

ECOROOTSFUNDATION.ORG

“We create nests for birds, providing them habitats that closely resemble their natural nests”

– RAKESH KHATRI

Nest-making workshop at Venkateshwara International School conducted for a BBC shoot. Image courtesy Animesh Kapoor, Director, Eco Roots Foundation



ECO ROOTS FOUNDATION

Art and Action for Biodiversity

Eco Roots Foundation (ERF), founded in 2012 by Shri. Rakesh Khatri, the “Nest Man of India,” harnesses art to confront India’s escalating biodiversity crisis, where urbanisation and habitat loss threaten species like the house sparrow. Its pioneering nest making initiative crafts biodegradable nests from bamboo and jute, installing over 728,000 nests nationwide to counter this decline – a creative antidote to ecological disruption. Amid India’s water scarcity and polluted rivers, the Jal Sparsh – Waste to Wealth (Water Hyacinth to Marketable Products) project empowers rural women to rejuvenate village water bodies, transforming invasive hyacinth into sustainable products. “Eco-Theatre” and “Eco-Cinema” amplify these efforts, engaging over 112,000 children with narratives of deforestation and climate change, fostering ecological stewardship. “We create nests for birds, providing them habitats that closely resemble their natural nests,” says Khatri, honoured as Earth Champion by Sony BBC Earth, encapsulating a fusion of art and action. By blending creativity with community involvement, ERF tackles India’s environmental woes, inspiring sustainable practices with far-reaching influence.

FOUNDED:

2014

SECTOR:

**PRESERVING AND PROMOTING
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL
HERITAGE FOR CLIMATE ACTION**

FOCUS:

**ART FOR EDUCATION AND
CHANGE TO EMBRACE
SUSTAINABILITY**

THEMATIC AREAS:

**INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL
KNOWLEDGE WITH MODERN
SCIENCE,****BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS**

WHERE:

NEW DELHI

MORE INFO:

5WARAJ.IN/

5WARAJ

Redefining Sustainability Through Cultural Revival

5waraj, founded in 2014 by Gaurav Shorey, reimagines sustainability by rooting it in India's cultural heritage, countering the country's escalating challenges of water pollution, deforestation, and biodiversity erosion driven by industrialisation. Its distinctive "5D's Framework" – dialects, diets, dresses, dwellings, and dances and songs – harnesses artistic traditions like folk music and vernacular design to promote eco-conscious living. Projects like Mapani tackle water pollution with sustainable skincare, while H2Ours revives community water management traditions, blending Indigenous wisdom with modern needs. "The narrative of sustainability, the way it's being driven by the west, is not necessarily sustainable at all, especially in the Indian context," says Shorey, emphasising hyperlocal solutions over imported models. By empowering communities to reclaim their ecological knowledge – evident in zero-waste clothing and climate-responsive dwellings – 5waraj fosters resilience against India's environmental crises. This fusion of art and tradition inspires sustainable practices with global relevance, honouring cultural diversity as a cornerstone of climate action.

"The narrative of sustainability, the way it's being driven by the West, is not necessarily sustainable at all, especially in the Indian context,"

– GAURAV SHOREY, FOUNDER OF 5WARAJ

FOUNDED:

2007

SECTOR:

**ART-BASED SCIENTIFIC
RESTORATION OF BIODIVERSITY
AND LAKES,****COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

FOCUS:

**ART FOR EDUCATION AND
CHANGE TO EMBRACE
SUSTAINABILITY,****ART FOR COMMUNITY
STEWARDSHIP FOR
SUSTAINABILITY**

THEMATIC AREAS:

**BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS**

WHERE:

TAMIL NADU

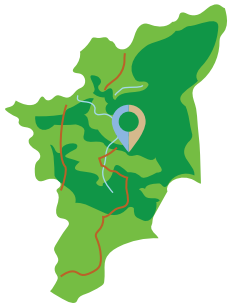
MORE INFO:

INDIAENVIRONMENT.ORG/

ENVIRONMENTALIST FOUNDATION OF INDIA (EFI)

Conservation Through Art and Community

Founded in 2007 by Arun Krishnamurthy in Chennai, Environmentalist Foundation of India (EFI) pioneers environmental conservation across India's 18 states, tackling the nation's critical freshwater scarcity and habitat loss – threats intensified by pollution and urban sprawl. Its unique approach merges scientific restoration with art, reviving 563 lakes and planting thousands of saplings through community efforts like the ForestTREE project. EFI's Wall-E initiative paints biodiversity onto urban walls, such as Chennai's East Coast road murals of aquatic life, while Upcycling transforms cyclone debris into public art, promoting sustainable creativity. "What if the traffic-congested streets of Chennai could convey insightful information about the environment?" asks Krishnamurthy, highlighting art's role in awareness. "Environment conservation is no choice, no compulsion, it is common sense – EFI is a platform for those who wish to become that somebody for India and her environment," says Shri Krishna, Chief Administrative Manager. Street theatre and films further engage schools and communities, inspiring over 250,000 volunteers to act on an annual basis. By blending ecological action with artistic outreach, EFI fosters stewardship, offering a scalable model to combat India's environmental decline while inspiring collective conservation efforts.



Group of volunteers gathered for a cleanup at the Besant Nagar Beach in Chennai. Image courtesy Environmentalist Foundation of India



8

FOUNDED:

2010

SECTOR:

WETLAND CONSERVATION,
NATURAL AND CULTURAL
HERITAGE PRESERVATION,
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FOCUS:

ART FOR COMMUNITY
STEWARDSHIP FOR
SUSTAINABILITY,

ART AS A PLATFORM FOR
DIALOGUE ON ECOLOGY,

ART FOR EDUCATION AND
CATALYSING CHANGE TO
EMBRACE SUSTAINABILITY

THEMATIC AREAS:

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS,

SUSTAINING LIVELIHOODS AND
ECOSYSTEMS THROUGH
TRADITIONAL CREATIVE SKILLS

WHERE:

WEST BENGAL

MORE INFO:

DISAPPEARINGDIALOGUES.
ORG/



Wetland Biodiversity study. Image courtesy Disappearing Dialogues Collective



Sample collection for data collection on biodiversity. Image courtesy Disappearing Dialogues Collective

DISAPPEARING DIALOGUES (dD) Preserving Heritage Through Art and Ecology

Disappearing Dialogues (dD) is a collective of passionate, multidisciplinary practitioners working at the intersection of art, environment, education, and conservation. They co-create art-based engagements with communities to revive cultural memory and highlight environmental assets in places under threat.

For the past nine years, their work has focused on the East Kolkata Wetlands (EKW) — a Ramsar site and the world's largest sewage-fed wetland, vital for natural sewage treatment and rich biodiversity. As urban pressures endanger this fragile ecosystem and its marginalised communities, dD responds with Jalabhumi Utsav, an annual festival on World Wetlands Day that unites stakeholders in celebration and action.

Through initiatives like the community-run eco-trails “Wake Up to the Wetlands” and dD Dokan, a community store connecting rural craft with urban markets, they bridge art and tradition with sustainability. “Art catalyses change by engaging communities and youth to value ecological assets in vulnerable spaces like the wetlands,” says Founder-Director Nobina Gupta, positioning dD as a model for art-driven conservation with global relevance.

FOUNDED:

2003

SECTOR:

**SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE,
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

FOCUS:

**USING ART AS A CATALYST FOR
CHANGE**

THEMATIC AREAS:

**SUSTAINING LIVELIHOODS AND
ECOSYSTEMS THROUGH
TRADITIONAL CREATIVE SKILLS,****INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL
KNOWLEDGE WITH MODERN
SCIENCE**

WHERE:

GUJARAT

MORE INFO:

**SANKALAN-HUNNARSHALA.
ORG/**

HUNNARSHALA FOUNDATION

Building Sustainability Through Traditional Architecture

Born from the 2001 Kachchh earthquake, Hunnarshala Foundation, incorporated in 2003 in Gujarat, pioneers sustainable architecture by blending traditional craftsmanship with modern science, tackling India's climate-induced disasters and resource scarcity. In seismic-prone, arid Kachchh, it adapts Indigenous bhunga designs – circular, quake-resistant homes – using recycled shipwreck wood. As an example of vernacular design, Hunnarshala Foundation's bhunga homes showcase how architecture rooted in local traditions and materials can be adapted for sustainability. This approach ensures resilience while maintaining cultural authenticity. Through Sankalan, Centre for Alternative Learning, Hunnarshala Foundation promotes stabilised rammed earth with industrial waste and mine overburden, along with innovations like rice husk roof thatching and lime-plastered wattle and daub panels, cutting ecological footprints with local artistry. "We ensure seven of ten workers are skilled artisans," says Senior Manager Prajesh Jethwa, emphasising artisan empowerment. Community projects, like Housing for Displaced Families and the Khamir Craft Facility, fuse cultural identity with climate-conscious design, fostering sustainable livelihoods. Hunnarshala Foundation's heritage-infused innovation advances sustainable architecture for ecological resilience.



The inverted roof of Jetavana – a thoughtful blend of form and function, channeling rainwater efficiently while harmonising with the natural surroundings through low-impact design.
Image courtesy Team Sankalan

FOUNDED:

2016

SECTOR:

**MULTIDISCIPLINARY ARTS
FESTIVAL**

FOCUS:

**ART AS A PLATFORM FOR
DIALOGUE ON ECOLOGY,
ART AS A SOCIAL CRITIQUE AND
A VISION FOR A SUSTAINABLE
FUTURE, AND ART FOR
EDUCATION AND CHANGE TO
EMBRACE SUSTAINABILITY**

THEMATIC AREAS:

**BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS,**

**SUSTAINING LIVELIHOODS AND
ECOSYSTEMS THROUGH
TRADITIONAL CREATIVE SKILLS**

WHERE:

GOA

MORE INFO:

SERENDIPITYARTS.ORG

By showcasing South Asian crafts — like natural dyeing and bamboo construction, it counters the ecological toll of industrialisation, merging traditional ingenuity with modern relevance.

SERENDIPITY ARTS FOUNDATION

Reimagining Sustainability Through Artistic Lenses

Launched in 2016 in Goa, the Serendipity Arts Festival (SAF), one of the main initiatives of Serendipity Arts Foundation, stands as India's premier multi-disciplinary arts platform, weaving sustainability into creativity to address the nation's pressing issues of rapid urbanisation, waste proliferation, and fading cultural heritage. Its distinctive approach transforms industrial waste into evocative installations and stages performances in ecologically fragile sites, challenging India's throwaway culture while fostering climate resilience. By showcasing South Asian crafts – like natural dyeing and bamboo construction, SAF counters the ecological toll of industrialisation, merging traditional ingenuity with modern relevance. The festival's emphasis on culinary arts and local traditions critiques globalised consumption, rooting solutions in Goa's coastal ecosystems and beyond. Workshops and residencies educate artists and audiences, embedding sustainability literacy into India's cultural fabric. Amid rising climate anxiety and urban sprawl, Serendipity Arts Foundation redefines art as a collaborative tool for ecological and social renewal, honouring Indigenous wisdom while envisioning sustainable futures.

FOUNDED:

2014

SECTOR:

**URBAN ART FESTIVALS,
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

FOCUS:

**ART AS A PLATFORM FOR
DIALOGUE ON ECOLOGY,
ART FOR EDUCATION AND
CHANGE TO EMBRACE
SUSTAINABILITY**

THEMATIC AREAS:

**BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS**

WHERE:

NEW DELHI

MORE INFO:

**WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/
STARTINDIA/**

ST+ART FOUNDATION

Art for Urban Sustainability

Since 2014, St+art India Foundation has transformed India's urban landscapes, using contemporary art to address the nation's challenges of unchecked urbanisation, air pollution, and waste accumulation. Based in New Delhi, its unique approach revitalises neglected spaces with murals and installations, as seen in the Mumbai Urban Art Festival (2022) and Lodhi Festival (2023), blending aesthetic innovation with sustainability. In a country where cities strain under environmental degradation – Delhi's toxic air and Mumbai's sprawling slums – St+art India Foundation repurposes materials and spaces to inspire climate-conscious living. Festivals across Chennai, Hyderabad, and Kolkata engage diverse communities, turning public walls into canvases for dialogue on waste management and urban resilience. By fostering inclusivity and supporting local artisans, St+art India Foundation counters cultural homogenisation, weaving India's pluralistic heritage into sustainable narratives. Its initiatives educate and mobilise, offering a scalable model of urban regeneration that marries artistic expression with ecological action.



By fostering inclusivity and supporting local artisans, St+art India Foundation counters cultural homogenisation, weaving India's pluralistic heritage into sustainable narratives. Its initiatives educate and mobilise, offering a scalable model of urban regeneration that marries artistic expression with ecological action.

“Artists have long narrated climate shifts through poetry and songs, like cyclone signs in nature,”

- SUKRIT SEN, ART AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR



Gagri Phooti Performance feat Radhika Mulay on Dance and Sukrit Sen on Music at the Sasoon Dock Art Festival. Image courtesy Living Waters Museum Archive



THE LIVING WATERS MUSEUM

Exploring Water Through Art and Storytelling

Since 2017, the Living Waters Museum, a hybrid institution based at the Centre for Water Research at Indian Institute of Science Education and Research in Pune, has reimagined water narratives through art, confronting India's escalating crises of freshwater scarcity – where 600 million people face shortages – and climate-driven floods in regions like the Sundarbans. Its distinctive approach blends visual arts, storytelling, music, and theatre to transform scientific water issues into accessible dialogues, spotlighting ecological wisdom. The Paani Ki Kahaani fellowships animate personal water stories via dance and folk songs, while the Jalkatha series – like Kalkattaki Jalkatha – uses performance to revive traditional knowledge. In India, where industrial pollution and erratic monsoons strain rivers like the Ganga, Living Waters Museum's Aquamuse project collaborates with Sundarbans artists to depict flood resilience through visual and performative works. “Artists have long narrated climate shifts through poetry and songs, like cyclone signs in nature,” says Sukrit Sen, Art and Outreach Coordinator, highlighting art's role in decoding environmental cues. By integrating Indigenous practices with creative expression, Living Waters Museum fosters dialogue on water conservation and climate action, gaining international recognition as part of the UNESCO-endorsed Global Network of Water Museums.

FOUNDED:

2015

SECTOR:

**YOUTH MEDIA FELLOWSHIPS,
PUBLIC ART EXHIBITS,
CREATIVE STORYTELLING,
YOUTH AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

FOCUS:

**ART FOR EDUCATION AND
CHANGE TO EMBRACE
SUSTAINABILITY**

THEMATIC AREAS:

**BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS**

WHERE:

**ASSAM; MADHYA PRADESH;
HIMACHAL PRADESH**

MORE INFO:

GREENHUBINDIA.NET

THE GREEN HUB

Fostering Conservation by Leveraging the Power of Youth Using Visual Media

Since 2014, Green Hub's project in Tezpur, Assam, has pioneered young people's involvement in conservation action in India's northeast – a global biodiversity hotspot facing deforestation, climate shifts, and species decline – by using video as a transformative tool. Its unique Youth Media Fellowship trains young people, especially from Indigenous communities and disadvantaged backgrounds, to deepen their connection with their own roots. Fellows learn how to use the camera to capture the intricacies of nature from insects and butterflies to Indigenous knowledge and their land. The films of people working on the ground offer stories of a solution that trigger a shift in mindset that enables young people to think of a future – founded on ecological security and community well-being. Green Hub has now spread across central India and the western Himalayas with a strong network of young people building a web of action through diverse streams of action – storytelling, nature-education, ecological restoration and collective action.



Image courtesy Green Hub



Its unique Youth Media Fellowship trains young people, especially from Indigenous communities and disadvantaged backgrounds, to deepen their connection with their own roots.



Chajo Lowang from the Nocte Tribe, documenting her own people.
Image courtesy Green Hub

Tallo Anthony with Forest Guards. Image courtesy Green Hub



Fellows learn how to use the camera to capture the intricacies of nature from insects and butterflies to Indigenous knowledge and their land.

FOUNDED:

2007

SECTOR:

**HANDLOOM WEAVING,
HANDCRAFTED TEXTILES,
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE,
CULTURAL PRESERVATION,
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

FOCUS:

**USING ART AS A CATALYST FOR
CHANGE**

THEMATIC AREAS:

**SUSTAINING LIVELIHOODS AND
ECOSYSTEMS THROUGH
TRADITIONAL CREATIVE SKILLS,**

**INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL
KNOWLEDGE WITH MODERN
SCIENCE,**

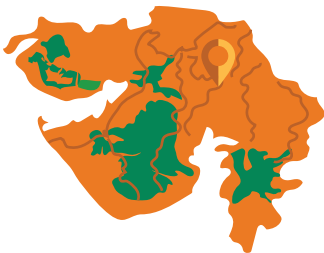
**BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS**

WHERE:

GUJARAT

MORE INFO:

**KHAMIR.ORG/CRAFTS/
KALA-COTTON**



Hand picking of Kala cotton in the farm. Village- Mangadh, Ta-Rapar, East Kachchh.



Weaving Kala cotton on a traditional pit loom.

KHAMIR KALA COTTON INITIATIVE **Reviving Tradition for Sustainability**

In the semi-arid plains of east Kachchh, hardy plants grow that bore soft white tufts of Indigenous cotton. This “by default organic” cotton, resilient to drought, requires no pesticides and minimal care – perfect for regions facing water scarcity. Branded as Kala cotton by Khamir (Kachchh Heritage, Art, Music, Information and Resources) in 2010–11, after years of research, it now carries organic certification and powers a unique value chain of sustainable craft. Since 2007, the Kala Cotton Initiative has revived this Indigenous crop and supported its cultivation, spinning, dyeing, and weaving in Gujarat’s Kachchh region. Linking over 100 farmers, 150 hand spinners, and 250 weaving families, the initiative reduces environmental impact while supporting livelihoods in a challenging climate. Kala cotton is resilient to pests, thrives without synthetic inputs, and is processed without chemical dyes, significantly reducing the runoff that pollutes India’s waterways. This cotton, procured from East Kachchh, is transformed into high-quality handloom products that reach premium markets proving heritage crafts can be both sustainable and economically viable. Today, every third handloom in Kachchh works with Kala cotton, giving new life to the region’s weaving traditions.



Kala cotton in the farm. Village-Pandyagadh, Taluka-Rapar, East Kachchh.

FOUNDED:

2010

SECTOR:

**YOUTH FELLOWSHIP AND
CREATIVE COLLABORATIONS
FOR CLIMATE ADVOCACY AND
ACTION, RECYCLING AND
UPCYCLING**

FOCUS:

**ART FOR EDUCATION AND
CHANGE TO EMBRACE
SUSTAINABILITY,**

**ART FOR COMMUNITY
STEWARDSHIP FOR
SUSTAINABILITY**

THEMATIC AREAS:

**BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
MOVEMENTS,**

**INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL
KNOWLEDGE WITH MODERN
SCIENCE**

WHERE:

WEST BENGAL AND KARNATAKA

MORE INFO:

ARTSFORWARD.IN



ARTSFORWARD

Innovating Sustainability through Creative Collaboration

Based in Kolkata and Bengaluru, Artsforward imagines compelling artistic and environmentally sustainable experiences for communities using solution-driven thought, communication and methodologies to build an ecosystem for the arts. Its distinctive methods foster strategic partnerships between artists and businesses, driving youth-led initiatives like the Microsoft Create to Inspire Fellowship programme, which engaged over 70 fellows in e-waste management using performance and installation across campuses in Kolkata and beyond. The Karo Sambhav School programme mobilised school children across West Bengal, using an environmental toolkit to educate teachers. Projects like the Tree of Vitality used bamboo and thread to create a zero-waste installation; Rise Design Lab crafted prosthetic legs from cane, repurposing leftovers into art; the E Wonder Tree installation transformed e-waste into a call for recycling. Children from the Mishing tribe in Majuli, Assam engaged in theatre to learn more about the current environmental crisis, while the recent Lost Waterways Labyrinth installation tells stories of Kolkata's lost canal networks. "At the grassroots, models rooted in Indigenous wisdom are less prone to error than urban spaces overwhelmed by excess information," says Director-Creative and Execution, Paramita Saha, highlighting art's role in imaginative ecological advocacy. Artsforward reshapes behaviours, blending creativity with sustainability to inspire a greener India.

Tree made of electronic waste in the dissected photo method.
Image courtesy Artsforward



FOUNDED:

2002

SECTOR:

CULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT,**ART AS A TOOL FOR EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES**

FOCUS:

ART FOR COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP FOR SUSTAINABILITY,**ART FOR EDUCATION AND CHANGE TO EMBRACE SUSTAINABILITY,****ART AS A SOCIAL CRITIQUE AND A VISION FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

THEMATIC AREAS:

SUSTAINING LIVELIHOODS AND ECOSYSTEMS THROUGH TRADITIONAL CREATIVE SKILLS,**BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION MOVEMENTS**

WHERE:

WEST BENGAL

MORE INFO:

BANGLANATAK.COM

CONTACT BASE

Weaving Sustainability Through Cultural Arts

Since 2002, Contact Base (a social enterprise of banglanatak dot com) has been advancing art-led sustainability efforts, addressing key climate challenges like water scarcity, deforestation, and pollution by reviving traditional knowledge and practices and using theatre as a tool for public education and community empowerment. Its flagship initiative, Art for Life, works with rural artists – especially those using natural fibres – to professionalise their skills, connect them to markets, and enhance livelihoods. The initiative has revitalised heritage art forms like patachitra (scroll painting) and chhau (folk dance), encouraging artists to create works that reflect environmental concerns such as plastic pollution and global warming. Contact Base continues to integrate art with environmental awareness through campaigns like Sheher Green Karo, which used photography and theatre in cities such as Kolkata and Goa to engage young people on issues like waste and urban greenery. Grassroot women leaders are leveraging folk arts and traditional knowledge to promote climate resilience and inspire collective green action. “Photography and art connect people to their environment,” notes Director and Secretary, Ananya Bhattacharya. From the CamEra project in Kolkata to storytelling in the Sundarbans, Contact Base nurtures ecological consciousness and community leadership, presenting a globally relevant model deeply rooted in India’s cultural heritage.



Rural artists are crafting eco-friendly products using Kashi grass, blending traditional skills with sustainable innovation. Their work supports green livelihoods while promoting the use of natural, biodegradable materials. Image courtesy Contact Base

FOUNDED:

2021

SECTOR:

DESIGN EDUCATION VIA
INTERACTIVE LEARNING TOOLS,
CULTURAL PRESERVATION

FOCUS:

ART FOR EDUCATION AND
CHANGE TO EMBRACE
SUSTAINABILITY

THEMATIC AREAS:

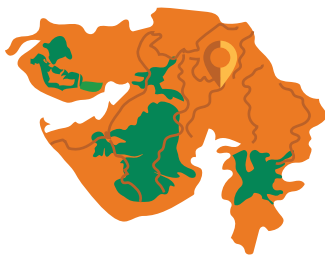
INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL
KNOWLEDGE WITH MODERN
SCIENCE

WHERE:

GUJARAT

TRONDHEIM, NORWAY

MORE INFO:

[THREADSOFINNOVATION.COM/](https://threadsofinnovation.com/)


TOI fosters knowledge exchange between Indigenous artisans and global design communities, creating sustainable applications of craft knowledge through innovative projects and experimentation.



Play Day with Manav Sadhna – Connecting Craft with Curiosity. Image Courtesy Threads of Innovation

THREADS OF INNOVATION

Bridging Craft and Design through a Collaborative Pedagogy

The Threads of Innovation (TOI) is a four-year collaborative project between the Faculty of Design, CEPT University, India, and the Faculty of Architecture and Design, University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Norway. Established in 2021, TOI is led by Jay Thakkar of CEPT University and Aleksandra Raonic from NTNU. It promotes interdisciplinary and intercultural interactions in art, crafts, architecture, and design by integrating design studio culture and pedagogy with traditional practices from Norway and India. Through academic exchanges, participatory workshops, immersive exhibitions, field-based visits, hands-on exploration, and experiential learning platforms, TOI fosters knowledge exchange between Indigenous artisans and global design communities, creating sustainable applications of craft knowledge through innovative projects and experimentation. Two design studios, Reimagining the Vernacular and Celebrating Craft, used craft-design pedagogy to transform regional knowledge from Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh into board games and graphic novels.

Other Referenced Organisations

KALA GHODA ARTS FESTIVAL

Established in 1998, the Kala Ghoda Association launched the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival in 1999, Mumbai's pioneering multi-disciplinary street art event. The Kala Ghoda Arts Festival increasingly incorporates environmental conservation and sustainability in several ways, often through its art installations, operational practices, partnerships, and overall messaging.

MORE INFO: <https://kalaghodaassociation.com/about-us/>

RIVER FESTIVAL BY KULTX

The River Festival (first edition in 2019) was created for bringing creative arts out from enclosed spaces into the public, for everyone to enjoy and participate, and create awareness about the Ghats (river banks) of river Hooghly in Kolkata. They address themes of river ecology, environmental degradation, pollution, etc.

MORE INFO: <https://kultx.org/river-festival/>

CHANDER HAAT

Formed in 2015, Chander Haat is an artist collective fostering interdisciplinary artistic practices. They engage with local neighborhoods and residents, facilitating various artistic inquiries and community art projects, including an international artist residency program. Known for its site-specific environmental projects, the collective directly addresses pressing ecological issues within affected communities.

MORE INFO: <https://chanderhaat.org>

SANCTUARY ASIA

Since 1981, with the first issue of Sanctuary Asia (a wildlife magazine created to galvanise urban Indians in support of the country's wilds) has been chronicling India's natural history and shaping conservation discourse bringing together conservationists, naturalists, photographers, writers and editors supporting policy, advocacy, on-ground field work and environmental education.

MORE INFO: <https://www.sanctuarynaturefoundation.org/magazine>

SUSTAINA INDIA

Launched in 2024 by Thukral and Tagra and the Council on Energy, Environment, and Water, it is a platform fostering discussions at the intersection of art, science, and climate. It aims to empower creators to weave decentralised climate-awareness and sustainability dialogues into the cultural narrative of India and globally.

MORE INFO: <https://sustainaindia.org/>

Glossary: How to Read this Guide

Below are a set of terms used in this guide that focus on recurring themes, methodologies, and contextual elements from the Introduction, State of Affairs, Current Trends, and Directory. Each term is succinct, informed by the document, and tailored to the guide's emphasis on art-driven environmental action in India.

Adivasi: Indigenous tribal communities of India, comprising 8.6% of the population (104 million), known for sustainable practices in agriculture and resource management, vital to biodiversity conservation.

Anthropocene: The anthropocene describes the current era where human activities have become a dominant force shaping Earth's geology and ecosystems. This term is frequently used in scientific and social discussions, particularly when addressing the rapid geophysical and biochemical transformations observed during the 20th and 21st centuries.

Bhunga: Traditional circular, quake-resistant homes in Kachchh, Gujarat, made from mud and thatch. Hunnarshala Foundation's Sankalan, Centre for Alternative Learning adapts these for modern sustainability using recycled material.

Biodiversity hotspot: A biogeographic region with significant levels of biodiversity under threat from human activity. India hosts four such hotspots – the Himalayas, Western Ghats, Indo-Burma, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands – that are critical to its ecological wealth yet imperilled by habitat loss and climate change.

Circular economy: An economic model prioritising resource efficiency, waste minimisation, and regenerative processes over linear consumption. In India, traditional crafts and textiles align with this concept, reducing environmental impact while sustaining livelihoods.

Climate action: Efforts to mitigate or adapt to climate change impacts, such as extreme weather and rising temperatures. Artistic initiatives in India inspire collective engagement in this domain.

Climate literacy: Understanding climate change concepts and impacts through accessible education, often enhanced by art. Initiatives like Sustaina India use sensory storytelling to embed climate awareness in public consciousness.

Cross-disciplinary: An approach that integrates diverse disciplines such as art, science, and policy for holistic solutions. Khoj's projects exemplify this in addressing ecological challenges.

Dadima: Gujarati term for "grandmother", used in CEPT University's oral tradition stories to teach sustainability.

Eco-art: Artistic practices addressing environmental challenges, blending creativity with ecological advocacy. In India, eco-art spans murals, performances, and upcycling, fostering awareness and action.

Ecological justice: A framework advocating equitable access to a clean and healthy environment, often integrating art to amplify marginalised voices and nature's rights, as seen in Khoj's Landscape as Evidence: Artist as Witness.

Feminist ecology: A perspective linking ecological degradation with gender marginalisation, highlighting women's roles in conservation. ALT EFF champions this through community-focussed art.

Ghat: Riverbank steps or landing, often culturally significant. The River Festival by KultX honours Hooghly's ghats.

Indigenous knowledge: Traditional wisdom of India's tribal and rural communities, encompassing sustainable practices in agriculture, textiles, and resource management. Art integrates this into modern climate strategies.

Jalkatha: Water stories in performative art, used by Living Waters Museum to revive ecological wisdom.

Kachchh: Arid region in Gujarat, home to Khamir's Kala Cotton Initiative and Hunnarshala's Foundation's Sankalan, Centre for Alternative Learning's sustainable architecture.

Mission-driven narrative: A storytelling approach built on a clear purpose, values, or cause, all to achieve a larger positive mission, by inspiring awareness and empathy, appealing to people's emotions and earning their trust.

Mixed method: An approach to research that combines qualitative (e.g., interviews) and quantitative (e.g., secondary data) techniques. Used in this guide to analyse art-climate intersections.

Participatory art: Creative projects co-developed with communities to address ecological concerns, fostering engagement and ownership. The River Festival by KultX involves locals in river conservation dialogues.

Ramsar site: Wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. One example is Disappearing Dialogues' KNOW WASTE project on the East Kolkata wetlands.

Regenerative practices: Methods restoring ecosystems and resources, rooted in traditional Indian crafts and modern innovations, like Khamir's Kala cotton weaving.

Social art: Art created with the intent to engage, inspire, and involve communities in addressing social issues, often through social commentary, activism, and community development, prioritising participation and collaboration to drive collective action.

Stepwells: Historical water storage structures in India, built with steps leading to underground reservoirs, reflecting traditional ecological wisdom for conservation.

Sustainable consumption and production: United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12 emphasises responsible resource use. India's traditional creative industries, revitalised through art, align with this principle.

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan: India's national cleanliness campaign, linked to Artsforward's waste management art.

Tangalya: A traditional weaving technique from Gujarat, characterised by raised dots, integrated into modern design education by CEPT University to preserve sustainable craft heritage.

Thematic analysis: A qualitative method identifying patterns in data, applied in this study to synthesise interview insights with secondary research on art's environmental role.

Traditional ecological knowledge: Place-based, intergenerational wisdom guiding sustainable living, such as rainwater harvesting and zero-waste crafts, revitalised through artistic interventions.

Upcycling: Transforming discarded materials into functional or artistic products, reducing waste. Cartist's automotive art initiatives highlight this practice in India.

Value chain: Refers to the full sequence of activities and relationships involved in creating a product or service — from sourcing raw materials to production, distribution, consumption.

INDIA GREEN GUIDE

The Green Hub

Cartist

The Green Hub

Hunnarshala Foundation

Khamir

Threads of Innovation

All Living Things Environmental

Film Festival

The Living Waters Museum

Serendipity Arts Foundation

Artsforward



sā Ladakh Biennale

Khoj International Artists' Association
Eco Roots Foundation
5waraj
St+art Foundation



The Green Hub

Disappearing Dialogues
Artsforward
Contact Base

Environmentalist Foundation of India

CREATIVE RESPONSES TO SUSTAINABILITY

Cultural Initiatives Engaging
with Social & Environmental Issues

INTRODUCTION

STATE OF AFFAIRS

ART'S ROLE IN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION: CURRENT TRENDS IN INDIA

ARTS AS A TOOL: METHODOLOGIES AND STRATEGIC APPROACHES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

THEMATIC INTERVENTIONS: ART'S ENGAGEMENT WITH CLIMATE ISSUES

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

WAY FORWARD

DIRECTORY OF ORGANISATIONS

KHOJ INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS' ASSOCIATION: REDEFINING
ART'S ROLE IN ECOLOGICAL ADVOCACY

ALL LIVING THINGS ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL
(ALT EFF): CATALYSING CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH CINEMA

CARTIST: REDEFINING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH
AUTOMOBILE ART

SĀ LADAKH BIENNALE: REGENERATIVE LAND ART IN
THE HIMALAYAS

ECO ROOTS FOUNDATION: ART AND ACTION FOR
BIODIVERSITY

5WARAJ: REDEFINING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH
CULTURAL REVIVAL

ENVIRONMENTALIST FOUNDATION OF INDIA (EFI):
CONSERVATION THROUGH ART AND COMMUNITY

DISAPPEARING DIALOGUES: PRESERVING HERITAGE
THROUGH ART AND ECOLOGY

HUNNARSHALA FOUNDATION: BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY
THROUGH TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

SERENDIPITY ARTS FOUNDATION: REIMAGINING
SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH ARTISTIC LENSES

ST+ART FOUNDATION: ART FOR URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

THE LIVING WATERS MUSEUM: EXPLORING WATER
THROUGH ART AND STORYTELLING

THE GREEN HUB PROJECT OF INDIA: FOSTERING
CONSERVATION BY LEVERAGING THE POWER OF YOUTH
USING THE VISUAL MEDIUM

KALA COTTON INITIATIVE OF KHAMIR: REVIVING TRADITION
FOR SUSTAINABILITY

ARTSFORWARD: INNOVATING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH
CREATIVE COLLABORATION

CONTACT BASE: WEAVING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH
CULTURAL ARTS

THREADS OF INNOVATION: BRIDGING CRAFT AND DESIGN
THROUGH A COLLABORATIVE PEDAGOGY

OTHER REFERENCED ORGANISATIONS