

WITNESS

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EDITORIAL

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When I look outside my window I'm greeted with a few green trees and wet cloudy weather - a "filter coffee weather" what we Bangaloreans like to call. While senses await the aromatic coffee my mind is occupied with thoughts; that there is weather to enjoy for some and then devastating climate events for others. While rains can be welcoming here they are a matter of concern in 13 other districts of Karnataka, which are flooded or the situation in the eastern part of the country. These thoughts push one to go beyond our own experiences of daily events and view the world through the eyes of the most vulnerable.

As Greenpeace India campaigns work on complex areas of climate justice and adaptations, we are often asked about the connection between equity in society and climate change. The answer lies in the connection between equity and sustainability. People from vulnerable backgrounds are most impacted by climate change, they often don't have the means or resources to deal with it. The solutions for climate change need to be equitable while focusing on sustainability. We as humans are an integral part of nature and not just consumers of it, therefore the idea of a people-driven climate movement is the hope for our planet. Hope is not about wishful thinking but a muscle that must be developed.

It feels unreal to see that we are already in the middle of the year. As we continue to build momentum for the climate movement with reinvigorated force, the response we are receiving on our campaigns makes me believe that we are on the right path. Over 10,000 concerned citizens, which includes cyclists, mothers, volunteers, and our allies, signed a petition asking the CPCB to revise the country's outdated National Ambient Air Quality Standards. We have successfully partnered with communities of nearly 500 women cyclists as part of our campaign. We are working with citizens to actively demand the protection and extension of Bangalore's Bus Priority Lanes. Our longstanding organic village project in Kedia, Bihar received a shot in the arm this year with an FPO in Kolkata approaching the farmers for supplies - their first commercial market! Parallely, we have also released multiple reports on the heatwaves that struck parts of India while initiating research work on another climate change-related extreme weather event in the country. You will read about all this and more in Witness 2.22.

Your support is critical to our work and together we will continue to address the climate challenges. I thank you with all my heart for being part of the Greenpeace movement and I believe that we will get stronger in the face of adversities that threaten our planet.

AN OPEN LETTER TO CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

For the first time in fifteen years, WHO updated its air quality guidelines reducing the concentration of safe levels of pollutants significantly. To urge the government to take action, we rolled out a petition across the country for people to sign, demanding the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) revise the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) based on the updated WHO air quality guidelines.



It was heartening that more than 10,000 of you supported and signed the petition submitted to the CPCB on April 22, 2022, for action. There is always hope for doing better, being better. With this hope in mind, we installed a **Tree of Life** to highlight all the petitions you shared and to show that there is a possibility for change - a future where we can breathe cleaner and pure air.

A recent reply from CPCB to the RTI filed by us has revealed that a one-year study has been sanctioned to review the NAAQS and any changes to the current national standards will depend on the findings. This is a step towards taking action for clean air.

Challenging stereotypes & fighting climate change one PEDAL at a time

This World Bicycle Day (3 June 2022), we celebrated women who made the conscious decision to fight for their rights and environment. We released our report - **Powering change with each pedal** where we recount stories from women who are reclaiming their road space. Furthermore, a cycle rally was organised by Kolkata Cycle Samaj, Bengal Loves Cycle, BYCS, SwitchOn Foundation and Greenpeace India which was attended by more than 100 cyclists. Through this event, we focused on emphasizing the need for sustainable transportation like cycling and walking and a robust public transportation system to combat air pollution.

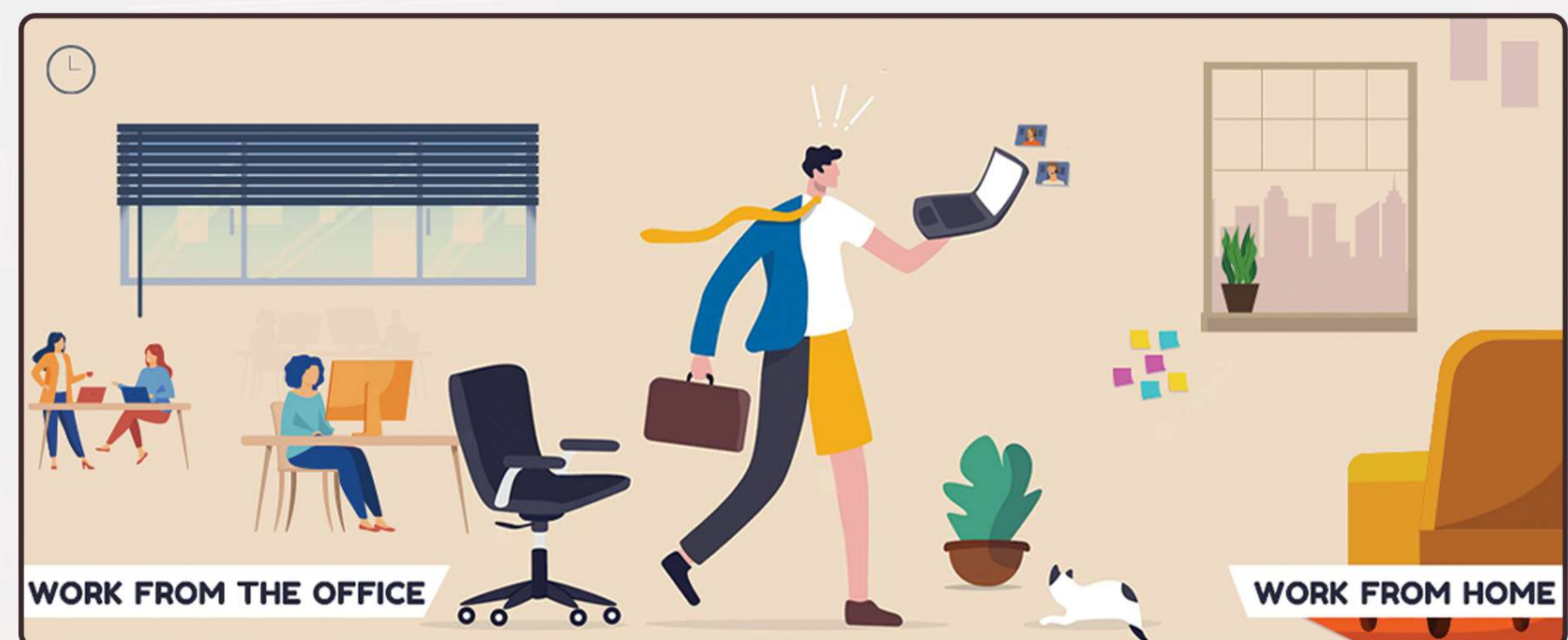


Protect Bengaluru's Bus Priority Lanes!

Bangalore has Bus Priority Lanes (BPL) that help reduce travel time and the stress of the drivers and ultimately make buses a convenient option for commuters. Recently, there has been increasing pressure from various parties to remove the BPL to make room for more private vehicles. We launched a **petition** for people to sign for urging the Directorate Of Urban Land Transport to take immediate action so that bus users have a mode of transportation for an easier commute and there is a decrease in fossil fuel consumption. Public transportation is integral to the fight against rising air pollution - join the movement!



Flexible working - solution to climate change!



Let's Flex it! - our new initiative to fight climate change will keep track of climate-conscious companies through a leaderboard. We are focusing on companies that are changing the narrative around remote work, implementing long-term Flexi-work policies and having a direct impact on traffic congestion and emissions in our cities.

CONSUMERS JOIN JAMUI FARMERS IN THE CLIMATE FIGHT!

Back in 2014, we piloted Living Soils Ecological Agriculture Model in Kedia, Bihar which was witnessing a decline in quality yield and soil health due to the use of excessive synthetic fertilisers. Through our work with the farmers, we co-created a nuanced understanding of soil health to improve the conditions for farming. Fast forward to 2022, Farmers in Jamui have successfully transitioned from an unsustainable dependence on agrochemicals to self-reliant eco-friendly fertilisation, non-pesticidal pest management systems and locally available natural solutions. This has resulted in the production of safe, diversified and healthier crops. With our efforts, the farmers from Kedia have partnered with a Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) in Kolkata which will sell the ecologically grown food. Finding a regular and remunerative market for their produce is a big leap for the farmers - it will provide a platform for the sales of their crops and also become a stable source of income for the farmers. Owing to the success of Kedia, it was recognised by the Government of Bihar as a resource centre for sharing knowledge about organic farming in the state. Recently, a group of 160 farmers visited the village from Lakhisarai, Munger and Bhagalpur Districts to gain a deeper understanding of the Bihar Living Soil model and implement it in their regions. Kedia farmers led the work with the Government of Bihar is a step toward promoting sustainable farming practices in the entire state.



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ORGANIC KITCHEN GARDEN: A STEP TOWARDS DIETARY DIVERSITY

With the success of the Living Soils Ecological Agriculture Model in Kedia, we started working with Jeevika to expand organic and natural farming practices in more villages in the Jamui District. A pilot project was launched, #IGrowWithNature with over 187 small and marginal women farmers (all associated with Jeevika Self Help Groups) as the key project partners in various villages of the district. The project is a part of our larger campaign on mainstreaming ecological farming practices to make farming adaptive and resilient to climate crises. The women farmers established their Organic Kitchen Gardens (OKGs) with certain technical and logistical support from Greenpeace India and Jeevika.

With active support from Jeevika, Greenpeace India facilitated a series of knowledge co-creation sessions on ecological agricultural practices including the using biomass residues for the preparation of eco-fertilisers and pest management concoctions. In their Organic Kitchen Gardens (OKGs), Jeevika Didis are growing 15-20 varieties of vegetables since 2020 on small pieces of land close to their residences. This pilot project was aimed at encouraging women farmers to grow different varieties of vegetables to ensure the nutritional security of their families.

Organic Kitchen Gardens has been instrumental in ensuring access to diverse, nutritious food to families which were unable to access them before. This initiative has helped the implementing families to reduce the cultivation cost as well as food costs. These kitchen gardens have also helped families in earning additional incomes.

RICE FORTIFICATION: UNDERSTANDING THE GROUND REALITY

As the government enacted rice fortification in India, we held multiple discussions to learn how the fortified rice is being used in communities. As a part of the Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA-Kisan Swaraj) and Right To Food Campaign (RTFC), the **Fact-Finding** team engaged with the villagers, medical practitioners and other stakeholders and conducted a 3-day fact-finding visit in Jharkhand based on which we released a fact-finding report at a press conference in Ranchi. We found that communities assumed fortified rice kernels to be “plastic rice”. Several people who consumed fortified rice kernel-mixed rice in the Khunti district reported abdominal discomfort, gastritis, diarrhoea and nausea. At a Roundtable, "Building resilient nutritional security amid Climate crisis: Community Initiatives and Agroecological Solutions" in Patna, representatives of government departments, NGOs, women SHGs, and community members urged that techno-fix solutions, such as fortification are undesirable and can have harmful effects on public health and there is a need for a holistic approach towards dietary diversity.

The fortification project undermines natural sources of nutrition and is causing a major disruption to people's source of nutrition – rice – without any due consideration of their right to choose what food they would like to consume. Instead, the government must focus on investing in holistic, sustainable, natural and community-controlled solutions.



HEATWAVE TRENDS IN INDIA

India ranks 5th in terms of people exposed to heatwaves. In 2022, India experienced numerous heatwaves in 2 months with temperatures crossing 45 degrees in some areas. As heatwaves swept across the country putting public health as well as the ecosystem at risk, Greenpeace India analysed the climate and temperature trends of multiple cities and released two reports on its findings.



Our report, **Heatwaves Trends in a changing climate**, analysed climate trends in Mumbai, Pune, Delhi, and Chennai to understand the changes in the temperatures and what holds for metropolises in the future.

In our second report, **Summers like none other** we analyzed temperatures in ten cities to find that plains and hilly regions were affected more than coastal regions during the heatwaves.



GLOBAL & NATIONAL NEWS

BIG WIN FOR CLIMATE - VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

On May 6, 2022, the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines (CHR) issued the final report of its multi-year investigation into 47 investor-owned corporations for human rights harms that result from their actions triggering climate change. The report sends a clear and strong message that carbon majors like Shell, Exxon, Total, Chevron, and BP are destroying the planet and harming people's fundamental rights to life, food, health, and livelihoods, among others. This is the first time a human rights body has stated that corporations can be found legally and morally liable for harm linked to climate change.

While releasing this report will not resolve climate change, it is one step closer to holding corporations accountable for their responsibility in the worsening climate crisis, which leads to the violation of human rights.



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INDIA IS LAST IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE INDEX FOR 2022

As per the Environment Performance Index (EPI) estimates India is headed towards the wrong direction with rapidly rising greenhouse gas emissions. The low EPI scores indicate the need for greater attention to the spectrum of sustainability requirements with a high priority focus on critical issues such as air and water quality, biodiversity and climate change.

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THE CHEF'S TABLE: COOKING UP CHANGE

To initiate a dialogue around dietary diversity, Greenpeace India in association with The Slurp Studio organised an event - The Chef's Table on 4 June 2022. The Chefs and Greenpeace used locally sourced ingredients to serve a 5-course meal. The protagonist of this one-of-a-kind event was rice where every dish from starter to dessert was made using rice. The event also focused on creating a channel for farmer-consumer connection by initiating dialogue about the importance of the community's support in buying locally produced organic produce.

Today you can be the change



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Impact Box

A strong community of 500 women cyclists!

We have built a community of 500 women cyclists. These cycles have helped women to take charge of their work commute, travel to markets, visit friends and travel with kids on leisure trips. We are gearing up for our next phase to reach our goal of building a community of 5000 women cyclists by incorporating suggestions from the women cyclists.

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