



WOTR in association with IDH launches ECOBARI to enable marginalised communities in India adapt to Climate Change

~ The Ecosystems based Adaptation collaborative brings together key stakeholders to enable underprivileged sections of society to regenerate and manage their ecosystems, maintain biodiversity and to generate sustainable incomes

Pune, 20th November 2021: WOTR, a Pune-based development organisation dedicated to poverty eradication through sustainable ecosystem based adaptation, and IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative, along with other partners have launched the ECOBARI (Ecosystem-Based Adaptation for Resilient Income) collaborative. The new initiative is aimed at helping marginalized communities to increase their income while conserving local biodiversity, restoring, and managing their natural resources. The initiative aims to pool resources - human, material, and financial - to help communities become self-sufficient in the face of climate change. A virtual event to mark the launch saw participation from various dignitaries in the Government, international and national development organisations, the private sector, and institutions involved in studying Climate change.

Elaborating on ECOBARI's vision, **Marcella D'Souza, Director**, WOTR Centre for Resilience Studies, said, *"We all live in an ecosystem. ECOBARI is a wonderful term in which bari means home in many Indian languages. Through this collaborative approach our vision is to empower communities to sustainably regenerate and manage their ecosystems, conserve biodiversity, derive resilient incomes and improve their quality of life through nature-based solutions, as they adapt to climate change. We hope to realise this vision by being a leading platform that grounds Ecosystem-based Adaptation at scale through multi-stakeholder partnerships, policy enablement and resource provisioning, so as to contribute to the country's SDGs, the Land Degradation Neutrality targets and climate change commitments"*

Describing the purpose and membership for ECOBARI, **Arjuna Srinidhi**, Thematic Lead, Climate Change Adaptation, WOTR, said, *"This collaborative is not just meant for NGOs. It is an open forum for all – whether you represent a scientific institution, a government body, a corporate, a financial institution, or a part of civil society. The collaborative will be engaged in generating evidence through case-studies, training and capacity building programs, interdisciplinary research and policy advocacy. We will also be engaged in novel and cutting-edge action that can bridge the science, policy, practice and business interfaces to upscale Ecosystem based Adaptation to climate change in India and beyond."*

As a part of the virtual launch event, a panel discussion was organised around 'How collaboration amongst varied stakeholders can help realise several national goals - SDGs and the Paris Agreement'. The panel, with participation from Dr Ashok Dalwai - CEO, NRAA, Namita Vikas - Founder and MD, auctusESG, Shannon Olsson - Global Director, The Echo Network and Dr. Milind Mujumdar - Scientist, IITM Pune, and Sandhya Edlabadkar, President, Jagrut Mahila Samaj, expressed their views on the need for ecosystem based adaptation amid the ongoing climate crisis. A short film on EbA (Ecosystem based Adaptation) and its execution was also featured at the online event.

Talking about the urgent need to address climate Change, **Jigmet Takpa, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**, said, *"Collective action is the pressing need of the hour to*



address ecosystem degradation and climate change. India's focus has always been on sustainable and equitable growth.”

In a video message, **Vandana Chavan – MP Rajya Sabha**, said, *“Climate Change is around us. Despite several resolutions and policies in the past, we didn’t take this issue seriously. Now, we should adopt a collaborative approach to make our ecosystem intact. This collaborative approach will help us in creating a better future for our next generations.”*

“This is not the time to push this issue for tomorrow, as it is already too late but this is the time for us to really join hands to work towards the cause. Sustenance and restoration of ecosystems is essential and should be married with people's need to pursue sustainable livelihoods. ECOBARI is a great initiative in that regard”, she added.

Other participants stressed the importance of generating and disseminating climate information at the grassroots level, providing rapid financial support to innovative projects on a global scale, parallel efforts by government and research organisations, and capacity building at the village level, all of which are geared toward fostering ecosystem services for the benefit of rural communities.

Learn more about ECOBARI by visiting: <https://wotr.org/ecobari/>

About WOTR

[WOTR](#) is a globally recognised organisation dedicated to transforming the lives of millions of poor villagers across India through participatory watershed development and ecosystems restoration, climate resilient sustainable agriculture, integrated and efficient water management and climate change adaptation, with a special emphasis on building resilience of vulnerable communities, farmers, and women. WOTR was established in 1993 and is headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, India. As on March 2021, WOTR, in collaboration with its partners, has worked in over 5,200 villages across 9 Indian states - Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Odisha. It has impacted more than 4.3 million people, trained over 530,000 people from across India and 63 countries and collaborated with 230 NGOs/ Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs), and promoted over 15,500 SHGs involving 190,000 women.