

## Earth Care Awards 2025

# Building Resilient Cities for a Changing Planet

The 13th Earth Care Awards brought together changemakers, innovators and visionaries who are reshaping how India's cities can adapt to a rapidly changing climate



Mayura Shanbaug

The Earth Care Awards (ECA), a joint initiative of the JSW Foundation and The Times of India, have steadily grown into one of India's most respected platforms for recognising innovation in sustainability. Since their inception in 2008, the awards have honoured individuals and organisations working to protect the planet through climate adaptation, mitigation and community-driven initiatives.

Now in its 13th edition, the ECA continues to evolve, spotlighting the people and ideas building a more sustainable and inclusive future. With more than 100 winners so far, the platform has become much more than an awards ceremony. It has become a



“The solution to complex urban and climate challenges often lies in simple wisdom. We must learn to get more from less, for more people. This principle of resource efficiency and human empathy is key to building cities that can endure and evolve

**Dr. R. A. Mashelkar**  
Eminent Scientist, Innovator and Former Director General, CSIR

Water, Environment and Sanitation at JSW Foundation, who reminded everyone that coming together for such a cause is an act of hope in itself.

The keynote address by Dr R A Mashelkar, one of India's most celebrated scientists, offered an inspiring look at



### CATEGORIES

The awards are presented in six categories—Community-Led Climate Action, Institutional Leadership in Urban Climate Action, Emerging Businesses in Climate Action, Communicators for Climate Action, Women Leaders in Climate Action, and the Young Climate Champions. Last date to submit your entries is 24th November 2025.

### JURY

This year's jury is chaired by Dr. Ajay Mathur, professor of practice, School of Public Policy, IIT Delhi; Dr. Arunabha Ghosh, founder and CEO, Council on Energy, Environment and Water; Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, Chairperson, MS Swaminathan Research Foundation; Rajat Gupta, senior partner, sustainability practice, McKinsey & Company; and Shloka Nath, CEO, India Climate Collaborative; Jens Nielsen, Founder and CEO, World Climate Foundation.

how innovation and compassion can go hand in hand. He spoke about the need for cities to rethink their growth models, to become smarter and more efficient

while remaining humane and inclusive. Dr. Mashelkar also spoke about his latest book, *More from Less for More*, which introduces the powerful idea of “MLM”



“The fact that people gathered on a festive period to discuss climate change shows how deeply we care. The Earth Care Awards began long before climate change became a mainstream topic, and today the award continue to honour those who work tirelessly to protect our planet

**Rupa Dawane**

Head – Water, Environment and Sanitation, JSW Foundation

community bound by purpose and shared responsibility.

As a part of the awards, a panel discussion on ‘Building Resilient Cities’ was organised in Pune recently.

The event opened with a heartfelt welcome from Rupa Dawane, Head of



“Six years ago, I started a small climate action app from my dorm room. Today, it has reached millions across the world. That journey was only possible because of the ecosystem of mentors, institutions and changemakers who believe in the power of community-driven resilience

**Prachi Shevgaonkar**  
Founder, Cool The Globe



“We need to rethink how we plan and manage cities. Nature doesn't maximize one outcome; it balances many. Resilient cities must be designed to optimise efficiency, circularity, renewability and human well-being, not just growth or profit

**Dr. Gurudas Nulkar**  
Professor & Director, Centre for Sustainable Development, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics



“Technology and systems can only go so far without people's participation. For cities to truly become resilient, we need governance that listens, engages and implements at scale. Every plan, from mobility to waste, must include citizens at its heart

**Amarnath Karan**, Scientist, Centre for Environment Education (CEE)

— creating more from less for more people.

The panel discussion, moderated by Prachi Shevgaonkar, founder of Cool The Globe, brought the conversation closer to everyday reality. As someone who started her climate action app as a student and went on to engage millions across the world, Prachi embodied the spirit of resilience that the awards celebrate. The panel of experts shared perspectives on how cities can plan better, innovate faster and stay rooted in equity and empathy.

The discussion reflected a shared belief that building resilience is not the job of governments alone. It begins in neighbourhoods, in schools, in small ideas that grow into collective action. Technology and policy play their parts, but people and participation make the real difference. Whether it was about integrating climate goals into city planning, improving urban governance, or understanding the delicate balance between nature and development, every voice on stage echoed the same thought: the future of our cities depends on the choices we make today.

The day ended on an uplifting note. Despite the daunting challenges of climate change, there was a sense of optimism in the air. The Earth Care Awards once again proved that real change happens when individuals, institutions and communities work together. It reminded everyone that resilience is not only about surviving disruption but about shaping a better, fairer, more sustainable tomorrow.

The 13th edition reaffirmed that while cities may be where challenges converge, they are also where solutions begin. And as the world looks for ways to rebuild with care and conscience, the Earth Care Awards continue to shine a light on those who lead the way with courage and creativity. Last date to submit your entries is 24<sup>th</sup>



“Cities cannot exist in isolation. Their strength comes from the ecosystems around them—the farms, the forests, the people. To build resilience, we must see cities and their surroundings as one living system, each supporting and protecting the other

**Dr. Bharat Kakade**  
President and Managing Trustee, BAIF Development Research Foundation



“Climate resilience will begin when we stop treating climate plans as separate documents. Real progress happens when we embed climate thinking into urban development, governance and everyday decisions. It needs collaboration between citizens, administrators and political leaders working toward a shared vision

**Dr. Priyadarshini Karve**  
CEO, Clean Energy Access Network (CLEAN)