

Press Release

A green transition in Chandrapur-Nagpur-Yavatmal, Maharashtra's energy hub, can unlock ₹5.4 lakh crore investment, 3.4 lakh jobs and 4% regional GDP growth, finds iFOREST

- iFOREST releases India's first Regional Just Transition Investment Plan for the CNY region, which accounts for 100% of the state's coal production and half its coal-based power.
- With resource exhaustion triggering coal decline by 50% in the next decade, the repurposing of closed and retiring coal mines can propel CNY into Maharashtra's green industry and energy hub.
- The 10-year blueprint identifies three Economic Development Nodes—Bhadrawati—Wani, Rajura—Chandrapur, and Umrer—which can together repurpose 6,000 hectares of coal mine land into green energy and industrial hubs.
- Highest solar potential in CNY region—37 GW of solar energy opportunities.
- ₹33,400 crore from public investments, coal companies and power utilities can fund land reclamation and repurposing.

25th June, 2025, Mumbai: In a move to secure India's clean energy future, environmental think tank iFOREST, in close collaboration with Govt. of Maharashtra's Dept. of Environment and Climate Change, released the first-ever Regional Just Transition Investment Plan on Wednesday, focused on the Chandrapur–Nagpur–Yavatmal (CNY) region — the state's energy heartland. The report was released at a conference in Mumbai titled 'Just Transition to Support Green Growth and Inclusive Climate Action in Maharashtra'.

The CNY region, responsible for 100% of Maharashtra's coal production and half its coal-based thermal power capacity, is the state's energy backbone. However, with ageing power plant units in the horizon and several mines facing resource exhaustion, the region's coal production capacity is projected to decline by half and coal-based power production capacity by a quarter in the next 10 years. This is a massive opportunity to pivot to green growth.

Repurposing coal mining land and tapping into the region's vast renewable energy potential can transform CNY into Maharashtra's green energy and green industry hub, finds iFOREST. The region's strong industrial base, growing services sector, and robust rail and road connectivity make it well-suited for green transformation. By 2035 projections show that it can attract up to ₹5.4 lakh crore in green investments, generate 3.4 lakh jobs, and contribute to 4% of regional GDP growth.

Giving the inaugural video address Smt. Sujata Saunik, Chief Secretary, Govt. of Maharashtra, said, “I commend the iFOREST team on this report and dialogue. A green transition is not the only thing we need to do, in terms of phasing out coal, it is also about bringing new avenues for green growth and ensuring that the shift is far reaching and fair. Our focus should be to attract investment for development of renewable energy projects and green industrial clusters. We also need to expand electrification from personal vehicles to commercial transportation. This transition will be driven by policy frameworks that unlock green finance and support innovation. Maharashtra has consistently led from the front in adopting progressive policies for climate resilience and sustainability”.

Shri Praveen Pardeshi, the Chief Economic Advisor to the Chief Minister, and CEO, MITRA said, “Forty percent of Maharashtra’s energy is used by farmers to pump water for irrigation. Moving them to solar pumps is our biggest ongoing success story. We need innovative nudge policies and behavior change incentives to support a transition of this scale from traditional energy sources.”

“None of India’s net zero targets can be met without Maharashtra playing a big role in this transition. The Regional Just Transition Investment Plan is an actionable blueprint to turn this traditional energy cluster into a green investment destination. By developing strategic economic nodes and unlocking the region’s renewable energy and industrial potential, the plan promotes inclusive green growth in the region,” said Dr. Chandra Bhushan, CEO, iFOREST.

Besides investments, the plan identifies key just transition costs amounting to ₹33,400 crore that must be supported through public investment and contributions from coal mining companies and power utilities. These include expenditures on land reclamation and repurposing, worker skilling, capacity building, and institutional strengthening.

To enable successful implementation of the plan, iFOREST recommends development of a dedicated State Policy and a robust governance architecture. This includes, a Chief Minister–led High-Level Committee, Executive bodies, a Just Transition Office, district-level implementation cells, and an SPV to mobilise green finance. Specific roles of the private sector and financial institutions have also been outlined to mobilise capital, create green value chains, and scale industrial investments.

The report release and panel discussions saw robust participation from key government, industry and financial institution functionaries. Speakers included Shri Prashant Girbane (DG and Head, Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce), Shri Jai Prakash Dwivedi (CMD Western Coal Fields Ltd.), Shri Abhijit Ghorpade, Director, State Climate Action Cell, Department of Environment and Climate

Change, Government of Maharashtra, Shri Amit Kumar Khandelwal, Deputy General Manager, State Bank of India, and several others.

About iFOREST

The International Forum for Environment, Sustainability and Technology (iFOREST) is an independent non-profit research and innovation organization working on pressing environment-development challenges in India.

We conduct independent evidence-based research, develop new knowledge and innovative solutions, convene stakeholders to increase awareness and build consensus to scale up green solutions.

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