

Ratnagiri Releases India's First District Development-cum-Climate Action Plan to Enable Climate-Resilient Growth, Developed by iFOREST

Ratnagiri, Maharashtra; Feb 24, 2026

In a district-level meeting organised in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, iFOREST released the *District Development-cum-Climate Action Plan for Ratnagiri*— a first-of-its-kind plan that integrates climate action into district development planning to foster climate-resilient growth.

The Plan has been prepared under a Memorandum of Understanding between iFOREST and the Department of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Maharashtra, and provides a comprehensive roadmap to align district development priorities with emerging climate risks that increasingly impact agricultural and fisheries outputs, infrastructure, livelihoods of the local community and economy.

The Plan was released by Shri Manuj Jindal, IAS, District Collector and District Magistrate, Ratnagiri.

The meeting brought together district officials, members of panchayati raj, women self-help groups, farmers cooperatives, and civil society organisations.

Congratulating iFOREST on the development of the **District Development–cum–Climate Action Plan**, **Shri Abhijit Ghorpade, Director, Environment and Climate Change Department, Government of Maharashtra**, said, “This first-of-its-kind district plan will serve as a model for climate-resilient development across Maharashtra. It clearly demonstrates that climate action and development are not contradictory—they must go hand in hand. Our focus is on enabling localised climate action that advances sustainable growth.”

Manuj Jindal, Collector and District Magistrate, Ratnagiri, said,“iFOREST has proposed a pathbreaking idea by integrating climate action directly into district development planning. The Plan outlines innovative solutions to improve livelihoods and quality of life. It also highlights Ratnagiri’s significant renewable energy potential of nearly 19 GW. To implement that plan, we can develop model solar villages and also consider piloting a green industrial zone. We now have an actionable pathway to translate climate ambition into inclusive, future-ready growth for the district. “Climate change action at the local level is about supporting development and creating opportunities as we strengthen localised interventions on mitigation, adaptation, and reducing disaster risks. The Integrated District Development and Climate Action Plan, prepared for Ratnagiri by the iFOREST team, provides a blueprint for that. Such integration is also important for streamlining administrative oversight and converging financial resources to ensure effective action”, **said Srestha Banerjee, Director, Just Transition and Climate Change at iFOREST.**

Ratnagiri’s economy is closely linked to climate-sensitive sectors such as horticulture, paddy cultivation, fisheries, and coastal tourism, with nearly 84 percent of the population residing in rural areas. However, changing climate patterns — including rising temperatures, high-intensity

rainfall, and increasing coastal risks — are expected to pose significant challenges to infrastructure, water resources, farm productivity, and coastal settlements in the coming decades

“Our projections show temperatures in Ratnagiri may rise by 2.3–3.3°C by mid-century, with increased extreme rainfall and nearly one-third of villages at risk of flooding, which could significantly impact development prospects unless proactive measures are undertaken,” said Sindhuja Kasthala, Senior Researcher at iFOREST, who led the plan development.

Key Highlights of the Plan

- Climate projections indicate that mean temperatures in the district may rise by 2.3–3.3°C by mid-century, affecting agriculture, fisheries, and water resources
- Nearly one-third of Ratnagiri’s villages are projected to face increasing flood risks by 2050 due to high-intensity rainfall and terrain-related vulnerabilities.
- Around 167 villages are already located in landslide-prone zones across hilly talukas of the district.
- Rising sea levels along the Konkan coastline are increasing risks of tidal flooding, saline intrusion, and damage to fishing settlements and coastal infrastructure.

Actionable Recommendations

- Expansion of climate-resilient agriculture practices, micro-irrigation, and post-harvest infrastructure for horticulture crops such as mango and coconut.
- Renewable energy development provides a major opportunity for Ratnagiri’s climate-resilient growth. **The district has an estimated renewable energy potential of nearly 19 gigawatt**, with significant potential for solar, wind, rooftop, and floating solar systems.
- Deployment of solar pumps, renewable-powered cold chains, and clean energy systems for rural infrastructure and fisheries.
- Climate-proofing of roads, bridges, public buildings, and coastal infrastructure through improved drainage and resilient design standards.
- Development of green skills among youth to support emerging clean-technology and climate-linked livelihood opportunities.

The Plan also proposes the **establishment of a District Climate Cell within the district administration** to integrate climate priorities into annual planning and budgeting processes across departments. In addition, a **District Climate Finance Platform** has been recommended to facilitate convergence of government schemes and mobilise investments for climate-resilient development projects.