

# Sustainability Watch

May - June, 2025



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# Global Insights & Development

# Global Energy

Investment to Hit \$3.3 Trillion in 2025 Amid Geopolitical Strains, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025



The International Energy Agency (IEA) released its *World Energy Investment Report*, projecting global energy investment to reach a record-breaking **\$3.3 trillion**. Of this, **\$2.2 trillion** will be directed toward clean energy technologies like renewables, grids, nuclear, and electric vehicles — nearly double the investment in fossil fuels. The surge is driven largely by energy security concerns amid rising geopolitical instability. **China** leads the charge, accounting for one-third of global clean energy investments. The report also marks a growing global shift toward electricity-based systems, while warning of stark regional imbalances, particularly in **Africa**, where energy access and funding remain critically low.

## Key Takeaways:

1

**Clean Energy Boom:** Clean energy investment in 2025 will reach \$2.2 trillion — nearly double that of fossil fuels.

2

**China Leads the Charge:** China is the world's largest energy investor, responsible for one-third of global clean energy spending.

3

**Solar & Battery Growth:** Solar PV will receive \$450 billion, while battery storage exceeds \$65 billion in investments.

4

**Electricity Surpasses Fossil Fuels:** Investment in electricity-related infrastructure now outpaces fossil fuels by 50%, signalling a global energy transition.

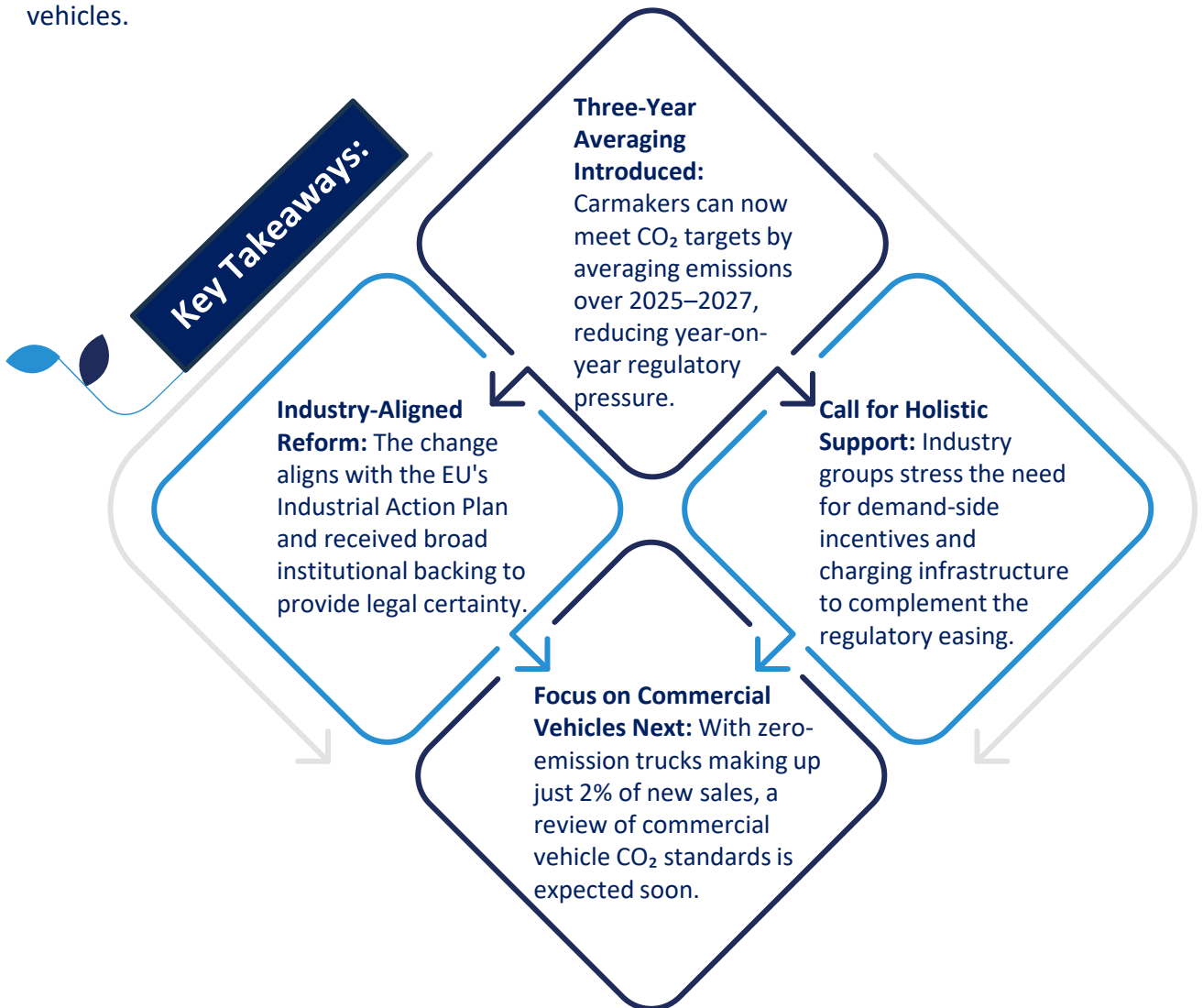
The report signals a major global shift toward clean energy, with investment nearly doubling that of fossil fuels. China emerges as the top investor, driving much of the growth. However, regional disparities, especially in Africa, highlight the need for more equitable energy funding.

# EU Approves

## Flexible CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions Rules for Carmakers Through 2027, 28<sup>th</sup> May 2025



The European Union finalized a regulatory amendment that allows carmakers to average their carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions over a three-year period — from 2025 to 2027 — instead of evaluating compliance annually. This decision is a key part of the EU's Industrial Action Plan for the automotive sector, designed to provide regulatory certainty and flexibility amid a rapidly evolving transition to green technologies. The policy aims to balance environmental goals with market realities, especially as manufacturers face complex geopolitical and economic conditions. While broadly welcomed by the industry, experts stress the need for stronger demand-side support, such as consumer incentives and charging infrastructure, to drive the shift toward zero-emission vehicles.



The EU's flexible emissions rule provides regulatory relief to carmakers during the green transition. However, its success depends on boosting consumer demand and charging infrastructure. Broader support measures will be key to accelerating zero-emission vehicle adoption.

# UNDP Launches

World's First AI Environment Champion to Promote Climate Action in the Pacific, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with support from the Government of Japan, launched Una, the world's first AI Environment Champion. Una will act as a digital ambassador for the Pacific Green Transformation Project, working across Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu to promote renewable energy adoption and climate resilience. Using immersive AI storytelling, videos, and interactive platforms, Una aims to amplify community voices and inspire global sustainable action. This initiative represents a significant milestone in the use of AI to strengthen environmental advocacy, especially in regions most vulnerable to climate change.

## Key Takeaways:

**Amplifying Local Voices:** The campaign centers on community narratives to globalize awareness of grassroots climate challenges and solutions.

**AI for Climate Advocacy:** Una utilizes AI storytelling and media to promote renewable energy and climate resilience in Pacific Island nations.



**Multi-Platform Engagement:** Una will feature in documentary-style videos, holographic appearances, and real-time digital interactions via a dedicated website.

**AI for Good:** UNDP positions Una as a model of ethical, human-centered AI that supports sustainable development and environmental protection.

The launch of Una marks a pioneering step in integrating artificial intelligence with climate action, especially in vulnerable regions like the Pacific Islands. UNDP is setting a precedent for inclusive and impactful environmental advocacy also this initiative highlights the transformative potential of AI in supporting climate resilience and sustainable development goals.

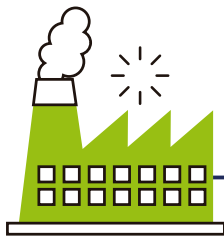
# Clean Energy

Investment Surges to Record Levels, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025

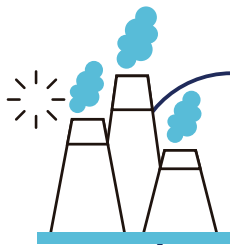
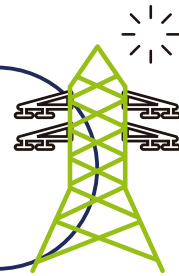


The International Energy Agency (IEA) reported that global investment in clean energy technologies is set to reach a record **\$2.2 trillion**, despite ongoing economic uncertainty. This surge reflects long-term trends toward “electrons over molecules” and is driven by rising energy demands—from AI, data centers to cooling—alongside heightened concerns over energy security. In contrast, investment in fossil fuels is expected to decline for the first time since 2020. However, the report warns that investment in critical infrastructure like grids must rise to maintain system reliability.

## Key Takeaways:

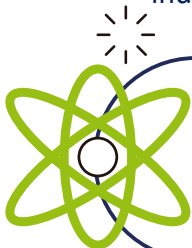
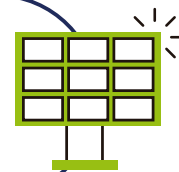


**Clean energy investment doubles fossil fuel spending:** \$2.2 trillion vs. \$1.1 trillion, marking a significant shift.

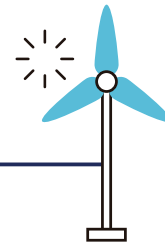


**Grid infrastructure underfunded:** Investment here lags behind generation, threatening future energy security.

**Electricity demand accelerates investment:** Growing needs from AI, data centers, EVs, and industry are driving clean energy growth.



**Fossil fuel investment softens:** Oil, gas, and coal spend dips due to weaker demand and prices.



The IEA's findings underscore a pivotal shift towards clean energy, driven by technological advancements and energy security concerns. However, to ensure a stable and sustainable energy future, significant investments in grid infrastructure are imperative.

02



## National Insights

# India's 1st Race Car

Made from E-Waste Unveiled by Envision Energy, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025



Envision Energy, in partnership with **Earthday.org**, unveiled *Recover-E*—India's first race car built entirely from electronic waste including old phones, laptops, and tablets. The drivable prototype was showcased in Mumbai as part of an Earth Day 2025 celebration under the theme "Our Power, Our Planet." Designed to be both functional and symbolic, the car demonstrates the potential of circular manufacturing in addressing environmental challenges. It also aims to inspire innovation-led sustainability in India's automotive and waste sectors.

## Key Takeaways:

### Innovation in Sustainability:

*Recover-E* demonstrates how e-waste can be repurposed into high-performance technology.

### Tackling E-Waste Head-On:

The project raises awareness of India's rising e-waste problem, which exceeds 1 million tonnes annually.

### Earth Day Alignment:

The launch reinforces global calls for sustainable action and resource recovery.

*Recover-E* serves as a bold example of turning waste into innovation, encouraging sustainable manufacturing. It strengthens Envision Energy's leadership in green technology. The initiative also promotes broader public engagement with India's e-waste challenges.



# Patna's Water Metro:

A Sustainable Leap in Urban Mobility,  
28<sup>th</sup> June 2025



Patna is poised to become the second Indian city, after Kochi, to introduce a Water Metro system, signaling a major shift toward sustainable urban transport. Announced by Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, the project will utilize electric or hybrid ferries on the Ganga River to connect major city areas and suburbs. The initiative aims to ease congestion, reduce emissions, and offer affordable, eco-friendly commuting options to over 2 million residents.

## Key Takeaways:

**Extensive River Connectivity:** A 50 km route with multiple stops will link key riverbank zones from Chhapra to Vaishali.

**Green and Modern Vessels:** Battery-powered ferries with fast-charging LTO batteries will carry 100 passengers per trip.

**Affordable, Integrated Transit:** Fares start at ₹20 and the system will integrate with the upcoming Patna Metro Rail network.

The Patna Water Metro promises to revolutionize urban mobility by blending sustainability, affordability, and accessibility. It represents a forward-looking model for green infrastructure in Indian cities. The project also underscores the strategic use of riverways for easing urban transportation challenges.

# Bihar's First Nuclear Power Plant:

A Landmark in India's Energy Mission,  
27<sup>th</sup> June 2025



Bihar is set to host its first-ever nuclear power plant in Rajauli, Nawada district, under India's broader mission to expand clean, reliable nuclear energy across all states. Backed by a ₹20,000 crore allocation in the Union Budget 2025–26, the plant will feature Small Modular Reactor (SMR) technology, offering a flexible, safer, and cost-effective energy solution. This initiative not only strengthens Bihar's energy security but also supports India's long-term decarbonization goals.

## Key Takeaways:

**SMR-Based Clean Energy:** The Nawada plant will use Small Modular Reactors, ideal for smaller grids and enhanced safety.



**Water Sourcing from Ganga:** Plans are underway to address local water constraints by drawing supply from the Ganga River.



**Boost to Power and Industry:** The project will help reduce electricity deficits and support Bihar's economic and industrial growth.



The launch of Bihar's first nuclear plant marks a critical step toward state-level energy independence and sustainable growth. It reinforces India's commitment to clean energy while enabling regional development through enhanced infrastructure and power reliability.



# India's SDG Ranking

in 2025, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025



India has reached a significant milestone by entering the top 100 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Index for the first time, securing the 99th rank out of 193 countries. This reflects India's focused efforts toward achieving the global 2030 Agenda, particularly in health, energy access, and climate action. With a score of 67, the country has moved up from its 109th position in 2024.

## Key Takeaways:

**Improved Global Ranking:** India climbed to 99th with a score of 67, up from 109th in 2024.

1

**Regional Context:** India ranks behind Bhutan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, but ahead of Bangladesh and Pakistan in South Asia.

2

**Progress in Key Goals:** Advancements were noted in SDG 3 (Health), SDG 7 (Clean Energy), and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

3

India's improved SDG ranking signals growing momentum in its sustainability journey. Continued focus on social equity, climate resilience, and infrastructure will be crucial to maintain this upward trajectory. The achievement also enhances India's global standing in sustainable development efforts.

# India Launches New ESG Bond

Regulations to Strengthen Sustainable Finance,  
9<sup>th</sup> June 2025

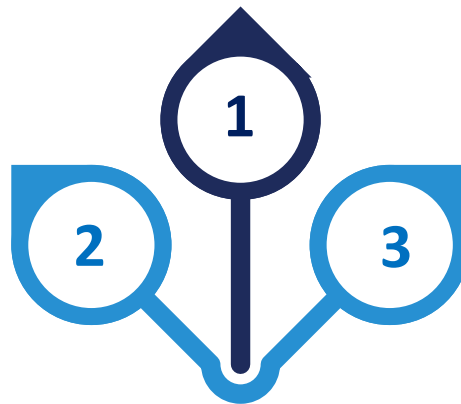


SEBI has unveiled a robust framework for ESG debt securities, including Social, Sustainability, and Sustainability-Linked Bonds (SLBs), to improve accountability and transparency in India's growing sustainable finance market. The new rules aim to curb greenwashing, align with global best practices like ICMA Principles, and support genuine ESG-driven investments across sectors.

## Key Takeaways:

**Mandatory Disclosures:** Issuers must detail project goals, beneficiaries, and fund tracking both pre- and post-issuance.

**Strict Eligibility & Labeling:** Only bonds funding projects aligned with global ESG standards can be labeled as Social, Sustainability, or SLBs.



**Independent Verification:** All ESG bond claims require third-party review to ensure alignment with recognized principles.

SEBI's new ESG bond rules mark a critical step in enhancing the credibility of India's sustainable finance landscape. By enforcing rigorous standards and transparency, the framework supports meaningful ESG investments while aligning India with global market expectations.

# 03



## Corporate Goals/ Initiatives

# Infosys Sets New Goal

to Remove More Carbon than it Emits by 2030, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025

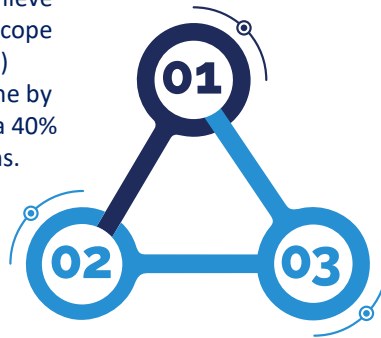


Global digital services and consulting firm Infosys announced a new set of commitments under its updated sustainability strategy “Infosys ESG Vision 2030,” including a new goal to become carbon negative by the end of the decade moving beyond net zero to sequester more greenhouse gases from the atmosphere than it emits.

## Key Takeaways:

### Transitioning to Climate

**Positivity:** Infosys plans to achieve a 90% reduction in absolute Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from a 2020 baseline by 2030. Additionally, it targets a 40% reduction in Scope 3 emissions.



**Commitment to Data Privacy and Governance:** Infosys continues to prioritize data privacy and information security, aiming to shape and embrace leading standards across various geographies. The company has been recognized among the World's Most Ethical Companies by Ethisphere for five consecutive years, reflecting its dedication to exemplary governance practices.

### Maintaining Carbon Neutrality:

While striving for climate positivity, Infosys commits to remaining carbon neutral across all emissions (Scopes 1, 2, and 3) annually until 2029. This involves continued investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and carbon offset projects.

These renewed commitments reflect Infosys’ proactive stance on environmental stewardship and responsible corporate governance. By aiming for carbon negativity, the company sets a high bar for sustainability leadership in the tech industry.

# British Airways

Signs SAF Deal to Cut 400,000 Tonnes of Emissions, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025



British Airways has signed a multi-year agreement with Hong Kong-based EcoCeres to procure **Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)** made entirely from waste-based biomass like used cooking oil. This move is expected to reduce the airline's lifecycle emissions by **approximately 400,000 metric tonnes**—equivalent to emissions from 240,000 round-trip economy-class passengers flying between London and New York.

## Key Takeaways:

**Waste-Based SAF Partnership:** EcoCeres will supply British Airways with SAF derived from waste biomass, reducing lifecycle carbon emissions by up to **80%** compared to traditional jet fuel.

**Emission Impact:** The deal will cut **400,000 tonnes** of CO<sub>2</sub>, aiding British Airways' sustainability goals.

**IAG Net-Zero Goals:** The airline's parent company, IAG, aims to use **10% SAF by 2030** and reach **net-zero emissions by 2050**.

**Current Progress:** In 2024, SAF made up **2.7%** of British Airways' fuel, contributing to a **13% drop in carbon intensity** since 2019.

This agreement underscores British Airways' commitment to sustainable aviation and its strategy to incorporate more environmentally friendly fuel options into its operations.



# Microsoft Signs

10-Year Deal for 4.8 million Tons of Carbon Removal via Forest Management, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025



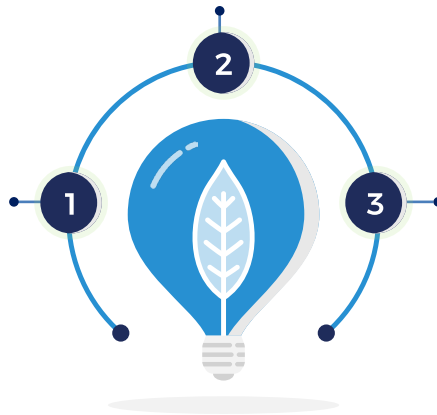
Microsoft has entered into a significant agreement with Anew Climate and Aurora Sustainable Lands to acquire 4.8 million nature-based carbon removal credits over the next decade. These credits will be generated through Improved Forest Management (IFM) practices across more than 425,000 acres of U.S. forestlands, including regions in New York, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Florida.

## Key Takeaways:

### Strategic Collaboration:

This marks the second agreement between Microsoft, Anew Climate, and Aurora Sustainable Lands, following a previous deal for 970,000 tons of carbon removal credits.

**Innovative Monitoring:** The project will utilize Anew's proprietary Epoch Evaluation Platform, which employs machine learning, satellite imagery, drone data, and ground-based measurements to ensure precise tracking and validation of carbon sequestration efforts.



### Commitment to

**Sustainability:** This initiative aligns with Microsoft's goal to become carbon negative by 2030, reinforcing its position as a leading corporate buyer of carbon removal credits.

This agreement underscores Microsoft's commitment to leveraging nature-based solutions in its broader climate strategy, emphasizing transparency, technological innovation, and environmental stewardship.



# 04

## Notable Legal Judgments & Others

# SC Strikes Down

Retrospective Environmental Clearances,  
16<sup>th</sup> May 2025



The Supreme Court of India delivered a landmark judgment striking down a 2017 notification and a 2021 Standard Operating Procedure that allowed industries and infrastructure projects to seek **retrospective (ex post facto) environmental clearances**. The Court declared these practices **“completely illegal”** and contrary to environmental jurisprudence, violating **Article 21 of the Constitution**, which guarantees the right to a pollution-free life. The judgment, spurred by petitions led by environmental group Vanashakti, criticized government attempts to protect violators and emphasized that environmental clearance must always be **pre-emptive, not corrective**. It also ordered the government to refrain from issuing any future notifications allowing such retrospective approvals.

This ruling is seen as a **major win for environmental governance** in India, potentially impacting several ongoing industrial and real estate projects initiated without prior approval.

## Key Takeaways:

**Government Reprimanded:** The Court criticized repeated efforts by the Ministry of Environment to legalize violations through backdoor policies.

**Impact on Projects:** The judgment could affect a significant number of real estate, mining, and infrastructure projects that began without prior EC.



### Illegal Practice Struck

**Down:** Supreme Court held that retrospective environmental clearances are unconstitutional and violate the right to a pollution-free environment.

### Stricter Compliance

**Mandated:** Industries must now strictly adhere to prior environmental clearance procedures before initiating projects.

The Supreme Court’s verdict reinforces the principle that environmental safeguards must be preventive, not reactive. It sets a strong legal precedent against regulatory dilution and holds violators accountable. This judgment is expected to improve environmental compliance and strengthen public trust in environmental governance across India.

### Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) Services

- ESG Framework and Strategy Development
- ESG Due Diligence
- ESG Rating
- Responsible Investment (RI) Advisory



### Nature based Solutions (Nbs)

- Corporate Biodiversity Solutions
- Forestry and Ecology Advisory
- Rivers and Wetlands Studies



## Our Services

### Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility Advisory

- Sustainability Reporting and Assurances
- Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) Services
- Lifecycle Assessment & Sustainable Supply Chain Services
- Energy Advisory
- Corporate Social Responsibility Services
- Circular Economy



### Climate Change Advisory

- Policy and Strategy Development
- Carbon Projects Development
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Corporate Climate Actions
- Climate change presents financial risk to the global economy
- Assessing and managing climate-related risks & opportunities
- Integrating climate related risks and opportunities



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