



# Reflections from Ecociate's Journey in 2025

Building Collaborations - Strengthening Agroecology,  
Inclusive Markets, and Resilient Food Systems

## Our Initiatives







# A Year of Collaboration and CATALYTIC CHANGE

Looking back at the past twelve months, Ecociate's journey has been defined by one word - Collaboration. We have always believed that the most vibrant solutions for rural livelihoods—building climate resilience, bridging market gaps, and ensuring food security—thrive when we work in harmony rather than in silos. This year, we moved closer to a true 'Ecosystem' reality. From ground-breaking field interventions in agroecology with partners like CAT and GIZ, to contributing to the global dialogue at ESCAP and ILDC, our role has matured from technical advisors to ecosystem architects.

As you flip through these pages, you will see more than just project

milestones; you will see a story of empowerment. You will see the resilient faces of the women farmers who inspire us, the strategic depth of our alliances with IDH and MANT, and the visionary energy of the next generation of leaders emerging through IBFL.

This document is a celebration of a year where we didn't just analyze value chains—we breathed life into them, making them more inclusive, resilient, and deeply human. None of this would be possible without the unwavering passion and commitment of the Ecociate team, and support of our partners and clients.

*Key themes of the year*  
**OUR AREA OF IMPACT**

# Mapping the Ecociate Journey

## A strategic flow across SIX CORE PILLARS

### Strategic Partnerships

Collaborating for amplifying the impact



### Transforming Food Systems

Building an ecosystem for resilient, affordable and nutritious food



### Nourishing Future

Building the next generation of leaders through the Inclusive Business Future Leaders Program



### Agroecology & Climate Change

Shaping Policy and Practices for Inclusive & Resilient Livelihoods



### Markets for Good

Private sector engagement to build inclusive markets



### Dialogues and dissemination

Learning and sharing knowledge for designing solutions





# 1 REGENERATING THE EARTH Agroecology & Climate



This year has been instrumental in deepening our expertise and contribution to the intersection of agroecology, climate action, and community resilience.

Our partnership with GIZ allowed us to champion agroecology as a powerful vehicle for social inclusion— demonstrating how this approach creates equitable pathways for women, smallholders, youth, and tribal communities. Through our strategic collaboration with IDH and the NRLM, we moved toward systemic change, institutionalizing climate-focused frameworks into grassroots livelihood planning.

Furthermore, our engagement with CAT enabled us to decode the complexities of landscape-level transformation. By developing comprehensive action and investment blueprints for Dantewada and Patharpratima, we have laid the groundwork for these communities to evolve with enhanced resilience— strengthening their ability to withstand vulnerabilities, whether they are environmental, economic, or social.

## Key Partners

syngenta foundation  
India

AFPRO  
Action For Food Production

giz

Consortium for  
Agroecological  
Transformations

aeg  
foundation

ipc trickleUP

WorldFish



# Private Sector Engagement

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This year has allowed us to further champion a theme that is foundational to our mission: the development of inclusive and resilient market systems.

At Ecociate, we reframe markets as community-embedded ecosystems rather than purely commercial spaces. Our work is guided by the conviction that rural haats are more than just transaction points; they are vital nodes where livelihoods, governance, culture, and ecological exchange converge. Through this lens, we facilitate private sector partnerships that catalyze local economies while remaining anchored in equity, inclusion, and sustainability.

Our collaboration with ESCAP has been instrumental in helping enterprises penetrate rural markets through Inclusive Business Models. To scale this vision, we launched the Inclusive Business Ecosystem Network (IBEN)—a solution-driven platform that supports a diverse range of partners, from established global corporates to agile, emerging startups.

Beyond high-level strategy, we provide 'boots-on-the-ground' support, handholding companies through grassroots implementation. By providing specialized training and last-mile

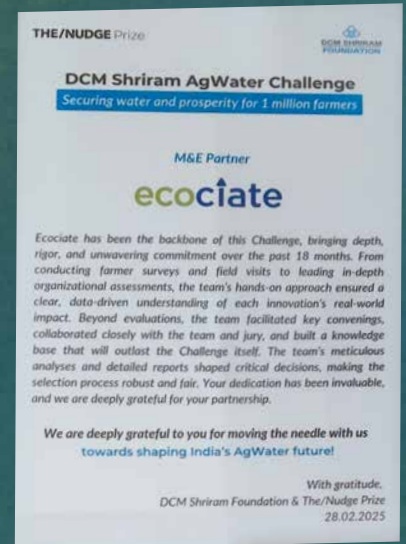




## Private Sector Engagement

mentoring, we ensure that business models are not only commercially viable but are also deeply impactful and sustainably integrated into the community fabric.

Ecociate supported The/Nudge in evaluating technology players offering innovative solutions for agricultural water management under the Nudge-DCM Ag Water Challenge. Our team conducted a rigorous assessment combining detailed desk reviews with on-ground field evaluations to examine the technical robustness, usability, and potential impact of the proposed solutions. This structured and evidence-based assessment process played a critical role in identifying high-potential innovations and facilitated the selection of the semi-finalists and finalists for the challenge.



### Key Partners

**THE/NUDGE** Prize



**CRB** CENTRE for RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS  
Enabling Change for Impact





# The Power of "We" Strategic Partnerships

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The "Power of We" is the core philosophy driving Ecociate's ecosystem approach, moving beyond isolated interventions to create interconnected systems where ecology, economy, and community thrive in unison. By integrating diverse stakeholders—from grassroots NGOs and governments to private enterprises and scientific bodies—we co-create nature-based solutions that address climate challenges while enhancing livelihoods. This collaborative synergy ensures that regenerative agriculture and inclusive market systems are not just concepts, but scalable realities that offer equitable growth for rural enterprises at the bottom of the pyramid.

Our flagship "**Sanjeevan**" initiative epitomizes this approach through a unique Practice-Science-Data alliance between MANT, Datamuse, and Ecociate. Focused on the tribal uplands of Purulia, West Bengal, this partnership tackles interconnected challenges of soil degradation and water scarcity through integrated agroforestry and watershed regeneration. By combining community-led governance with data-driven insights, we are on a path to support 10,000 smallholder farmers, restoring 2,000 hectares of landscape and driving a minimum 30% increase in household incomes through improved soil health and access to premium markets.

Innovation in market access is further amplified through our





## Strategic Partnerships



unique partnership with Common Ground, where we are developing a cutting-edge price discovery system for Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP). By bridging the information gap, we empower tribal collectors with real-time market data, ensuring they stay ahead in decision-making and receive a fair share of the value chain. This transforms the traditional "buyer-led" market into a more transparent, "collector-centric" system, fostering economic agency at the grassroots.

Finally, our work in 2025 with DMKS in Madhya Pradesh and BhoomiKa (an initiative by Welthungerhilfe) has been pivotal in strengthening end-to-end food systems in Chhatarpur district of MP. These collaborations focus on ensuring that local communities have a dominant voice in their own nutritional and food-related needs. By building resilient local supply chains and fostering community sovereignty over food production, we are helping to create a future where rural households are not just consumers, but empowered architects of their own food security and health.



### Key Partners





# Nourishing the Future Food Systems

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In 2025, we strengthened our efforts to build an inclusive and resilient food system through several impactful partnerships and initiatives. A key milestone was our collaboration with Bhoomika and Darshna Mahila Kalyan Samiti (DMKS) to implement the project “Establishing an Eco-model Region for Local Food Systems Transformation” in Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh. This multi-stakeholder initiative integrates local production systems, food habits, and markets to promote natural and healthy foods while generating scalable learnings for place-based food systems transformation

Reducing post-harvest losses remains central to our food systems work. Through our engagement with Far-Mart, we developed and delivered training on post-harvest management and food loss reduction to over 1,000 paddy farmers across Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh, helping improve quality, reduce waste, and enhance farmer incomes.

We continued our partnership with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) to strengthen sustainable supply chains for healthy and nutritious foods across tea estates in Tamil Nadu, building on a model already implemented in more than 100 tea estates in Assam.

Millets continued to be a cornerstone of our sustainability efforts. Through Earthy N Green, we supported millet-based farmers and enterprises and launched a millet van in 2025 to promote millet consumption and consumer awareness.





## Food Systems

Alongside these initiatives, our ongoing work on value chains, agroecology, and food systems enabled us to share insights and lessons through multiple workshops, dialogues, and conferences, contributing to broader food systems transformation efforts.

Our collaboration with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and Jeevika in Bihar has been instrumental in co-creating grassroots-led branding and positioning solutions for healthy and nutritious snack products tailored to local communities. By actively involving community institutions, producer groups, and local enterprises in the co-creation process, the initiative strengthened local ownership, enhanced market acceptance, and contributed to the development of inclusive and sustainable market pathways for nutritious foods.



### Key Partners





# Building Future Leaders (IBFL)

At Ecociate, we believe that lasting systemic change begins with people. Through the Inclusive Business Ecosystem Network (IBEN), we launched the Inclusive Business Future Leaders (IBFL) Program in 2025 to nurture the next generation of professionals committed to inclusive, sustainable, and impact-driven enterprises in agriculture and food systems.

During the year, Ecociate successfully completed two cohorts—IBFL Summer 2025 and Winter 2025—bringing together 16 postgraduate students from diverse regions and academic backgrounds. Fellows engaged with real-world challenges in inclusive business, climate-smart agriculture, and market systems through mentorship, field immersion, expert-led sessions, and collaborative problem-solving.

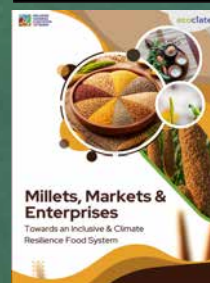
**Compendium of Climate-Smart Technologies in Agriculture and Agri-Allied Sectors:** A comprehensive overview of 75+ climate smart technologies for Agriculture and allied sectors

**Millet, markets and enterprises:** For inclusive and resilient food systems: A detailed analysis of production, market and consumption and enterprise systems for promotion of millet based food.



**Coming Soon**  
**IBFL Summer Cohort 3.0,**  
**Scheduled to begin in April 2026**

## Knowledge documents from IBFL Team



# Voices

from the IBFL fellows and experts

IBFL helped me connect classroom learning with ground realities. The mentorship, field exposure, and peer learning gave me the confidence to pursue a career in inclusive business with purpose and clarity.

IBFL Fellow, 2025 Cohort

Through the IBFL program, we invest in young talent with the skills, exposure, and mentorship needed to build a strong league of future leaders for advancing inclusive businesses.

Santosh Gupta,  
Director, Inclusive Business Ecosystem Network

The Inclusive Business Future Leaders (IBFL) Programme, supported by Ecociate, serves as an effective platform in this direction by nurturing future leaders and management professionals. The IBFL 2.0 team has demonstrated strong analytical and practical engagement by developing a well-grounded knowledge product on millets, contributing to the discourse on inclusive and resilient food systems. Congratulations to the Ecociate team and the IBFL 2.0 cohort for successfully concluding the programme and delivering meaningful outcomes.

Dr. Deepak Chamola,  
Advisor, NRM & Agroecology, GIZ

It was a privilege to join Inclusive Business Future Leaders (2.0) programme, organised by Ecociate. The members of this cohort done a wonderful research and come out with a nice report on Millet, Market and Enterprises. It was also nice to learn about use of "Netnography" in research.. In comparison to IBFL (1.0) this version has been able to make a significant progress. The report is worth to read.

Dr. Alok Pandey,  
Senior Consultant

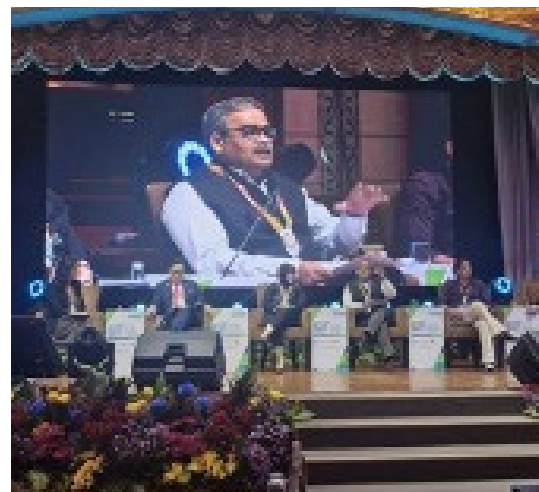


# Conversations for Learning and Sharing Knowledge **6**

In 2025, Ecociate strengthened its role as a knowledge agency by contributing to global and national dialogues on rural livelihoods, inclusive business, food systems, and market ecosystems. Through participation in international forums, practitioner platforms, and policy dialogues, Ecociate bridged ground-level realities with global discourse, ensuring that evidence from the field informs strategies, partnerships, and investments at scale.

## **ASEAN Inclusive Business Forum, Kuala Lumpur**

Ecociate, along with the IBEN, was represented at the 8th ASEAN Inclusive Business Forum, organised by the Government of Malaysia, UN ESCAP, OECD, Oxfam International, and partners. During a panel on *Capacity Building and Talent Development for Inclusive Business*, Our Co-Founder, Mr. Kirti, shared reflections from coaching of Inclusive Business in India, emphasising the urgent need to build ecosystems that enable inclusive business models to thrive. He highlighted the critical role of India's social capital—including networks of SHGs, FPOs, and cooperatives nurtured by NRLM, SRLMs, and CSOs—and called for a shift from transactional engagements to empowerment-based partnerships.



## **India Land & Development Conference (ILDC): Haats as Commons**

At the India Land & Development Conference (ILDC), Ecociate co-organised a roundtable with the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) on “Haats as Commons.” The dialogue highlighted the role of rural haats as engines of inclusive markets, circular local economies, natural farming promotion, and rural leadership, emphasising their repositioning within the Panchayati Raj framework.



## **Impact Harvest Forum, Hyderabad: Jointly organized by UN-ESCAP and the Government of Telangana**

Ecociate was a key partner for the second edition of the Impact Harvest Forum: Investing in Inclusive Business, held in Hyderabad on 3rd and 4th July, which brought together over 150 participants from more than 10 countries across South Asia and Southeast Asia. As part of the forum, Ecociate played a leading role by facilitating three high-impact sessions.









# Looking Ahead

**A Decade of Impact, A Future of Scale:** As 2026 marks our 10th anniversary in the development sector, Ecociate stands at a pivotal milestone. This decade has been a journey of learning, building, and refining 'source codes' for inclusive growth. Moving forward, we are committed to amplifying our impact by deepening our work across our core pillars: resilient market systems, regenerative agroecology, and equitable food systems. To mark this milestone and foster collective action, Ecociate will organize a flagship Inclusive Growth Conference, bringing together global and national stakeholders to shape the next decade of developmental strategy.

**Global Horizons:** South-South Cooperation - The coming years will see Ecociate expanding its footprint beyond the Indian subcontinent. We are poised to reach out to Africa and the ASEAN region, fostering high-value South-South partnerships. We believe that the challenges of climate vulnerability and market exclusion are universal, and the lessons we have gathered in the Indian landscape offer a powerful blueprint for other emerging economies. By facilitating cross-continental exchange, we aim to contribute to a global growth narrative that is inclusive and locally rooted.

**Investing in the Architecture of Change:** Our commitment to Building IB Future Leaders (IBFL) will grow in intensity as we nurture the next generation of value chain architects. We recognize that for markets to truly serve the public good, they need leaders who can balance commercial rigor with social empathy. Simultaneously, our aspiration to act as a knowledge hub remains steadfast. We will continue to synthesize our field experiences into open-access knowledge, contributing to the global discourse and ensuring that evidence-based practices are available to all stakeholders in the ecosystem.

**Our Promise to 2026:** As we celebrate ten years, our promise remains the same: to remain grounded at the grassroots while thinking at a global scale. With a passionate team and a growing network of strategic partners, we are ready to navigate the complexities of the next decade, ensuring that the 'Power of We' continues to transform lives, restore landscapes, and redefine markets for the better.





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