



# Climate Vulnerability Index

## Why in News

Recently, a report titled **“Mapping India’s Climate Vulnerability - A District-level Assessment”** has been released by the [Council on Energy, Environment and Water \(CEEW\)](#) (not-for-profit policy research institution).

- The report has also launched the first-of-its-kind **Climate Vulnerability Index**.
- The index has **analysed 640 districts in India** and found that **463 of these are vulnerable to extreme floods, droughts and cyclones**.

## Key Points

- **Affected States:** 27 Indian states and Union territories are vulnerable to extreme climate events which often disrupt the local economy and displace weaker communities.
  - The states of Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Bihar are the most vulnerable to extreme climate events such as floods, droughts and cyclones in India.
- **Magnitude of Impact of Climate Change:** More than **80% of Indians live in districts vulnerable to climate risks**.
  - 17 of 20 people in the country are vulnerable to climate risks, out of which every five Indians live in areas that are extremely vulnerable.
  - More than 45% of these districts have undergone “unsustainable landscape and infrastructure changes”.
- **Low-level of Adaptability:** More than 60% of Indian districts have medium to low adaptive capacity in handling extreme weather events.
- **Role of Anthropogenic Activities:** The anthropogenic activity has already made vulnerable districts become even more vulnerable to impacts of natural disasters. Some of the activities has led to:
  - Loss of wetlands and loss in mangroves which would act as a natural barrier, making it more vulnerable.
  - Landscape disruptions such as the disappearance of forest cover, over-construction, have led to degradation of natural ecosystems.
- **Triggering Financial Crisis:** Combating the rising frequency and scale of extreme climate events is fiscally draining for developing countries such as India.
  - Investments in infrastructure such as housing, transport, and industries will be threatened by these events, especially along the coasts, adding that mounting weather-related insurance losses could trigger the next financial crisis.

## Suggestions

- **Decentralized Planning:** Since most districts in India are highly vulnerable to extreme weather events, a district-wise climate action plan is required.

- The CEEW study also indicated that only 63% of Indian districts have a District Disaster Management Plan (DDMP).
- Policymakers, industry leaders and citizens must use the district-level analysis to make effective risk-informed decisions.
- **Mobilizing Green Finance:** With loss and damage rising exponentially due to the climate crisis, India must demand climate finance for adaptation-based climate actions at [COP-26](#) (Climate Conference).
  - At COP-26, developed countries must regain trust by delivering the USD 100 billion promised since 2009 and commit to stepping up climate finance over the coming decade.
  - Further, India must collaborate with other countries to create a **Global Resilience Reserve Fund**, which could act as insurance against climate shocks.
- **Climate Risk Identification:** Finally, developing a **Climate Risk Atlas for India** would help policymakers to better identify and assess risks arising from extreme climate events.
  - Climate-proofing of physical and ecosystem infrastructures should also now become a national imperative.
- **Institutional Setup:** India must create a **new Climate Risk Commission** to coordinate the environmental de-risking mission.
  - Enhanced climate finance can also support India-led global agencies like the [Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure \(CDRI\)](#) to further mainstream climate actions.

### Other Indices Related to Climate Change

- [Climate Change Performance Index](#) (Germanwatch, the New Climate Institute and the Climate Action Network)
- [Global Climate Risk Index 2021](#) (Germanwatch)
- [Environmental Performance Index](#) (Yale University and Columbia University in collaboration with the World Economic Forum).
- [Hunger Hotspots Report](#) (FAO and WFP)
- [Children's Climate Risk Index](#) (UNICEF)

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