



Venture
Philanthropy



FOUNDATION FOR ECOLOGICAL SECURITY

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LGT Venture Philanthropy extends its partnership with FES to support its 5-year ‘Promise of Commons’ strategy

Mumbai, India, July 2024 – LGT Venture Philanthropy Foundation (LGT VP) is delighted to announce the extension of our engagement with Foundation for Ecological Security (FES), to support their ambitious 5-year ‘Promise of Commons’ strategy. The new 3-year contract will support FES’s plans to secure tenure over 30 million acres of commons for 38 million people in India by 2028 and unlock economic opportunities for communities by undertaking community-centric carbon action. The partnership builds on FES’s position as a leading organisation in restoring degraded commons in India, strong partnerships with central and state governments, and their community-centric approach. LGT VP’s financial and non-financial support will allow FES to further strengthen the organisation’s capabilities to deliver impact at scale and implement innovative community-centric carbon projects.

FES is a front-runner in restoring commons by securing tenure for communities, building inclusive governance systems, and unlocking public funding

Founded in 2001, FES works towards ecological restoration and conservation of land and water resources in degraded and marginalised zones in India through initiatives that are ecologically sustainable and socially equitable. The organisation collaborates directly with the government and other civil society organisation (CSO) partners to assist local communities in securing tenure over commons, building capacity of local communities, influencing government policies for inclusive land governance, and unlocking public funding to support these activities. As of March 2024, FES’s efforts have brought almost 15 million acres of commons in India under secure tenure, impacting over 30 million people.

The ambitious 5-year ‘Promise of Commons’ strategy aims to extend partnerships with state governments to scale impact and ensure equitable social development by making policies on commons gender-sensitive

FES kick-started the 5-year ‘Promise of Commons’ strategy in 2023 with an ambition to bring 30 million acres of land under tenure and restore them, improve livelihoods of 11 million people, and bring about gender-inclusive policy action in 11 states in India. The strategy involves partnering with state governments to co-design programs and policies for restoring commons at the state level, enhancing capacities of both government and communities, and fostering a supportive ecosystem for other CSOs involved in commons restoration. Moreover, it will ensure that policies and programs are gender-sensitive and increase the representation of women in local governance institutions.

FES will also pilot community-centric carbon projects to reward communities that have protected ecosystems

The current top-down approach of climate action such as payments for ecosystem services (PES) and carbon markets do not recognise the role of indigenous people and local communities in protecting their lands through traditional knowledge and practices. Noting this gap, FES plans to undertake community-centric carbon action based on traditional practices and unlock more funding from private and public sources.

Sreejan Dutta, Manager Venture Philanthropy at LGT Wealth India, explains: “LGT VP’s environment strategy is to support natural climate solutions that are embedded in local communities. FES’s success in restoring degraded land and aquatic resources in India through solutions co-designed with local communities aligns perfectly with our environment approach. We are very excited to continue to stand with FES as an engaged partner in their efforts to deepen government partnerships and roll out community-centric carbon projects.”

Subrata Singh, Executive Director of FES, echoes: “FES champions a holistic approach to environmental conservation with an emphasis on community stewardship and sustainable resource management. We prioritize pathways that are deeply rooted in local contexts, fostering partnerships between communities, governments, and diverse stakeholders. Our strategy focuses on restoring degraded ecosystems while simultaneously encouraging local communities to continue to steward their natural resources. By integrating traditional knowledge with innovative practices and enhancing capacities on the ground, we aim to facilitate the creation of resilient landscapes that support both biodiversity and human livelihoods through collective action, equitable resource access, and inclusive decision-making processes.”

The Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) is a Society registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860, New Delhi. FES is also registered under Section 12A & 80G of the Income Tax Act of 1961, and the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) of 2010. FES works to restore natural resources and enhance rural communities' livelihoods. It empowers local communities to secure land rights, strengthens local governance, promotes sustainable livelihoods, and restores ecosystems. For more information, please visit www.fes.org.in.

LGT Venture Philanthropy (LGT VP) is an independent charitable foundation established in 2007 with partners in Switzerland, Sub-Saharan Africa, and India. The Foundation strives to improve the quality of life of people facing disadvantages, contribute to healthy ecosystems, and build resilient, inclusive, and prosperous communities. LGT VP focuses on strengthening the capabilities of locally rooted organisations that deliver effective, scalable solutions across health, education, and the environment contributing directly to the SDGs. For more information, please visit www.lgtvp.com.

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