

The Power Of A Drop – Vedanta Transforming Lives Through Water Positivity

👤 BW Online Bureau 📅 Mar 20, 2025

Despite being home to over 1.4 billion people, India possesses only 4 per cent of the world's freshwater resources, leading to significant stress on its water supply



In the last border village of Barmer, Rajasthan, the air is thick with the scent of the desert, but today, it carries something else - laughter, music, and the rhythmic beat of dancing feet. Under the golden glow of the setting sun, women in vibrant ghagras twirl, their anklets jingling in unison. Their celebration is not for a festival, but for something far more precious - 'meetha paani' has finally arrived.

For generations, these women have woken before dawn, trekking miles under the merciless sun to fetch water. Their shoulders ached from carrying heavy pots, their days revolved around survival. But today, that burden has lifted. Thanks to Vedanta's Water ATMs and Baap Naadis, clean drinking water is now just steps away. Tears of relief mix with smiles of joy as they fill their pots effortlessly, some for the first time in their lives. Water is no longer a distant dream, but a present reality.

Such stories outline a common thread—the indispensable role of water in sustaining life. Recognizing this critical need, Vedanta has embarked on a transformative journey to achieve Water Positivity, ensuring that the communities around its operations have access to this vital resource for generations to come and businesses thrive in the region.

Water: A Precious Resource under Threat

Water scarcity is no longer a distant concern—it is a pressing crisis affecting millions across the country. Despite being home to over 1.4 billion people, India possesses only 4% of the world's freshwater resources, leading to significant stress on its water supply. As of recent estimates, approximately 35 million Indians lack access to safe water.

This scarcity is exacerbated in arid regions, where groundwater depletion and erratic monsoons threaten livelihoods. For instance, Bengaluru, a city of 14 million, recently faced severe water shortages, relying heavily on tanker deliveries. Such scenarios underscore the urgency for collective action among industries, governments, and communities to conserve and restore water resources.

In response to this crisis, the Government of India launched the Jal Jeevan Mission in 2019, aiming to provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections to all rural households. Complementing this, initiatives like Mission Paani focus on water conservation and management, promoting sustainable practices to ensure long-term water security.

These initiatives highlight the critical need for industries to align with national efforts in addressing water scarcity. Vedanta's commitment to Water Positivity not only supports these governmental missions but also amplifies their impact through targeted community interventions and sustainable practices.

Vedanta's Bold Step Towards Water Positivity

As a global natural resources company, Vedanta acknowledges its responsibility towards sustainable water management. The company has pledged to achieve net water positivity by 2030, meaning it will replenish more water than it withdraws. This ambitious goal is backed by a multi-faceted approach, integrating water conservation, wastewater recycling, and community initiatives.

Vedanta's sustainability-driven approach is already yielding remarkable results. As of FY2024, four of its sites—Hindustan Zinc Limited, Iron Ore Business, Cairn Oil & Gas, and Balco - have achieved water-positive status. These milestones reflect the company's dedication to balancing industrial growth with ecological well-being.

Vedanta is leveraging advanced water management technologies to minimize its environmental footprint. The company has adopted state-of-the-art zero liquid discharge (ZLD) systems, ensuring that industrial wastewater is treated and reused efficiently. Additionally, smart water monitoring systems have been deployed to track and optimize water usage, reducing wastage and enhancing efficiency – and with such technologies Vedanta has recycled more than 85 million m³ of water.

One such success story comes from the Lanjigarh alumina refinery, where Vedanta has implemented a closed-loop water recycling system, significantly cutting down freshwater consumption. These technological advancements are not just reducing industrial dependency on freshwater sources but are also setting new benchmarks for sustainable operations in the sector

Empowering Communities Through Water Stewardship

Water conservation is not just about corporate responsibility; it is about enriching lives. Vedanta's water initiatives have significantly impacted rural communities, particularly in water-stressed regions. Through rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge projects, and wastewater treatment plants, Vedanta is ensuring that local communities have access to clean and sustainable water sources.

In Rajasthan, where water scarcity is a persistent challenge, Vedanta's Hindustan Zinc has established extensive rainwater harvesting systems, revitalizing traditional water bodies and ensuring year-round availability of water. These efforts have not only improved agricultural productivity but have also uplifted the lives of thousands of farmers who previously struggled with water shortages.

Similarly, in Odisha's mining belts, Vedanta has been instrumental in building check dams and pond rejuvenation projects, empowering villagers with access to water for drinking and irrigation. These interventions have reduced migration rates, as local communities no longer have to abandon their homes in search of water elsewhere.

A Vision For Future

Water is not just a resource; it is a fundamental human right. As Vedanta continues its journey towards net water positivity, its commitment to sustainable water management is a beacon of hope for industries and communities alike. The company's efforts are a reminder that corporate growth and environmental responsibility can go hand in hand.

The young girl who once walked miles for a pot of water now sees a borewell in her village. The farmer, who once prayed for rain, now cultivates crops year-round thanks to restored water bodies. These are not just stories, they are testaments to the power of collective action.

Through unwavering commitment, innovative solutions, and community collaboration, Vedanta is shaping a water-secure future – and in doing so, it is not just conserving water it is transforming lives, one drop at a time.

(The above given article has been written by Priya Agarwal Hebbar, Chairperson, Hindustan Zinc and Director, Vedanta)

Share    

© 2023 Vedanta Limited. All rights reserved. | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#)