

## Mumbai-Nashik national highway to turn into carbon sink

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### Yes Bank joins hands with NHAI to plant 45,000 saplings on 40-km stretch over next five years

A 40-km stretch along the Mumbai-Nashik national highway is being turned into a carbon sink. It will serve as a natural reservoir that stores carbon-containing chemical compounds accumulated over an indefinite period of time. The carbon sink is a Corporate Social Responsibility initiative of Yes Bank, which is working closely with the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to plant 45,000 saplings over the next five years. The project, which is a part of the NHAI's Adopt a Green Highway drive, will be implemented along the stretch from Gonde to Pimpalgaon. As of now, 14,559 of the targeted 45,462 saplings have been planted. Namita Vikas, group president and global head, Climate Strategy and Responsible Banking, Yes Bank, said, "The bank undertook a commitment of planting saplings with an aim to help achieve India's Nationally Determined Contribution of creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030." Ms. Vikas said the initiative will have a positive social and environmental impact. "Apart from increasing tree cover and contributing to India's carbon sink, it will also help improve the soil quality, groundwater levels and air quality in the area." Tree plantation and maintenance is being carried out by an empanelled implementing agency and does not involve any of the bank's employees. "Electricity and heat production is the major source of excess carbon discharge by industry, transport and buildings," Ms. Vikas said quoting a report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Ms. Vikas said, "Carbon sinks such as plants, oceans and soil are natural systems that absorb and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Increasing forest and tree cover will help in carbon sequestration, and in mitigating the impact of climate change caused by global warming."

### **Will create 1 lakh jobs**

Under the NHAI, the government has created a Green Highways Division (GHD) which has been entrusted with the task of planning, implementation and monitoring roadside plantations along a one-lakh-km network of national highways. This is projected to in turn generate one lakh direct employment opportunities in the plantations sector in next 10 years. For effective project planning, implementation and monitoring, the GHD has developed a Guidelines and Vision Document.

SOURCE:-<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/mumbai/mumbai-nashik-national-highway-to-turn-into-carbon-sink/article27062418.ece>