

WHERE I WORK | 28 July 2025

How I'm helping to develop more-resilient food systems

Geographer Bhogtoram Mawroh works with Indigenous People in Meghalaya, India, to adapt agriculture to climate change.

By [Nikki Forrester](#)



Bhogtoram Mawroh is a consultant at the North East Society for Agroecology Support in Shillong, India. Credit: Sayan Hazra for *Nature*

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“Here in Meghalaya, India, the practices of Indigenous Peoples influence the foods that we eat and where they come from. It’s a food system characterized by richness and diversity. The Khasi, Garo and Karbi Indigenous People here grow multiple plant species together on the same land, use several approaches to farming and rely on knowledge of the surrounding forests and rivers. In the conventional system of farming, people grow food in one place all the time. But here, people farm in different areas across the mountains every year.

These food systems are resilient because of that diversity. Climate change is affecting agricultural systems around the world and farming contributes to around 30% of global greenhouse-gas emissions. Implementing Indigenous Peoples’ food systems is among the game-changing solutions that can help us to adapt.

In this photo, I’m examining bean leaves with Khasi farmer Ricona as part of my research on the links between Indigenous Peoples’ food systems, food sovereignty, nutrition and natural-resource management, as a consultant for the North East Society for Agroecology Support in Shillong, India. Over the past few years in Meghalaya, we’ve experienced record rainfall, rising temperatures and extreme heat waves.

I bring knowledge from people such as Ricona back to my colleagues so that we can develop experiments to determine which farming practices to use.

But as well as knowledge, sustainable farming needs legislation and funding. The Indian government is undertaking a big push to encourage regenerative farming, but its programme focuses on modern farming practices that stay in one place. How can communities that move their farms around get regenerative certifications and funding? It's great to have this policy, but we need it to connect to our people and landscape."

Nature **643**, 1444 (2025)

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-025-02352-w>

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

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Nature (*Nature*) | ISSN 1476-4687 (online) | ISSN 0028-0836 (print)