UNEP Young Champions of the Earth Prize

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance*

Why in News?

Three entrepreneurs from India, Kenya and the United States have been awarded the UN Environment Programme's 2025 Young Champions of the Earth prize.

- The award is bestowed ***annually*** to ambitious young people from around the world with outstanding ideas to ***protect and restore the environment.***
- **Launched in –** 2017.
- **Age criteria -** Under 30.
- **Prize money -** Each winner receives $20,000 in seed funding, mentoring and access to a global platform to scale their ideas.
- **Awardees of 2025** –
  - **Jinali Mody (28, India)**, founder of Banofi Leather, which produces leather alternatives from banana crop waste.
  - The women-led company aims to reduce the fast fashion industry's *environmental footprint* by cutting water use, toxic waste and carbon emissions compared with *conventional leather*.
  - **Joseph Nguthiru (27, Kenya)**, whose company HyaPak transforms the invasive water hyacinth in *Lake Naivasha* into biodegradable packaging bags and seedling wrappers, replacing single-use plastics.
  - **Noemi Florea (24, US)**, founder of Cycleau, a compact greywater reuse system that retrofits under sinks, showers and laundry units to convert *wastewater into drinking water*, with significantly lower energy use than existing systems.

Reference

Down to Earth | UNEP's 2025 Young Champions of the Earth prize



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