

# Resilience Beyond Control

*Negotiating Water, Climate, and Urban Life  
Along the Vishwamitri River in India*



1806: A View of the bridge along Vishwamitri river in near Vadodara, Gujarat, a painting by Grindlay, Robert Melville.  
Source: <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O75954/a-view-of-the-bridge-print-grindlay-robert-melville/>

**Designing Resilience Global Competition**  
July 2026, China

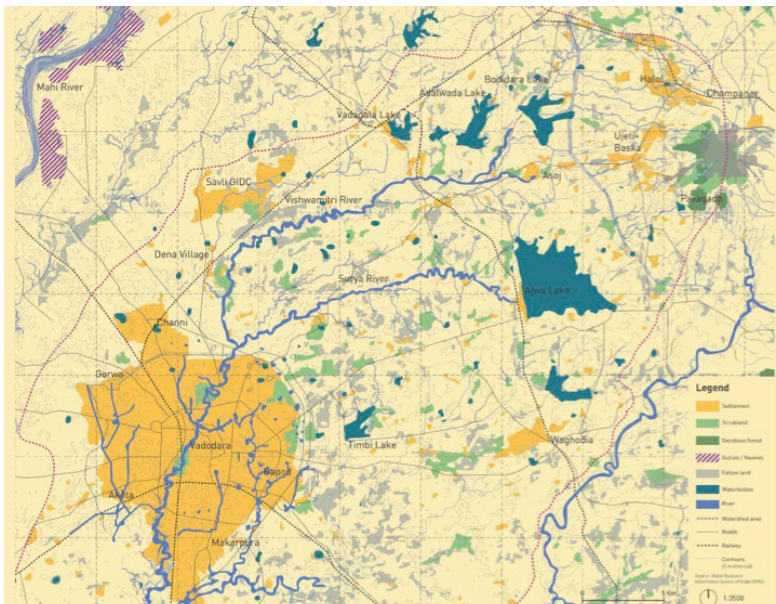
**DESIGNING  
RESILIENCE  
GLOBAL**



**CEPT  
UNIVERSITY**

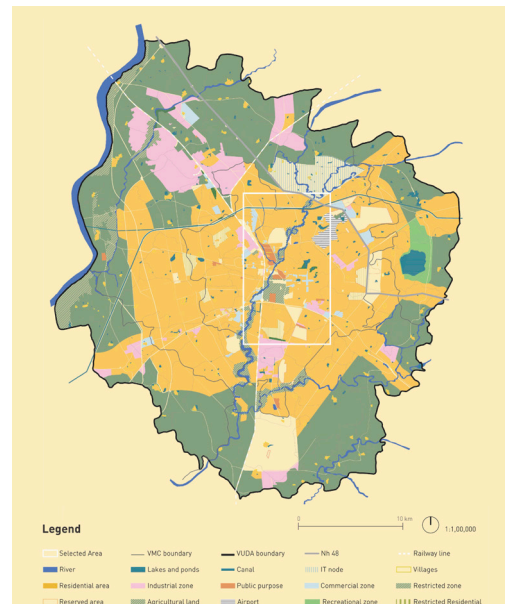
## Thinking The Unpredictable, Designing With Uncertainty

Climate change is changing how water and cities interact throughout semi-arid South Asia. The Vishwamitri River in Vadodara, an urban setting characterised by extremes, is a prime example of this. The area experiences heat stress and water scarcity for a large portion of the year, but when the monsoon arrives, the same landscape is overtaken by sudden, devastating flooding. This paradox has been exacerbated by rapid urbanisation, which has reduced ecological capacity, uprooted traditional water systems, and made both human and non-human communities more vulnerable.



Regional map showing origin of Vishwamitri river from Pavagadh hills and the Ajwa reservoir, main supplier of water to the river, and its this reservoir when overflows, leads to major flooding in Vishwamitri river

Source: <https://www.wris.gov.in/> Water Resource Information System of India (WRIS)



Urban extents of Vadodara city, showing the 11 kms long river in the white box, and the proposed landuse Map

Source: <https://www.vadodara.gov.in/> Vadodara Urban Development Authority

## The Vishwamitri today embodies a profound dilemma of climate resilience, and cities must learn to live with both too little and too much water.

The 2026 Designing Resilience Global (DRG) Competition invites students to confront this challenge not through control-driven engineering, but through design approaches that recognise the river as a dynamic and living system. The aim is to rethink how cities can inhabit, negotiate, and adapt to shifting hydro-ecological conditions—cultivating resilience rooted in ecological function, social equity, and multispecies co-existence.



Location: near EME cantonment area, Sama road, Vadodara City.  
Source: Priyanka Kanhare



Ghat along the Vishwamitri river, Kala Ghoda circle, Vadodara city  
Source: Priyanka Kanhare

## The Central Challenge:

**How can design enable cities to live with too little and too much water—strengthening ecological function, social resilience, and climate-adaptive urban life along fragile river corridors?**

The competition calls for proposals that:

- Respond to the seasonal rhythms, unpredictability, and ecological agency of the Vishwamitri
- Integrate flood resilience and drought preparedness without displacing ecological processes
- Create spatial frameworks that support everyday life, cultural practices, and biodiversity
- Foster adaptive, inclusive, and just relationships between communities and the river

Participants will intervene in a 1-1.5 km stretch of the Vishwamitri River within the urban fabric of Vadodara, a site defined as much by its socio-ecological significance as by its governance and infrastructural complexity. Solutions may operate across multiple scales, from territorial strategy to architectural urbanism and landscape interventions, but must articulate a vision of resilience beyond control.

The site related specific information will be shared in the detailed final brief at a later date.

**SCUT, China awaits DRG Challenge Participants in July 2026!**

**Credits:**  
Oscar Carracedo, Prof. Yin Shi, Chnadrani Chakrabarti, Priyanka Kanhare, Shilpa Mevada, SCUT, CEPT University  
Students from Level 3 Studio named "Living Waterfronts", in the year 2022, Bachelor in Urban Design Program,  
Faculty of Planning, CEPT University.