



# State of the World's Forests 2022

**For Prelims:** State of the World's Forests 2022, FAO

**For Mains:** State of Forest Resources in India and related concerns

## Why in News?

Recently, the State of the World's Forests 2022 (SOFO 2022) was released by the [United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\)](#).

- In January 2022 the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) released the [India State of Forest Report-2021](#).
- At the [Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use](#), 140 countries pledged to eliminate forest loss by 2030 and to support restoration and sustainable production and consumption.

## What is the State of the World's Forests?

- The report is **published bi-annually** and is widely regarded as **one of the most important stock takes on forest ecosystems**.
- The 2022 edition of SOFO **explores the potential of three forest pathways** for achieving green recovery and tackling multidimensional planetary crises, including [climate change](#) and biodiversity loss.
  - Halting deforestation and maintaining forests
  - Restoring degraded lands and expanding [agroforestry](#)
  - Sustainably using forests and building green value chains

## What are the Key Highlights of the Report?

- **Loss of Forests:**
  - The **420 million hectares (mha) of forests have been lost between 1990 and 2020**, due to [deforestation](#), though forests cover 4.06 billion ha of the earth's geographical area.
    - Although the **rate of deforestation was declining**, 10 mha of forests were lost every year between 2015 and 2020.
    - An **estimated 289 mha of forests would be deforested between 2016 and 2050** in the tropics alone, resulting in the emission of 169 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e if additional action is not taken.
      - The greenhouse gas total is expressed in terms of billions of tonnes of global annual CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent emissions (GtCO<sub>2</sub>e/year).
- **Rise in Infectious Diseases:**

- **15% of 250 emerging infectious diseases** have been linked to forests.
  - **Example:** Covid-19, **Drug-resistant infections (Antimicrobials)**, [Zika Virus](#), etc.
- 30% of new diseases, reported since 1960, can be attributed to deforestation and land-use change.
- **Rise in Poverty:**
  - The **cost of global strategies to prevent pandemics** based on reducing the illegal wildlife trade, avoiding land-use change and increasing surveillance was estimated to be **USD22 billion to USD31 billion**.
  - **Approximately 124 million more people fell into extreme poverty after Covid-19 and this may have longer-term impacts on wood-based fuel** (such as firewood, charcoal) due to increase in wood-based fuel use in some countries during the pandemic.
- **Consumption of Natural Resources:**
  - The world population is **projected to reach 9.7 billion people by 2050**, which will increase competition for land, as the demand for food for this large population will rise by 35 to 56% by the 2050s.
  - The **annual global consumption of all natural resources combined** is expected to more than **double from 92 billion tonnes in 2017 to 190 billion tonnes in 2060** due to increases in population size and affluence.
    - **Annual biomass extraction is expected to reach 44 billion tonnes by 2060**, from 24 billion tonnes in 2017.
    - **Demand for forest-based biomass is expected to rise further**, mainly due to construction and packaging.
- **GDP Dependence on Forests:**
  - It is estimated that more than half of world **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** (USD 84.4 trillion in 2020) depends moderately (USD 31 trillion per year) or highly (USD 13 trillion per year) on **ecosystem services**, including those provided by forests.
    - **Ecosystem services make human life possible by**, for example, providing nutritious food and clean water, regulating disease and climate, supporting the pollination of crops and soil formation, and providing recreational, cultural and spiritual benefits

## What are the Suggestions?

- **Conservation, Restoration and Agroforestry:**
  - Forest protection, such as stopping illegal wildlife trade and avoiding land-use change, can help prevent the next pandemic, and the cost is a fraction of the damages that an actual pandemic would cause.
  - Agroforestry holds special potential for boosting biodiversity, food security and even crop production.
- **Sustainable Use:**
  - **Supply chains that incorporate forest products are another way to make sustainable development** a reality, particularly as the world's population is projected to double by 2060 and demand for natural resources will double to 190 billion metric tons.
- **Funding:**
  - **A massive uptick in funding will require**, specifically, a three-fold increase by 2030.
    - Establishing and maintaining forests, for example, may cost USD 203 billion every year by 2050.
- **Supporting Local Producer Organizations:**
  - **Supporting local producer organizations and protecting land tenure rights** are also crucial for allowing small communities and Indigenous groups to continue sustainably managing their forests.
    - For this, governments can **give smallholders long-term rights to their tree products**, which would help de-risk agroforestry, as well as formalize the recognition of customary land rights.

## What is FAO?

- **About:**

- FAO is a specialized agency of the [United Nations](#) that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- [World Food Day](#) is celebrated every year on 16th October to mark the anniversary of the founding of the FAO in 1945.
- It is one of the UN food aid organisations based in Rome (Italy). Its sister bodies are the [World Food Programme](#) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
- **Initiatives Taken:**
  - [Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems \(GIAHS\)](#).
  - Monitors the [Desert Locust](#) situation throughout the world.
  - The [Codex Alimentarius Commission or CAC](#) is the body responsible for all matters regarding the implementation of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme.
  - [The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture](#).
- **Flagship Publications:**
  - The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA)
  - The State of the World's Forests (SOFO)
  - [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World \(SOFI\)](#)
  - The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA)
  - The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets (SOCO)
  - [World Food Price Index](#)

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions

**Q. With reference to the 'New York Declaration on Forests', which of the following statements are correct?**

1. It was first endorsed at the United Nations Climate Summit in 2014.
2. It endorses a global timeline to end the loss of forests.
3. It is a legally binding international declaration.
4. It is endorsed by governments, big companies and indigenous communities.
5. India was one of the signatories at its inception.

**Select the correct answer using the code given below.**

- (a) 1, 2 and 4
- (b) 1, 3 and 5
- (c) 3 and 4
- (d) 2 and 5

**Ans: (a)**

**Exp:**

- The New York Declaration on Forests is a voluntary and non-legally binding political declaration which grew out of dialogue among governments, companies and civil society, spurred by the United Nations Secretary-General's Climate Summit in 2014. Hence, statement 1 is correct and statement 3 is not correct.
- The declaration pledges to halve the rate of deforestation by 2020, to end it by 2030 and to restore hundreds of millions of acres of degraded land. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- The declaration currently has over 200 endorsers including, national governments, sub-national governments, multinational companies, indigenous peoples and local community organizations, nongovernment organizations, and financial institutions. Hence, statement 4 is correct.
- India was not one of the signatories at the time of New York Declaration on Forests inception. Hence, statement 5 is not correct. Therefore, option (a) is the correct answer.

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**Source: DTE**

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/state-of-the-world-s-forests-2022>