



## SAIME Initiative

### Why in News?

In Sundarbans, a new shrimp farming initiative offers hope for [mangrove restoration](#).

### What is the SAIME Initiative?

- Under Sustainable Aquaculture In Mangrove Ecosystem (SAIME) initiative, **farmers have taken up cultivation of shrimp at 30 hectares** in West Bengal.
  - Additionally, they are **restoring mangroves**.
- Started in 2019, the community-based initiative of sustainable shrimp cultivation is being conceived by **NGOs- Nature Environment and Wildlife Society (NEWS) and Global Nature Fund (GNF)**, Naturland, Bangladesh Environment and Development Society (BEDS).
- The mangrove ecosystem is **integrated with shrimp cultivation**, but when fisheries were expanded inwards, the mangrove ecosystem was excluded.
  - Fishing, particularly shrimp cultivation, is **one of the key occupations of the people of Sundarbans**, which is a complex network of rivers and low-lying islands that face a tide surge twice a day.
- Shrimp cultivation is **practised in about 15,000 to 20,000 hectares of the unique ecosystem** in India.

### What is the Significance of the Sundarbans Delta?

- The Sundarbans hosts the **largest mangrove forests in the world**, lying on the delta of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers on the Bay of Bengal.
  - Mangrove ecosystem is a **very specialised environment occurring in between the land and the sea** in the tropical and subtropical regions.
- Sundarbans is the natural abode of many groups of animals and a large number of species are known to feed, breed, and take shelter in this ecosystem.
  - It is home to many rare and globally threatened wildlife species such as the [estuarine crocodile](#), water monitor lizard, [Gangetic dolphin](#) and [olive ridley turtle](#).
- 40% of Sundarbans lies in India and the rest in Bangladesh. Sundarbans was designated a [UNESCO World Heritage site](#) in 1987 (India) and 1997 (Bangladesh).
- Sundarbans Wetland, India was recognised as the **'Wetland of International Importance'** under the [Ramsar Convention](#) in January 2019.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### Prelims

**Q. The 2004 Tsunami made people realize that mangroves can serve as a reliable safety hedge against coastal calamities. How do mangroves function as a safety hedge? (2011)**

**(a)** The mangrove swamps separate the human settlements from the sea by a wide zone in which people neither live nor venture out

**(b)** The mangroves provide both food and medicines which people are in need of after any natural disaster

**(c)** The mangrove trees are tall with dense canopies and serve as an excellent shelter during a cyclone or tsunami

**(d)** The mangrove trees do not get uprooted by storms and tides because of their extensive roots

**Ans: (d)**

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**Mains**

**Q.** Discuss the causes of depletion of mangroves and explain their importance in maintaining coastal ecology. **(2019)**

**Source: TH**

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