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## Sustainable Development in Bihar | Bihar | 13 Jun 2024

### Why in News?

According to the **Tata-Cornell Institute for Agriculture and Nutrition (TCI)** at Cornell University, Bihar can make significant progress towards [sustainable development](#) by implementing three transformative technologies in the **agricultural sector**.

### Key Points

- In a policy brief it is emphasised that Bihar can reduce the [Greenhouse Gas \(GHG\) emissions](#) associated with **rice and livestock production** while maintaining or even improving productivity.
- The policy brief discusses a study carried out within TCI's Zero-Hunger, **Zero-Carbon Food Systems project**, which seeks to develop a strategy to decrease agricultural emissions in Bihar while maintaining productivity levels.
  - Agriculture accounts for 20% of India's GHG emissions nationally, with Bihar being one of the states significantly affected by [malnutrition](#), especially among young children.
- According to TCI research, Bihar could reduce emissions by 9.4-11.2 metric tons each year by **adopting alternate wetting and drying for paddy cultivation**, advanced artificial insemination for cattle breeding, and anti-methanogenic feed supplements in its **livestock sector**.
- Research shows that alternate wetting and drying, advanced breeding techniques, and [anti-methanogenic feeds](#) can help Bihar to lower its agricultural emissions without damaging productivity.
  - The policy presented a breakdown of emissions reductions for each of Bihar's four agroclimatic zones. For alternate wetting and drying, Bihar's southwest and northwest zones have the highest potential mitigation levels.
    - **Bihar's Four Agroclimatic Zones:** Zone-I, North Alluvial Plain, Zone-II, north East Alluvial Plain, Zone-III A South East Alluvial Plain and Zone-III B, South West Alluvial Plain

### Note

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed an anti-methanogenic feed supplement '[Harit Dhara](#)' (HD), which can **cut down cattle methane emissions by 17-20%** and can also result in higher milk production.

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## Special Category Status for Bihar | Bihar | 13 Jun 2024

### Why in News?

Bihar's Chief Minister Nitish Kumar **reiterated the state's longstanding demand for [special](#)**

[category status](#) from the Centre.

- This status would **lead to an increase in the tax revenues** that Bihar receives from the Centre.

## Key Points

- One of the key concerns is **Bihar's low per capita income**, which is around ₹60,000, among the lowest in the country. Additionally, the State **lags behind the national average in various human development indicators**.
- Furthermore, Bihar's fiscal situation has been **negatively impacted by factors such as the bifurcation of the State**, leading to industries moving to Jharkhand, lack of adequate water resources for irrigation, and frequent natural disasters.
- Bihar's caste based survey of 2022 shows that **nearly a third of the State's people live under the poverty line**.
  - In 2023, the Bihar government estimated that the granting of the special category status will help the State receive an additional 2.5 lakh crore rupees over five years **to spend on the welfare of 94 lakh crore poor families**.
- Historically, States like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh suffered slow growth and **high poverty levels due to poor rule of law that discouraged investments** considered crucial to boosting growth.
- But now, as one of the fastest growing States in the country, despite originating from a lower starting point, **Bihar has managed to increase its per capita income level** and also the size of its overall economy at a brisk pace in recent years.
  - In 2022-23, for instance, Bihar's **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** grew at 10.6% as against the national average of 7.2% while its per capita income level in real terms grew by 9.4% in 2023.

## Special Category Status (SCS)

- **About:**
  - SCS is a classification **granted to some States by the Centre** to assist development, based on geographical and socio-economic disadvantages.
  - The scheme was **introduced in 1969** on the recommendation of the Fifth **Finance Commission**.
- **Factors considered for granting SCS to a State:**
  - Hilly and difficult terrain
  - Low population density and/or sizeable share of tribal population
  - Strategic location along international borders
  - Economic and infrastructural backwardness
  - Non-viable nature of State finances
- The 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission has done away with the '**special category status**' for states, except for the Northeastern and three hill states.
- **States with Special Status:** Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, and Uttarakhand.