



Forest Cover in India: Progress and Initiatives

[Source: PIB](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** provided valuable insights into the **various initiatives to boost forest cover in India** during a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

What are the Major Forest Conservation Initiatives in India?

▪ About Forest Cover in India:

- The **Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun** has been conducting **biennial (once every two years)** assessments of **forest cover since 1987**, and the findings are published in the [India State of Forest Report \(ISFR\)](#).
- As per the latest assessment in **ISFR 2021**, India's total forest and tree cover stands at **8,09,537 square kilometers, which accounts for 24.62%** of the country's geographical area.
- Notably, this represents an **increase of 2261 square kilometers compared to the ISFR 2019 assessment**, indicating positive strides in forest conservation efforts.

▪ Government Initiatives to Boost Forest Cover:

- [Green India Mission \(GIM\)](#): Started in the Financial Year 2015-16, GIM focuses on afforestation activities.
 - Over the last five years, **Rs. 755.28 Crores** has been released to seventeen States and one union territory to support afforestation efforts.
 - [National Afforestation Programme](#): Implemented for regeneration of degraded forests and adjoining areas.
 - **The National Afforestation Programme is now merged with Green India Mission.**
 - [Nagar Van Yojana \(NVY\)](#): Launched in 2020, NVY aims to create **600 Nagar Vans and 400 Nagar Vatika in urban and peri-urban areas** by 2024-25.
 - The initiative intends to enhance the **green cover, preserve biological diversity, and improve the quality of life** for urban dwellers.
 - [Compensatory Afforestation Fund \(CAMPA\)](#): Utilized by States/UTs for compensatory afforestation to offset forest land diversion for developmental projects.
 - **90% of the CAF money is to be given to the states** while 10% is to be retained by the Centre..
 - **Multi-Departmental Efforts**: Apart from the central initiatives, afforestation activities are taken up under various programs and schemes of line Ministries, State Governments/UT Administrations, Non-Government Organizations, Civil Society, and Corporate bodies.
 - Some notable efforts include participation in the [Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme](#), [National Bamboo Mission](#), and [Sub-Mission on Agroforestry](#).
 - **Draft National Forest Policy**: The policy focuses on **integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation measures into forest management practices**. It emphasizes building resilience to climate change, particularly among forest-dependent communities.
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UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q1. At the national level, which ministry is the nodal agency to ensure effective implementation of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006? (2021)

- (a) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- (b) Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- (c) Ministry of Rural Development
- (d) Ministry of Tribal Affairs

Ans: (d)

Q2. A particular State in India has the following characteristics: (2012)

1. It is located on the same latitude which passes through northern Rajasthan.
2. It has over 80% of its area under forest cover.
3. Over 12% of forest cover constitutes the Protected Area Network in this State.

Which one among the following States has all the above characteristics?

- (a) Arunachal Pradesh
- (b) Assam
- (c) Himachal Pradesh
- (d) Uttarakhand

Ans: (a)

Mains

Q. "The most significant achievement of modern law in India is the constitutionalization of environmental problems by the Supreme Court." Discuss this statement with the help of relevant case laws. (2022)