



First Sustainability Report of NHAI

Why in News?

The [National Highways Authority of India \(NHAI\)](#) has recently released its **first Sustainability Report** for FY 2021-22. The report highlights NHAI's governance structure, stakeholders, environment, and social responsibility initiatives.

- The Sustainability Report is prepared as per the **Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)** guidelines and it will help attract '[Green Finance](#)' for **Infrastructure financing**.

What are the Key Findings of the Report?

- **Digitization of Highway Network:**
 - NHAI has developed '**Data Lake Tool**' for digitizing the highway network in India, enabling NHAI to manage the vast amount of data generated by its infrastructure effectively.
- **Reduced Emissions:**
 - NHAI has **reduced direct emissions and fuel consumption** by 18.44% and 9.49%, respectively, from FY 2019-20 till 2021-22.
 - **GHG emissions** from energy consumption, operations, transport, and travel saw a **decline of 9.7% in FY 2020-21 and 2% in FY 2021-22**.
- **Use of Recycled Materials:**
 - NHAI has been using **recycled materials for national highway construction**, including [fly-ash](#), **plastic waste, recycled asphalt (RAP)**, and recycled aggregates (RA).
- **Wildlife Crossings:**
 - More than 100 **wildlife crossings** were created in three years across 20 states as a measure **for wildlife protection** and conservation to **reduce [man-animal conflict](#)**.
- **Plantation:**
 - NHAI has undertaken **plantation drives** to develop eco-friendly national highways, planting around 2.74 crore saplings till 2021-22 **to offset direct emissions from vehicles**.
- **Inclusive Workforce:**
 - **Women** employment and **employment of marginalized communities** at NHAI have increased over the last three years.
 - There has been a **steady increase in female hiring by 7.4%** and total increase of **3% in overall work force** in three financial years.

What is Global Reporting Initiative?

- GRI is the **independent, international organization** that **helps businesses and other organizations take responsibility for their impacts on environment**.
- It enables all companies and organisations to report their **economic, environmental, social and governance performance**.
- The GRI **Secretariat is headquartered in Amsterdam**, the Netherlands.

What is National Highways Authority of India?

- **About:** NHAI was set up under **NHAI Act, 1988** under the administrative control of the **Ministry**

of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH).

- **Objective:** It has been entrusted with the **National Highways Development Project (NHDP)**, along with other minor projects **for development, maintenance and management**.
 - NHDP is a **project** to upgrade, rehabilitate and widen major **highways** in India to a higher standard. The project was started in 1998.
- **Vision:** To meet the nation's need for the provision and **maintenance of National Highways network to global standards** and to **meet user's expectations** in the most time bound and cost effective manner and **promote economic well being** and quality of life of the people.

What is National Highways (NH)?

- NH are the **arterial roads** of the country for inter-state movement of passengers and goods.
- They traverse the length and width of the country **connecting the National and State capitals, major ports and rail junctions and link up with border roads and foreign highways**.
- According to MoRTH, there are **599 NH in India**.
 - The **longest National Highway is NH44**, which runs **between Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir and Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu**, covering a distance of 3,806 km (2,365 mi).
- According to **Basic Road Statistics 2018-19**, **National Highways (Total length-1,32,499 kms) constitutes 2.09 % of total road network in the country** and carry about **40% of the road traffic**.
 - **Maharashtra** has the **largest network of National Highways (13.4%)** followed by **Uttar Pradesh (8.9 %)** and **Rajasthan (7.8 %)**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. Consider the following pairs: (2014)

National Highway : Cities connected

1. NH 4 : Chennai and Hyderabad
2. NH 6 : Mumbai and Kolkata
3. NH 15 : Ahmedabad and Jodhpur

Which of the above pairs is/are correctly matched?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3
- (d) None

Ans: (d)

Exp:

- In 2010, GoI replaced the old system of numbering of national highways with a new system. According to the new system:
 - NH 4 connects Port Blair with Mayabandar in Andaman Islands. Hence, pair 1 is not correctly matched.
 - NH 6 connects Jorabat (Meghalaya) with Aizawl (Mizoram). Hence, pair 2 is not correctly matched.
 - NH 15 connects Baihata-Charali (Assam) with Wakro (Arunachal Pradesh). Hence, pair 3 is not correctly matched.

- Therefore, option (d) is the correct answer.

Source: ET

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/first-sustainability-report-of-nhai>

