



## Land Degradation

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India is facing a severe **problem of land degradation** ie. soil becoming unfit for cultivation. **About 29% or about 96.4 million hectares are considered degraded.**

- To fight this menace, India will convert degraded land of nearly 50 lakh (5 million) hectares to fertile land in the next 10 years (between 2021 and 2030).
- 5 million hectares are part of the **Bonn Challenge** commitment.
  - “Bonn Challenge” is a global effort to bring 150 million hectares of the world’s deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2020, and 350 million hectares by 2030.
  - At the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP) 2015** in Paris, India joined the voluntary Bonn Challenge and pledged to bring into restoration 13 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by 2020, and an additional 8 million hectares by 2030. India’s pledge is one of the largest in Asia.
- The government sees schemes such as the **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana**, **Soil Health Card Scheme**, and **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana** as tools to tackle the problem of land degradation.
- Also, **India**, for the first time, will be **hosting the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of Parties (COP-14) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)** from 2<sup>nd</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> September 2019 in Greater Noida.
  - The UNCCD was entered into force in December 1996. It is one of the three Rio Conventions along with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
  - India became a signatory to the UNCCD on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1994 and ratified it on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1996.
  - The main objective of the convention is to **combat desertification** and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification.

**Source: TH**