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National Action Plan on Forest Fire

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Why is in news? National Action Plan on Forest Fire empowers all stakeholders to reduce vulnerability of forests against fire hazards

The **Forest Survey of India (FSI)** has carried out a study **based on spatial analysis of forest fires** detected over the past 17 years (2004 to 2021), and have identified the fire prone forest areas in the country.

Severe fires occur in many forest types particularly **dry deciduous forest**, while evergreen, semi-evergreen and montane temperate forests are comparatively less prone (India State of Forest Report 2015).

More than 36% of the country's forest cover has been estimated to be **prone to frequent forest fires**. Nearly 4 % of the country's forest cover is extremely prone to fire, whereas 6% of forest cover is found to be very highly fire prone (ISFR 2019).

Every year large areas of forests are affected by fires of varying intensity and extent.

Based on the forest inventory records, 54.40% of forests in India are exposed to occasional fires, 7.49% to moderately frequent fires and 2.40% to high incidence levels while 35.71% of India's forests have not yet been exposed to fires of any real significance.

Based on the study, the forest area has been mapped under different fire prone classes as follows: **Extremely Fire Prone, Very Highly Fire Prone, Highly Fire Prone, Moderately Fire Prone, Less Fire Prone**.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has prepared **National Action Plan on Forest Fire to minimize forest fires**, was launched in 2018.

The plan comprises taking actions by **informing, enabling and empowering forest fringe communities** and incentivizing them to work in tandem with the Forest Departments.

It also comprises reducing vulnerability of forests against fire hazards, enhancing the capabilities of forest personnel and institutions in fighting fires, and speeding up recovery after a fire event.

The Ministry has also constituted **Central Monitoring Committee (CMC)** for **overseeing implementation** of National Action Plan on Forest Fire.

The Ministry also supports the efforts of the States/ UTs in prevention and control of forest fire by providing financial assistance.

The forest fire prevention and mitigation measures are funded under the **Centrally Sponsored Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme, Development of Wildlife Habitats**, and under **Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority**.

The funds are used for creation and maintenance of fire lines, construction of water conservation structures, procurement of fire-fighting equipment, awareness creation, and incentivizing villages/communities for protection against forest fire etc.

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Further, the forest fire prevention and its management is **primarily** the **responsibility of concerned State Governments /UT Administration**.

Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme (FPM):

The FPM is the **only centrally funded program** specifically **dedicated to** assist the states in dealing with **forest fires**.

The FPM **replaced the Intensification of Forest Management Scheme** (IFMS) in December 2017

By revamping the IFMS, the FPM has increased the amount dedicated for forest fire work

Funds are allocated under the FPM in 90:10 ratio of central to state funding in the Northeast and Western Himalayan regions and a 60:40 ratio for all other states.