



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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National Working Plan Code for Management of Forest

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Why is in news? National Working Plan Code-2023 released for scientific management of forests and evolving new approaches

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate change has released the “National Working Plan Code-2023” for scientific management of forests and evolving new approaches.
- The National Working Plan Code-2023 was released by Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate change during the occasion of the ‘**World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought**’ organized by the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) in Dehradun on **17th June 2023**.
- India is **one of the few countries** in the world that **has a scientific system of forest management**. The working plan is the main instrument through which the scientific management of Forests is being achieved in India.
- National Working Plan Code which was **first adopted in 2004** with a subsequent amendment in 2014 brought uniformity and acted as the guiding principle for the preparation of the working plan **for scientific management of different forest divisions of our country**.
- The forests in India are being **managed for a multitude of reasons** like maintaining environmental stability, conserving natural heritage, checking soil erosion and denudation of catchment areas, checking the extension of dunes, increasing tree and forest cover with people involvement, increasing the productivity of forests etc.
- Scientific forest management in India and the world is consistently evolving with new approaches, new technologies & innovations and it has become imperative to evolve ourselves to meet the essentials of forest management and the requirements of people who depended on it.
- The **National Working Plan Code-2023** will act as a **guiding principle for State Forest Departments** in preparation for the working plan for different forest divisions in the country.
- National Working Plan Code-2023 deals in detail with the **essentials of forest management planning, incorporating the principles of sustainable management of forests**.
- This includes extent and condition of forest and tree cover; maintenance, conservation and enhancement of biodiversity including wildlife, forest health and vitality, conservation and management of soil and water resources, enhancement of forest resource productivity, maintenance and enhancement of social, economic, cultural and spiritual benefits, and providing the appropriate policy, legal and institutional framework.
- **For the first time**, the National Working Plan Code-2023 has **prescribed state forest departments to engage in continuous data collection and its updation** in a centralized database.
- The “**Indian Forest Management Standard**” which is a part of this code, takes into account the diverse forest ecosystem in our country, while **trying to bring in uniformity in management**.
- The **Standards for Sustainable Forest Management** have been codified in the Indian Forest Management Standard, based on long term experiences of scientific forest management in India and in sync with international criteria and indicators.
- Indian Forest Management Standard would facilitate the State Forest Departments to measure effectiveness of the management practices against prescriptions of Working Plans.

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