



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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The India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023

Published On: 22-12-2024

Context:

The *India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023* was recently released by the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change at the Forest Research Institute in Dehradun.

This report, **published biennially by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) since 1987**, provides a comprehensive assessment of India's forest and tree resources through satellite data and field surveys. The 2023 edition is the **18th report in this series**.

Key Highlights of ISFR 2023:

1. Total Forest and Tree Cover:

- India's total forest and tree cover spans **827,357 sq km**, which constitutes **25.17%** of the country's geographical area. This includes:
- 715,343 sq km (21.76%)** of forest cover
- 112,014 sq km (3.41%)** of tree cover.

1. Increase in Forest and Tree Cover:

- Since the last report (2021), India has seen an increase of **1,445 sq km** in total forest and tree cover. This includes:
- 156 sq km** increase in forest cover
- 1,289 sq km** increase in tree cover.

1. States with Largest Increases in Forest and Tree Cover:

- The states that saw the largest increases in forest and tree cover are:
- Chhattisgarh:** +684 sq km
- Uttar Pradesh:** +559 sq km
- Odisha:** +559 sq km
- Rajasthan:** +394 sq km.

1. States with Largest Forest Areas:

- The states with the largest forest and tree areas are:
- Madhya Pradesh:** 85,724 sq km
- Arunachal Pradesh:** 67,083 sq km
- Maharashtra:** 65,383 sq km.

1. Mangrove Cover:

- India's total **mangrove cover** is **4,992 sq km**, indicating continued efforts in mangrove conservation.

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1. Growing Stock and Bamboo Resources:

- **Growing stock** of forests has increased by **262 million cubic meters**.
- The **bamboo-bearing area** has expanded by **5,227 sq km**, bringing the total to **154,670 sq km**.

1. Carbon Stock and Sequestration:

- India's **forest carbon stock** is estimated at **7,285.5 million tonnes**, with an increase of **81.5 million tonnes** from the previous assessment.
- India has exceeded its **carbon sequestration targets** under the **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)**, reaching a total carbon stock of **30.43 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent**.

1. Technological Advancements:

- The *Forest Survey of India (FSI)* has implemented advanced technologies for **real-time fire alerts** and improved forest fire management, enhancing forest conservation practices.

Way Forward:

1. Strengthen Conservation and Management:

- The focus should be on enhancing forest management practices, promoting **sustainable forest use**, conserving **biodiversity**, and tackling **deforestation**. Involving **local communities** more actively in conservation efforts will also be crucial.

1. Expand Technological Innovations and Monitoring:

- Continued use of **advanced technologies** for **real-time monitoring** of forest health (including fire alerts) should be prioritized. Expanding **data-driven approaches** can further improve **forest protection**, **carbon sequestration**, and **restoration** efforts.

This report underscores the progress India has made in forest conservation and highlights the role of technology in improving forest management and addressing climate change. It also calls for continued efforts to ensure sustainability in forest resources and environmental health.