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"Green Saudi" initiative

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Why is in news? Saudi Arabia Launches AI-Powered Program to Combat Desertification

The Saudi Environment Ministry has launched a program to combat desertification using artificial intelligence (AI).

The program, which is a collaboration between the ministry, the National Center for Vegetation Development and Combating Desertification, and the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, **aims to study the status of vegetative cover in the Kingdom** and contribute to the goals of afforestation projects and the "Green Saudi" initiative.

Desertification is a major challenge facing Saudi Arabia, an arid country that is already experiencing the effects of climate change.

The program will **use AI to analyze satellite imagery and other data to identify areas** that are most vulnerable to desertification.

Remote sensing technologies will be used to monitor vegetation cover, Rainfall, plant health and track its changes over time.

The program will also develop strategies to mitigate the effects of desertification, such as planting trees and shrubs, improving water management, and promoting sustainable agriculture.

The launch of the program is a significant step in Saudi Arabia's efforts to combat desertification and achieve its sustainability goals.

The program **will use cutting-edge technologies** to help the Kingdom protect its natural resources and build a more sustainable future.

In addition to the AI-powered program, Saudi Arabia is **also implementing a number of other initiatives** to combat desertification.

These include the "Green Saudi" initiative, which aims to **plant 10 billion trees** across the country, and the "National Center for Vegetation Development and Combating Desertification", which is working to **develop drought-resistant plants and improve water management practices**.

Saudi Arabia has **activated 77 initiatives** to help reach the three targets under the Saudi Green Initiative and achieve long-lasting positive change.

The initiatives range from afforestation and biodiversity protection to emissions reduction and establishing new protected areas.

Under SGI, Saudi Arabia is delivering against its aspirations to create a greener future for all, and is putting action and investment behind the country's commitment to sustainable development.

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The forthcoming **Saudi Green Initiative (SGI) Forum**, to be held in Riyadh on 23-24 October, is **set to be a milestone in the historic effort to transform the oil-based economy of Saudi Arabia into a cleaner and more sustainable one.**

In addition to planting 10 billion trees (covering 30 percent of total land area), the SGI aims to create vast protected zones, conserve marine life around the coasts and encourage alternative forms of agriculture.

One key aspect of this sea change will be the contribution of technology to the greening of Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia is around 2 million square kilometers in area, with multiple terrain types and a diverse mixture of vegetation, including forests, pastures, coastlines, and islands.

Now, the government is deploying AI and remote sensing to make studying and monitoring these environments more efficient.