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National Afforestation Programme

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Why is in news? National Afforestation Programme and Green India Mission implemented to increase forest and tree cover

The Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change administers the **Control of Pollution Scheme, a Central Sector Scheme** to curb environmental pollution.

The main objective of the Control of Pollution scheme is to **monitor air quality across the country** and take appropriate air pollution mitigation measures, besides monitoring water quality and noise levels in the country.

The Control of Pollution scheme is **operational since 2018**, the **component under the scheme** are as mentioned below:

Assistance for Abatement of Pollution to weaker State Pollution Control Boards/ Pollution Control Committees (SPCBs/PCCs) and to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).

Environmental Monitoring Network Programme: Operation and Maintenance of National Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP) stations, Operation and Maintenance of Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS), National Ambient Noise Monitoring Network (NANMN) – strengthening and establishment of New Stations in Million Plus Cities, National Water Monitoring Programme (NWMP).

Research and Outreach Programmes

For Increase of forest and tree cover in the country various schemes are implemented by the Central and State Government/Union Territory Administration.

These include the **National Afforestation Programme** (NAP) for regeneration of degraded forest and adjoining areas in the country and **Green India Mission** (GIM).

Afforestation activities are also taken up under various programmes/funding sources such as Compensatory Afforestation Funds in lieu of deforestation due to development activities, afforestation activities under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA), National Agroforestry Policy and Sub-mission on Agro-forestry (SMAF), National Bamboo Mission and National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture.

The Government has **taken several steps for mitigation of pollution** which include ban on single use plastic, introduction of BS-VI norms for fuel and vehicles since April, 2020, promotion of E-vehicles, cleaner fuel such as PNG, zig-zag technology for brick kilns, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastic and e-waste management, real time monitoring of major industrial sectors, etc.

The Ministry has also notified various rules such as **Hazardous and other waste Management (HWM) rules, E-waste rules and Bio Medical Waste rules**. Emission and discharge standards for various sectors have also been notified

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The CPCB and SPCBs/PCCs regularly monitor the compliance of industrial emission/effluent discharges and other operational activities according to the prescribed standards.

Further, requirement of prior environment clearances to various projects and activities has been mandated as per the provisions of **Environment Impact Assessment Notification 2006**.

While according EC to development project(s), necessary conditions, environmental safeguard and measures are stipulated for their effective implementation during the construction and operation of the project.

The safeguard measures are intended to minimize adverse impacts, inter alia, on (i) air quality, (ii) water quality, (iii) land degradation, (iv) bio-diversity, and (v) wildlife habitat.

National Afforestation Programme:

The Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) is undertaking participatory plantation/afforestation initiatives in forest regions.

A National Afforestation Programme (NAP) was launched **in 2002**, involving plantation in the country's degraded forests.

The basic goal of the National Afforestation Programme (NAP) initiative is to **restore ecologically damaged forests and develop forest resources with people's participation**, with an emphasis on improving the livelihoods of forest-fringe communities, particularly the poor.

NAP is a **flagship programme** of the **National Afforestation and Eco-development Board (NAEB)** that provides physical and capacity-building assistance to the implementing agencies, the Forest Development Agencies (FDAs).

The scheme will be run as a **100 percent centrally sponsored scheme** by the National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board, Ministry of Environment and Forests.

The **National Action Plan (NAP)** intends to promote and expedite the ongoing process of devolving forest conservation, protection, management, and development tasks to village-level Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs), which are recognised societies.

NAP is a **centrally funded plan** that is executed with a money sharing pattern of **60:40 percent between the Centre and the States, with a sharing pattern of 90:10 for North eastern and hilly states**.

The system is administered through a three-tier institutional structure consisting of the State Forest Development Agency (SFDA) at the state level, the Forest Development Agency (FDA) at the forest division level, and JFMCs at the village level.

Forest conservation and development are primarily accomplished through three strategies: afforestation via natural/artificial regeneration, protection, and management.

The Ministry of Environment is implementing **three major schemes for forest development**: the **National Afforestation Programme (NAP)**, the **National Mission for a Green India (GIM)**, and the **Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme (FFPM)**.

While NAP focuses on reforestation of degraded forest lands, GIM focuses on improving forest quality and increasing forest cover, as well as cross-sectoral activities on a landscape scale.

The FFPM is in charge of forest fire prevention and management.

To achieve the targeted objectives of national afforestation programmes, the Ministry has approved the merger of NAP into Green India Mission (GIM), and accordingly financial allocation for both schemes is provided under one budgetary head, thereby augmenting overall greening efforts.

Funds collected as compensatory levies from states under the **Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA)** are used in plantation activity, including compensatory afforestation by states/UTs.

NAP and Green India Mission, along with other afforestation schemes, have helped to restore degraded forest areas throughout the country.

This has contributed to the stabilisation and expansion of forest cover, as evidenced by the **India State of Forest Report** (ISFR) published by the **Forest Survey of India** (FSI).

According to the most recent **India State of Forest Report (ISFR 2021)**, the country's total forest and tree cover is 8,09,537 square kilometres (24.62 percent of the country's geographical area), up from 7,94,245 square kilometres (24.16 percent) in ISFR 2015. This represents an increase of 15,292 square kilometres in the country's forest and tree cover.