



World Environment Day 2021

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Why in News

The **World Environment Day** is observed on the **5th of June annually** to encourage awareness and environmental protection.

Key Points

World Environment Day:

- **History:**

- The **United Nations Assembly** established World Environment Day in 1972, which was the first day of the **Stockholm Conference** on the human environment.

- **Theme for 2021:**

- **'Ecosystem Restoration'.**

- It will kick off the **UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)** - a global mission to revive billions of hectares, from forests to farmlands, from the top of mountains to the depth of the sea.

- The theme for this year's in India is **'promotion of biofuels for a better environment'**.

- **Host Nation:**

- Pakistan will be the global host for 2021.

- **Initiatives Taken by India:**

- **E-100 pilot project** has been launched in Pune for the production and distribution of ethanol across the country.

- The government is **releasing the E-20 notification** that will allow oil companies to sell 20% ethanol blended petrol from 1st April, 2023, and BIS specifications for ethanol blends E12 and E15.

Ecosystem Restoration

- **Ecosystem:**
 - It is a **community of plants and animals interacting with each other in a given area**, and also with their **non-living environments**. The non-living environments include weather, earth, sun, soil, climate and atmosphere.
 - The ecosystem **relates to the way** that all these different organisms live in close proximity to each other and how they interact with each other.
- **Ecosystem Restoration:**
 - Ecosystem restoration means **assisting in the recovery of ecosystems** that have been degraded or destroyed, as well as **conserving the ecosystems** that are still intact.
 - It involves reviving old water bodies, building natural forests, providing space to wildlife and reducing water pollution to restore aquatic life.
 - Healthier ecosystems, with richer biodiversity, **yield greater benefits** such as more fertile soil, bigger yields of timber and fish, and larger stores of greenhouse gases.
- **Need of Restoration:**
 - Ecosystem loss is **depriving the world of carbon sinks**, like forests and wetlands, at a time when humanity can least afford it.
 - **Global greenhouse gas emissions** have grown for three consecutive years and the planet is one place for potentially catastrophic climate change.
- **India's Restoration Initiatives:**
 - **National Afforestation Programme (NAP)**: It focuses on the rehabilitation of degraded forests and afforestation around forests.
 - **National Mission for a Green India (GIM)**: It is under the **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)** and aimed at improving and increasing tree cover as a climate adaptation and mitigation strategy.
 - **National Biodiversity Action Plan**: It has been launched to implement strategies for the reduction in rates of degradation, fragmentation and loss of natural habitats.
 - **Rural Livelihood Schemes**: Recognition of natural resources intrinsically linked to rural livelihoods is also reflected in flagship schemes like the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)** and the **National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)**.
 - Potential for restoration through MGNREGA lies in its plantation and rejuvenation of water bodies subcomponents, through which provisions for livelihoods in afforestation, tree plantation, horticulture, and construction of new ponds have been made.
 - Similarly, schemes under NRLM, bifurcated into farm and non-farm livelihoods, focus on interventions to enhance natural capital and present opportunities for ecosystem restoration.

Source: BS