



LEAF Coalition

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Why in News

LEAF (Lowering Emissions by Accelerating Forest Finance) Coalition was announced at the **Leaders Summit on Climate, 2021.**

LEAF coalition will be one of the largest ever **public-private efforts to protect tropical forests** and **intend to mobilize at least USD 1 billion in financing** to countries committed to protecting their tropical forests.

Key Points

- **About LEAF Coalition:**
 - It is a **collective of the governments of the USA, United Kingdom and Norway.**
 - As it is a public-private effort, thus **also supported by transnational corporations (TNCs)** like Unilever plc, Amazon.com, Nestle, Airbnb etc.
 - A country willing to participate would need to fulfil certain predetermined conditions laid down by the Coalition.
- **Financial Support:**
 - The **results-based financing model** will be used in LEAF.
 - The model **weighs on work by the Environmental Defense Fund** over two decades, in collaboration with Indigenous communities, forest peoples, Brazilian and US NGOs, and other partners, to protect the Amazon and tropical forests globally.
 - Performance will be measured against the **TREES Standard (The REDD+ Environmental Excellence Standard)**

- **Significance:**

- **Platform for Private Leadership:** The goal of **net zero emissions** cannot be reached without bold leadership from the private sector and commitment to leverage its scale, investment capacity and political power to build a more sustainable, resilient and equitable future.
- **Increases Carbon Sink:** Tropical forests are massive carbon sinks and by investing in their protection, public and private players are likely to stock up on their **carbon credits**.
It will help in achieving **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** under the **Paris Agreement**.
- **Achieve REDD+ Objectives:** It is a step towards concretising the aims and objectives of the **Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+)** mechanism.
- **Solve Development versus Ecological Commitment:** Such a financial impetus is crucial as it incentivises developing countries **to capture extensive deforestation and provide livelihood opportunities** to forest-dependent populations.
- **Complements Other Global Goals:** Ending tropical and subtropical forest loss by 2030 is vital to achieving global climate, **biodiversity** and **sustainable development goals** as well as sustaining the well-being and cultures of Indigenous peoples and other forest communities.

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

- REDD+ aims to achieve climate change mitigation by incentivizing forest conservation. It monetises the value of carbon locked up in the tropical forests of most developing countries, thereby propelling these countries to help mitigate climate change.
- REDD+ was created by the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**.

Tropical Forest

- Tropical forests are **closed canopy forests growing within 28 degrees north or south of the equator**.
- They are **very wet places**, receiving **more than 200 cm rainfall** per year, either seasonally or throughout the year.
- **Temperatures are uniformly high** - between 20°C and 35°C.
- Such forests are **found in Asia, Australia, Africa, South America, Central America, Mexico** and on many of the Pacific Islands.

Scenario in India

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- India's **total forests is 24.56% of the geographical area** of the country.

- Observations made by the **Global Forest Watch**:
 - India **lost nearly 38.5 thousand hectares (Kha) of tropical forest between 2019 and 2020** making up nearly 14% loss of its tree cover.
 Meanwhile, the total tropical forest area in India fell by 0.38%.
 - Also, a **0.67% decrease in tree cover** has also been recorded across the country in the same period.
 - **Mizoram has witnessed the biggest decline** in forest area with a loss of 47.2 Kha , followed by Manipur, Assam, Meghalaya and Nagaland.
- **Conservation Steps Taken:**
 - **Indian Forest Policy, 1952:** It became conscious about the need to increase the forest cover to one-third of the total land area.
 - **National Forest Policy, 1988**: The ultimate objective of the National Forest policy was to maintain environmental stability and ecological balance through conservation of forests as a natural heritage.
 The National Forest Policy in 1988 made a very significant and categorical shift from commercial concerns to focus on the ecological role of the forests and participatory management.
 - **Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority, (CAMPA Funds)**: For every time forest land is diverted for non-forest purposes such as mining or industry, the user agency pays for planting forests over an equal area of non-forest land, or when such land is not available, twice the area of degraded forest land.

Source: DTE