



# King Bhumibol World Soil Day - 2020 Award

## Why in News

The [Indian Council of Agricultural Research \(ICAR\)](#) received the prestigious International “**King Bhumibol World Soil Day - 2020 Award**” conferred by the [Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\)](#), Rome.

- The award was announced on the eve of [World Soil Day - 2020 \(5<sup>th</sup> December 2020\)](#) in view of the **ICAR’s excellent contributions in “Soil Health Awareness”** on the theme “**Stop soil erosion, save our future**” (2019 theme).

## Key Points

### ▪ About King Bhumibol World Soil Day Award:

- Launched in 2018, the King Bhumibol World Soil Day Award **acknowledges individuals or institutions** that **raise public awareness of soils** by organising successful and influential World Soil Day celebrations.
- The award, **sponsored by the Kingdom of Thailand**, is named after **King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand** for his lifelong commitment to raising awareness of the importance of sustainable soil management and rehabilitation for food security, poverty alleviation and more.
- The former winners of the Award include **Practical Action in Bangladesh in 2018** and the **Costa Rican Soil Science Society (AACCS) in 2019**.

### ▪ Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR):

- It is an autonomous organisation under the **Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE)**, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- It was established on **16<sup>th</sup> July 1929** and was formerly known as the **Imperial Council of Agricultural Research**.
- It is headquartered at **New Delhi**.
- ICAR is the organisation responsible for the coordination, guidance and management of agricultural research and education in India.
- In this capacity, ICAR **oversees one of the largest networks of agricultural research and education institutes** in the world, covering the whole country in the fields of horticulture, soil science, fisheries and animal sciences among others.

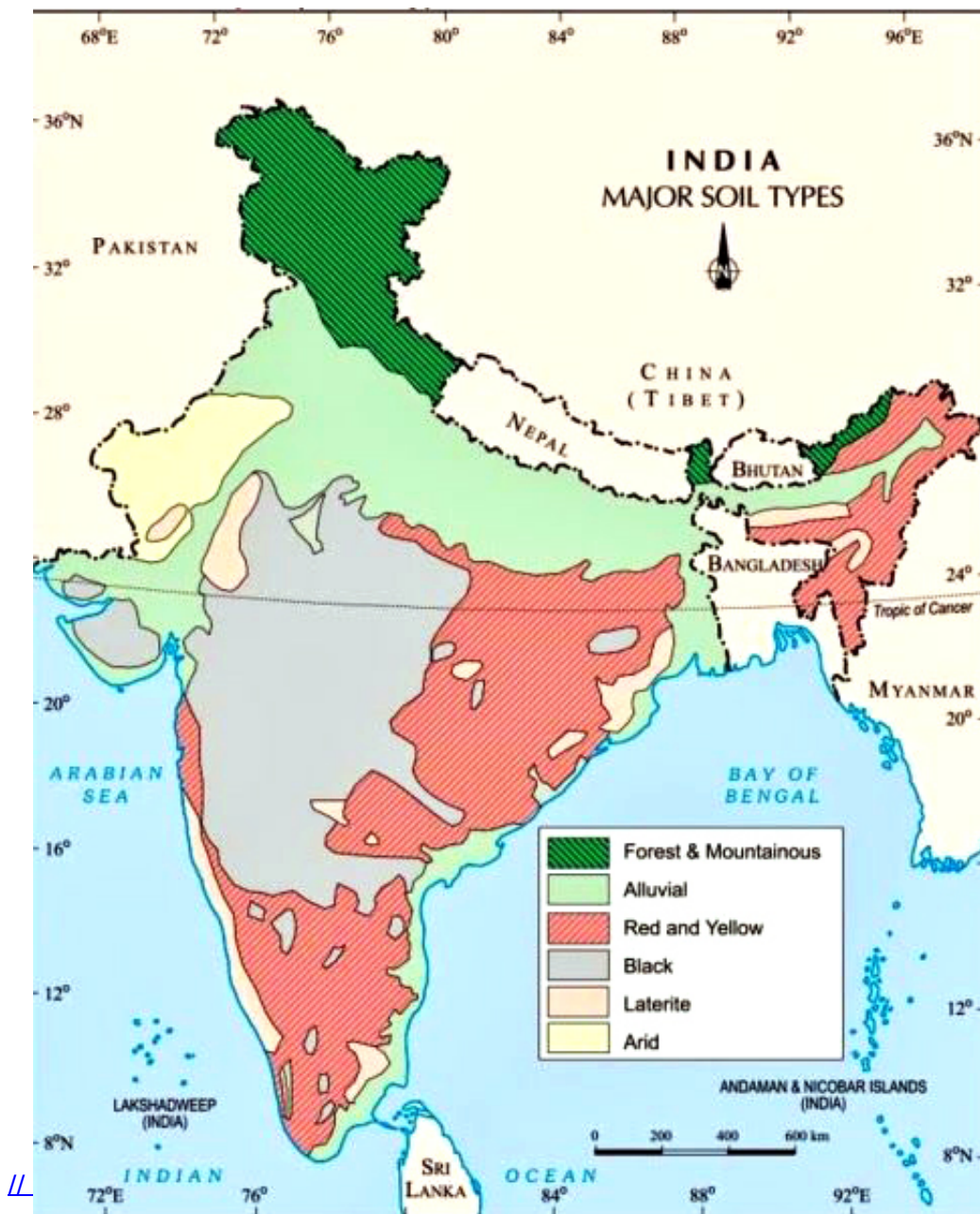
### ▪ Soil Degradation:

- Soil degradation is the **physical, chemical and biological decline in soil condition** caused by its **improper use or poor management**, usually for agricultural, industrial or urban purposes.
  - It can be the **loss of organic matter, decline in soil fertility**, and structural condition, **erosion, adverse changes in salinity, acidity or alkalinity**, and the effects of toxic chemicals, pollutants or excessive flooding.
- The soil degradation is **caused by excessive pressure on land to meet the competing demands of the growing population** for food, fodder and fibre.

- These processes, in turn, **reduce agricultural productivity leading** to social insecurity.
- Emission of **greenhouse gases** to the atmosphere resulting in **climate change** and **global warming** could be the major reason for soil degradation.
- Various human activities, such as the introduction of **large scale irrigation canals** and **faulty land use lead** to accelerated soil degradation through salinization, flooding, drought, erosion and waterlogging.
- The other causes of degradation due to **direct/indirect human interventions** are:
  - Deforestation and removal of natural vegetation
  - Overgrazing
  - Agriculture-related activities
  - Over exploitation of the vegetation for domestic purpose

### **Glinka World Soil Prize**

- It is also conferred by FAO in line with soil. It is an annual award for dynamic change-makers dedicated to solving one of our world's most pressing environmental issues, i.e. **soil degradation**.
- It honours individuals and organizations whose leadership and activities have contributed, or are still contributing to the promotion of sustainable soil management and the protection of soil resources.



Source: PIB

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