



# World Risk Index 2020

## Why in News

According to the **World Risk Index (WRI) 2020**, India is 'poorly prepared' to deal with 'climate reality', due to which it is vulnerable to extreme natural disasters.

## Key Points

### ▪ World Risk Index:

- It is calculated on a **country-by-country basis**, through the multiplication of exposure and vulnerability and **describes the disaster risk** for various countries and regions.
- **Released annually since 2011**, it indicates which countries are in the greatest need to strengthen measures for coping with and adapting to extreme natural events.
- It is **part of the World Risk Report 2020** released by the **United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS)**, Bundnis Entwicklung Hilft and the University of Stuttgart in Germany.
- **Among continents, Oceania is at the highest risk**, followed by Africa and the Americas.

### ▪ Oceania:



- Small island states, **especially in the South Pacific and the Caribbean**, are disproportionately represented among high-risk countries.
- **Vanuatu** (South Pacific Ocean) is the country with the **highest disaster risk worldwide**. It is followed by Tonga (South Pacific Ocean) and Dominica (Caribbean Sea).

- They are at a **high exposure to extreme natural events** which include the [rise in sea level](#) as a result of [global warming](#).
- The small island states have **limited financial resources and have made small contributions to climate change**, but are **affected the most** by its consequences.
- They are **needed to be compensated for the climate damage and losses** already incurred and merely providing financial resources for adaptation to climate change is not sufficient.

▪ **Africa:**

- It has been identified as a hotspot of vulnerability. **More than two-thirds of the most vulnerable countries in the world are located on the continent.**
  - The **size of semiarid regions in Africa is expected to increase**, with over half of Africa's land area **vulnerable to desertification**.
  - Large areas of Africa are **marginalized and already under significant financial stress**.
- The **Central African Republic is the most vulnerable** country, followed by Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Guinea-Bissau.

▪ **South Asia and India:**

- **India has ranked 89<sup>th</sup> among 181 countries** on the WRI 2020 and is **fourth-most-at-risk in South Asia**, after Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- **Sri Lanka, Bhutan and the Maldives have fared better than India** in their **abilities to cope with extreme disasters. India also lags behind** these three neighbours in terms of **lack of adaptive capacities or the preparedness to deal** with extreme events.
- A comparison with the WRI 2019, shows that **all south Asian countries have slipped** on their **ability to adapt** to the reality of climate emergency.
  - Countries with a **score above 52.73, are 'very poor'** in their **adaptive capacities** for extreme natural disasters.
- **India has also slipped on strengthening adaptive capacities** which is **concerning as it highlights the inability of systems, institutions, and other organisms to adjust** to potential damage, to take advantage of opportunities, or to respond to consequences.
  - It becomes more important given that [India's first ever comprehensive climate change assessment report](#) highlighted the impacts of the climate crisis.

[Source: DTE](#)

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