



NTPC's Biodiversity Policy

For Prelims: Biodiversity, NTPC, Biodiversity, Kunming Declaration, Convention on Biological Diversity, World Wide Fund for Nature

For Mains: Biodiversity and its significance, Initiatives taken for conserving biodiversity, Biodiversity and its Conservation

Why in News?

Recently, [National Thermal Power Corporation Limited \(NTPC Ltd.\)](#) has issued a renewed **Biodiversity Policy 2022** to establish a comprehensive vision and guiding principle for conservation, restoration, and enhancement of biodiversity.

- It is an **integral part of NTPC's Environmental Policy** and its objectives are **aligned with environmental and sustainability policies**.

What are the Objectives of the Policy?

- **Support Professionals to achieve Biodiversity Target:**
 - The policy is **designed to support all the professionals of the NTPC Group** to help them contribute toward the achievement of the targets set in this field.
 - NTPC has always been **mindful about avoiding operations in areas** with the highest biodiversity value and judiciously selecting project sites.
 - Company's efforts will be **further strengthened to ensure that biodiversity is not lost** at any of its currently operating sites and that there is a net positive balance wherever possible.
- **Mainstreaming the Concept of Biodiversity:**
 - The major aim is **to mainstream the concept of biodiversity** across NTPC's value chain.
 - It also **aims to adopt a precautionary approach** for sustainable management of biodiversity in all the decision-making processes to ensure the Earth's variety of life in and around the business units of NTPC.
- **Addressing Local Threats:**
 - The policy also **aims to adopt systematic consideration of local threats** to biodiversity beyond the company's business activities.

What are the other Related Steps taken by NTPC?

- **Raising Awareness:**
 - NTPC is **raising awareness among local communities**, employees, and its associates across the supply chain about biodiversity through project-specific and national level training in collaboration with experts.
- **Through Collaboration:**
 - NTPC is also **collaborating with local communities, organizations, regulatory agencies** and research institutes of national/international repute in the field of

biodiversity.

- **Adhering to Legal Compliances:**
 - NTPC will be **adhering to legal compliances** with respect to biodiversity by complying with rules and regulations related to the environment, forest, wildlife, coastal zone, and green cover during planning and execution of its projects.
- **Related Agreement Signed:**
 - NTPC has signed a five-year agreement with Andhra Pradesh Forest Department for conservation of [Olive Ridley Turtles](#) in the coastline of Andhra Pradesh.

What is Biodiversity?

- **About:**
 - It refers to the **variety of living species on Earth**, including plants, animals, bacteria, and fungi.
 - While Earth's biodiversity is so rich that many species have yet to be discovered, many species are being threatened with extinction due to human activities, putting the Earth's magnificent biodiversity at risk.
- **Significance:**
 - **Biodiversity Hotspot:** India is home to **nearly 8% of global biodiversity** on just 2.3% of global land area and contains sections of four of the 36 global biodiversity hotspots.
 - **Staggering Economic Value:** While the precise economic value of all ecosystem services provided by biodiversity may not be known, estimates suggest that **India's forests alone may yield services worth more than a trillion rupees per year.**
 - Further, it can be imagined how much greater this value will be with grasslands, wetlands, freshwater, and marine can add.
 - **Protection From Natural Disasters:** The varied ecosystems across land, rivers, and oceans, feed our people, **enhance public health security, and shield us from environmental disasters.**
 - **Spiritual Enrichment:** Our biodiversity **also serves as a perpetual source of spiritual enrichment**, intimately linked to our physical and mental well-being.
- **Related Initiatives:**
 - **India's:**
 - **India Business & Biodiversity Initiative (IBBI):** It serves as a **national platform for businesses and its stakeholders** for dialogue sharing and learning, ultimately leading to mainstreaming sustainable management of biological diversity into businesses.
 - **Global:**
 - [Kunming Declaration](#)
 - [Convention on Biological Diversity](#)
 - [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora](#)
 - [World Wide Fund for Nature](#)

What is NTPC Limited?

- NTPC is **India's largest power utility** with an installed capacity of 68,961.68 MW plans to become a 130 GW company by 2032.
- Established in 1975, NTPC aims to be the **world's largest and best power major.**
- NTPC has **comprehensive Rehabilitation & Resettlement** and [Corporate Social Responsibility \(CSR\)](#) policies well integrated with its core business of setting up power projects and generating electricity.
- The company is **committed to generating reliable power at competitive prices** in a sustainable manner by optimising the use of multiple energy sources with innovative eco-friendly technologies thereby NTPC is contributing to the economic development of the nation and upliftment of the society.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question

Q Which of the following can be threats to the biodiversity of a geographical area? (2012)

1. Global warming
2. Fragmentation of habitat
3. Invasion of alien species
4. Promotion of vegetarianism

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 4 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: (a)

Exp:

- According to United Nations Earth Summit (1992), Biodiversity is defined as 'the variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part, this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems'.
- Threat to Biodiversity
 - Fragmentation, degradation and loss of habitat, hence, 2 is correct.
 - Shrinking genetic diversity,
 - Invasive alien species, hence, 3 is correct.
 - Declining forest resource base,
 - Climate change and desertification, hence, 1 is correct.
 - Over exploitation of resources,
 - Impact of development projects,
 - Impact of pollution. Therefore, option (a) is the correct answer

Q. Biodiversity forms the basis for human existence in the following ways: (2011)

1. Soil formation
2. Prevention of soil erosion
3. Recycling of waste
4. Pollination of crops

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
(b) 2, 3 and 4 only
(c) 1 and 4 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: (d)

Exp:

- Human life is inextricably linked to ecological services that directly or indirectly benefit humans in different ways. **Soil formation, waste disposal, air and water purification, solar energy absorption, nutrient cycling and food production** all depend on biodiversity. Hence, 1 is correct.
- **Microorganisms act on waste and degrading substance** to recycle them and purify the environment. Hence, 3 is correct.
- The **pollination (an ecosystem service) by bees and other organisms** help in food

production. Hence, 4 is correct.

- The **faunal life is known to increase as well as to prevent the soil erosion**, while the plants and trees reduce the rate of erosion by protecting the soil from impact of rain, binding the soil, etc. Thus, in general, biodiversity is known to prevent the soil erosion. Hence, 2 is correct.
- In many environments, high diversity may help biological communities to withstand environmental stress better and to recover more quickly than those with fewer species. Therefore, option (d) is the correct answer.

Q. Consider the following regions: (2009)

1. Eastern Himalayas
2. Eastern Mediterranean region
3. North-western Australia

Which of the above is/are Biodiversity Hotspot(s)?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

Exp:

- To qualify as a biodiversity hotspot, an area must meet two strict criteria:
- Contain at least 1,500 species of vascular plants found nowhere else on Earth (known as “endemic” species).
- Have lost at least 70% of its primary native vegetation. The **Eastern Himalayas extend from eastern Nepal across northeastern** India, Bhutan, Tibet Autonomous Region to Yunnan in China and northern Myanmar. It is widely considered a biodiversity hotspot that contains exceptional freshwater biodiversity and ecosystems that are of vital importance to local and regional livelihoods. Hence, 1 is correct.
- The **Eastern Mediterranean Region (Eastern Turkey) is known as the Mediterranean Basin biodiversity hotspot** and is identified as one of the world’s 36 biodiversity hotspots, earth’s most biologically rich yet threatened areas. Hence, 2 is correct.
- **North Western Australia is not a biodiversity hotspot.** South Western Australia is a biodiversity hotspot. Hence, 3 is not correct. Therefore, option (b) is the correct answer.

Source: PIB

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