



Senna Spectabilis

Why in News?

Kerala has come out with a management plan to eradicate [Senna spectabilis](#), the exotic invasive plant that is posing **a severe threat to the State's wildlife habitat**.

- The management plan stipulates that **there should not be an attempt to kill the trees before a detailed reforestation programme** and the resources for implementing it are in place.



What is Senna spectabilis?

- Senna spectabilis is a **deciduous tree native to tropical areas of America**.
- It grows up to **15 to 20 metres in a short period of time** and distributes thousands of seeds after flowering.
- The thick foliage of the tree **arrests the growth of other indigenous tree and grass species**. Thus, it causes food shortage for the wildlife population, especially herbivores.
- It also adversely affects the germination and growth of the native species.
- It is categorised as '**Least Concern**' under [IUCN Red List](#).

What is the Eradication Plan?

- The plan envisages **landscape-level management** of the tree.
- Once the resources and material for landscape restoration are ready, the invasive species has to be removed using a threefold approach for **large trees, large saplings, and small saplings**.
 - The large trees need to be debarked from breast height downwards (1.3 m above ground level), including the collar part of the tree. Once done, the trees should be visited once a

month to remove the new growth across the debarked area.

- The larger saplings can be uprooted using specially designed weed pullers.
- The third is the removal of small plantlets which need to be removed mechanically.
- The large trees would take a minimum of 18 months to completely dry up after debarking.

What is an Invasive Species?

- An invasive species is **an organism that causes ecological or economic harm** in a new environment where it is not native.
- They are capable of causing **extinctions of native plants and animals, reducing biodiversity, competing with native organisms for limited resources, and altering habitats.**
- They can be **introduced to an area by ship ballast water, accidental release, and most often, by people.**
- There are many invasive species in India. For eg: [Charru Mussel](#), [Lantana bushes](#), [Indian Bullfrog](#), etc.

[Source: TH](#)

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