



Green Initiatives: Saudi Arabia

Why in News

Recently, Saudi Arabia launched **Saudi Green Initiative** and **the Middle East Green Initiative** to combat the threat of [climate change](#).



Key Points

▪ Background and G20 Summit:

- One of the main pillars of the Saudi [G20](#) presidency was to **safeguard the planet**.
 - In 2020, [G20 introduced initiatives](#) like establishing a **Global Coral Reef Research and Development Accelerator Platform** and the **Circular Carbon Economy (CCE) Platform**.
- Saudi Arabia reiterated that it is committed to lead regional efforts to address climate change and has been making steady progress in this direction.
 - Saudi Arabia established the **Environmental Special Forces in 2019**.

▪ Saudi Green Initiative:

- **Aim:**
 - To **raise the vegetation cover, reduce carbon emissions, combat pollution and land degradation, and preserve marine life**.
- **Features:**

- **10 billion trees** will be planted in the Kingdom.
 - To **reduce carbon emissions by more than 4% of global contributions**, through a **renewable energy programme** that will generate 50% of Saudi's energy from renewables by 2030.
 - Saudi Arabia is working towards **raising the percentage of its protected areas to more than 30% of its total land area**, exceeding the global target of 17%.
- **Middle East Green Initiative :**
- **Aim:**
 - To preserve marine and coastal environments, increase the proportion of natural reserves and protected land, **improve the regulation of oil production, accelerate the transition to clean energy and boost the amount of energy generated by renewables.**
 - **Features:**
 - Saudi Arabia will work with the [Gulf Cooperation Council](#) countries and regional partners to plant an additional 40 billion trees in the West Asian region.
 - It represents 5% of the global target of planting one trillion trees and reducing 2.5% of global carbon levels.
 - Saudi Arabia will **convene an annual summit called the Middle East Green Initiative** which will host leaders from the government, scientists and environmentalists to discuss the details of implementation.
 - In partnership with participating countries, **innovative methods will be researched** to irrigate from treated water, cloud seeding and other purpose-driven solutions such as planting native trees which requires support for three years to grow and will then be able to survive on their own with natural irrigation.
 - **Current Support:**
 - Saudi Arabia has been sharing its expertise and know-how with its neighbouring countries to **reduce carbon emissions resulting from hydrocarbon production in the region by 60% and globally by 10%.**
 - Saudi Arabia currently operates the **largest carbon capture and utilisation plant in the world**, it also operates one of the **region's most advanced CO₂-enhanced oil recovery plants** that captures and stores 8,00,000 tonnes of CO₂ annually.
- **Appreciating Indian Efforts:**
- Saudi Arabia also appreciated India's remarkable commitments to tackle climate change as India is on track to achieve its [Paris Agreement](#) targets.
 - India's **renewable energy capacity is the fourth largest in the world**. India has an ambitious target of achieving [450 gigawatts of renewable energy capacity by 2030.](#)
- **Related Indian Initiatives:**
- [National Clean Air Programme \(NCAP\)](#)
 - [Bharat Stage-VI \(BS-VI\) emission norms](#)
 - [UJALA scheme](#)
 - [National Action Plan on Climate Change \(NAPCC\)](#)
 - [International Solar Alliance](#)
 - [Coalition for Disaster Resilience Infrastructure](#)

Way Forward

- Saudi Arabia hopes that the launch of the two Initiatives marks the **beginning of a green era** and that these **initiatives provide momentum to other countries to unify their efforts to save our planet.**
- Economic prosperity cannot be achieved at the cost of the environment. It is critical for us, as an

industry, to shift from 'pollute-first, clean-up later' attitude and **commit to preserving our diminishing natural resources.**

- The intent and aspiration to align economic efforts with the environment should not be restricted to the government. **Collaboration between the industry, government and regulatory bodies will help in evaluating decisions on economic viability and environmental benefits.**

[Source:TH](#)

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