

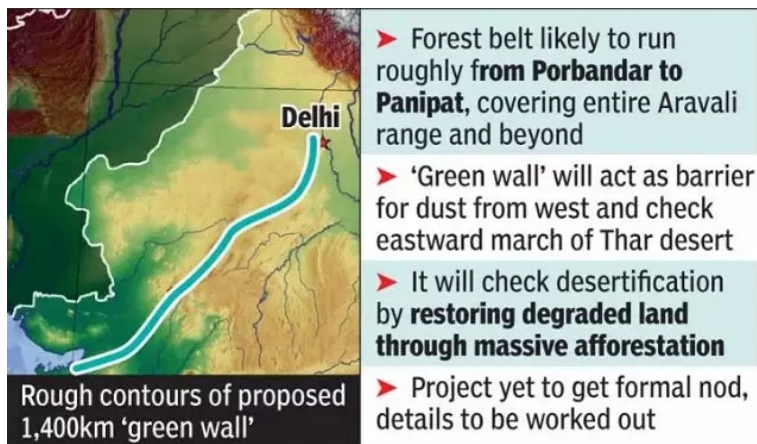


Green Wall of India

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The Centre is mulling an ambitious plan to create a 1,400km long and 5km wide **green belt from Gujarat to the Delhi-Haryana border.**

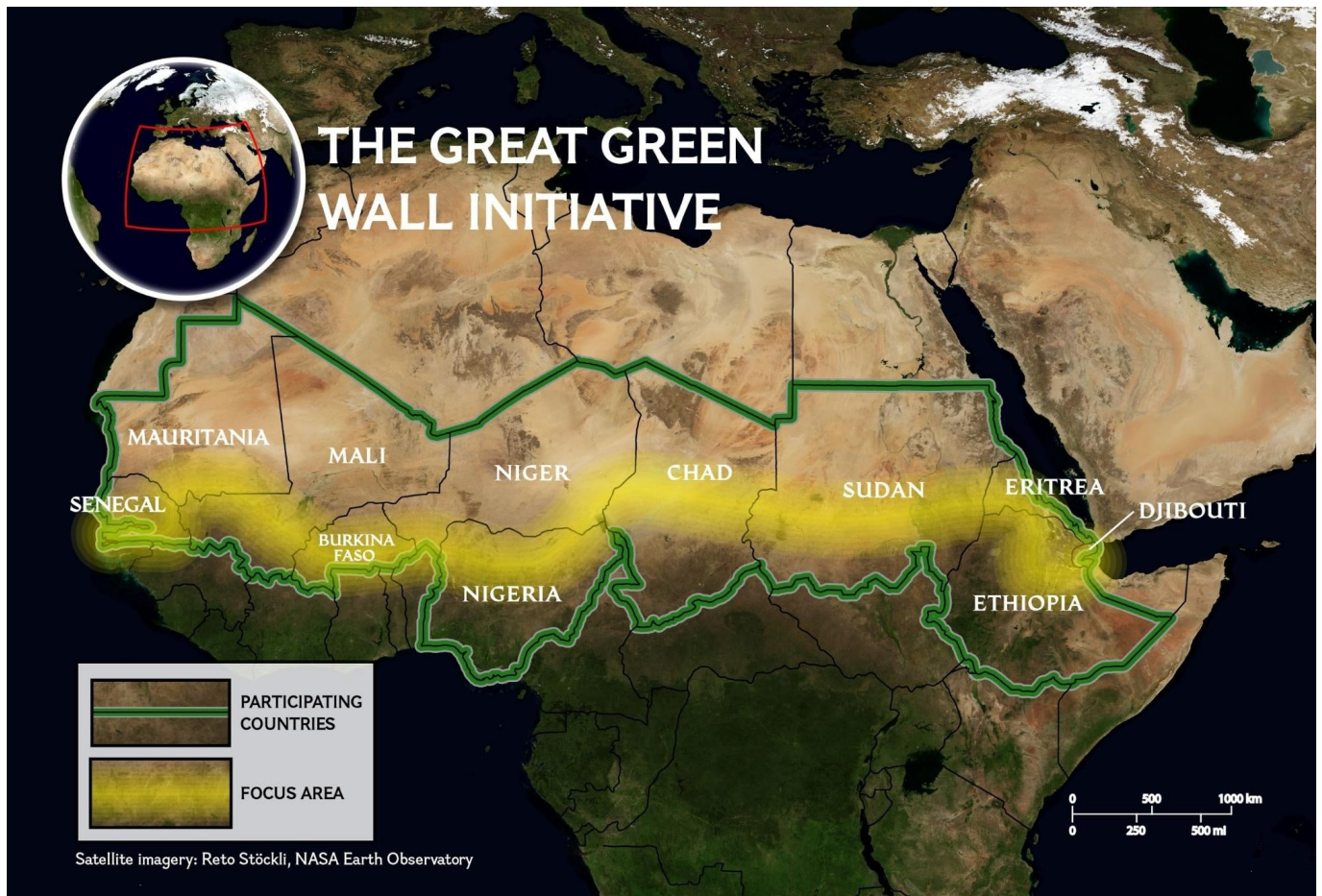
- The plan is **inspired by Africa's 'Great Green Wall' project**, running from Senegal (West) to Djibouti (East), which came into effect in 2007.
- The overarching **objective** of India's Green Wall will be to **address the rising rates of land degradation and the eastward expansion of the Thar desert.**
- The green belt being planned from **Porbandar to Panipat** will help in restoring degraded land through **afforestation along the Aravali hill range.** It will also act as a barrier for dust coming from the deserts in western India and Pakistan.
 - The **Aravali** has been identified as **one of the key degraded zones** to be taken up for greening **under India's target to restore 26 million hectares (mha) of its land.**
 - A 2016 report from the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** had also indicated that Delhi, Gujarat and Rajasthan had already degraded over 50% of their land.



Great Green Wall of Africa

- It aims to **restore Africa's degraded landscapes** and transform millions of lives in one of the world's poorest regions, the **Sahel.**
- The African initiative is **still only 15% complete.**

- Once fully completed, the **Wall will be the largest living structure on the planet** – an **8,000 km** natural wonder of the world stretching across the entire width of the continent.
- African countries during the **UNCCCD COP14** sought global support in terms of finance to make the Wall a reality in the continent's Sahel region by 2030.
 - **Sahel is a semiarid region** of western and north-central Africa extending from Senegal eastward to Sudan.
 - It forms a transitional zone between the arid Sahara (desert) to the north and the belt of humid savannas to the south.



Aravali Mountain Range

- The Aravallis, is the **oldest fold mountains on Earth**. Geological studies show its age as three billion years.
- It spans over **800km from Gujarat to Delhi (through Rajasthan and Haryana)**.
- The **highest peak** in the Aravalli Range is **Guru Peak on Mount Abu**.

- **Influences Climate:**

- The Aravallis have an impact upon the climate of northwest India and beyond.
- During monsoons, the mountain range gently guides the monsoon clouds eastwards towards Shimla and Nainital, thus **helping nurture the sub-Himalayan rivers and feeding the north Indian plains.**
- In the winter months, it **protects** the fertile alluvial river valleys (the para-Indus and Gangetic) **from the assault of cold westerly winds from Central Asia.**

- **Concerns:**

- The Aravalli range, which separates western India's Thar desert from the relatively green plains to its east, has **lost so much green cover** that it is losing its ability to act as a natural barrier against the heat and dust that blows in from the west.
The **Thar desert's expansion could threaten the "granary of India"**—the fertile belts of Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh and the Malwa region.
- **Unauthorized mining** for minerals and building materials has vanished some hills in the region.

Thar Desert

- The Thar Desert also called the **Great Indian desert** lies towards the western margins of the Aravali Hills.
- It is an undulating sandy plain covered with **sand dunes (mainly Barchans).**
Barchans are crescent-shaped sand dune always facing the wind. It is formed when a lot of sand is present in the desert. A steady wind from one direction is also needed.
- The region receives very low **rainfall below 150 mm per year.**
- It has an arid climate with low vegetation cover.
- **Luni** is the only large river in this region.

Source: Tol