

## Chapter 33

### ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST

**33.1** Existence of human beings not only involves interaction with the environment around them but also impacts the same significantly due to their potential to alter it. Burgeoning population in pursuit of its never ending needs has already made its imprints reducing forest covers, emitting green house & poisonous gases and releasing toxic chemicals. Quality of present life has been adversely impacted while that of future generations is in peril. No doubt, issue of climate change with its ensuing effects has shot into centre stage as human beings are faced with the inconvenient truth about their success story.

**33.2** Several entities have been set up in India to monitor diverse issues relating to environment, forests & wild life protection:

- **National Green Tribunal** has been established for effective & expeditious disposal of cases related to environmental protection and conservation of forests & other natural resources including enforcement of legal rights relating to environment & for giving relief & compensation in related matters.
- **Conservation of Water Bodies (Rivers & Wetlands):** The **National River Conservation Directorate (NRCDD)**, functioning under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is engaged in implementing the River and Lake Action Plans under the **National River Conservation Plan (NRCP)** and **National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP)** by providing financial assistance to the State Governments. **National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA)** constituted in 2009 decided that under Mission Clean Ganga it will be ensured that by 2020 no untreated municipal sewage and industrial effluent flow into Ganga.
- **National Wetland Conservation Programme (NWCP)** was initiated in 1987 to lay down policy guidelines for conservation and management of wetlands in the country, provide financial assistance for undertaking intensive conservation measures in the identified wetlands, monitor implementation of the Programme and to prepare an inventory of Indian wetlands. Central Government notified the **Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules – 2010** and as per the provision under Rule 5 of these wetlands rules, **Central Wetlands Regulatory Authority (CWRA)** has been constituted.
- Two tier system at National and State level are in operation for effective coordination to implement the scheme on **Mangroves and Coral Reefs**. This includes the **National Committee on Mangroves & Coral reefs** at centre & State Level Steering Committees. For encouraging targeted research on both hard and soft corals in the country, a **National Coral Reef Research Centre** at Port Blair has been established.
- **Wild Life Conservation:** Government of India provides technical and financial support to the State/ UT Governments for wildlife conservation under the various Centrally Sponsored Schemes – **Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats**, **Project Tiger**, and **Project Elephant**, and also through Central Sector Scheme -

**Strengthening of Wildlife Division** and Consultancies for Special Tasks, and through Grants in Aid to the **Central Zoo Authority** and **Wildlife Institute of India**, Dehradun. The **National Board for Wildlife (NBWL)** has been constituted as per the provisions of the **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**, in 2003

- For effectively control illegal trade in wildlife, a multidisciplinary Tiger and Other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau (**Wildlife Crime Control Bureau**) has been constituted with effect from 6.6.2007.
- **National Afforestation & Eco Development Board (NAEB)** : In order to promote afforestation, tree planting, ecological restoration and eco development activities in the country, the National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board (NAEB) was set up in August 1992. Special attention is also given by NAEB to the regeneration of degraded forest areas and lands adjoining forest areas, national parks, sanctuaries and other protected areas as well as the ecologically fragile areas like the Western Himalayas, Aravallis, Western Ghats etc.
- **Indian Network of Climate Change Assessment (INCCA)** was launched in 2009 to Assess the drivers and implications of climate change through scientific research; (b) Prepare climate change assessments once every two years (greenhouse gas estimations and impact of climate change, associated vulnerabilities and adaptation); (c) Develop decision support systems and (d) Build capacity towards management of climate-change related risks and opportunities.
- **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)**: It performs functions as laid down under the **Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974**, and the **Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981**. It is responsible for planning & executing comprehensive nationwide programmes for the prevention and control of water and air pollution, for advisory activities to Central Government & for coordinating with & for providing technical assistance & guidance to State Pollution Control Boards/ Committees.
- **Botanical Survey of India (BSI)** : Established in 1890, BSI is the apex research organization under MoEF for carrying out taxonomic & floristic studies on wild plant resources of the country. Besides survey of flora. BSI documents indigenous knowledge of plant resources carries out ex-situ conservation in botanic gardens & monitors implementation of “Assistance to Botanic Gardens Scheme” of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)** : The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), a premier institution under the Ministry, has been undertaking survey, exploration and research leading to the advancement of our knowledge on the exceptionally rich faunal diversity of the country since its inception in 1916. ZSI in recent years reoriented its plan of work by grouping the survey and studies under the following six major programmes :
  - Fauna of States
  - Fauna of Conservation Areas
  - Fauna of Important Ecosystems
  - Status Survey of Endangered Species

- Ecological Studies/Environment Impact Assessment Survey, and
- Computerization and Dissemination of Data

- **Forest Survey of India:** Forest Survey of India (FSI), established in 1981, is an organization under Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, engaged in the assessment of the country's forest resources on a regular interval. Some main activities of Forest Survey of India include – **Forests & Tree Cover Assessment** and **Inventory of forests and Trees Outside Forests (TOF)**. FSI is also preparing for the first time an Atlas of forest types of India.
- **National Spatial Data Infrastructure:** This is an initiative undertaken by **Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India**. NSDI aimed at encouraging collection, aggregation and distribution of spatial data on different themes on a common defined set of standards and formats by different mapping agencies in India. FSI is the nodal agency for forestry sector for the DST endeavour aimed at creating a portal from which users may directly access and buy all kinds of spatial data generated by Indian mapping agencies.

<b>List of Tables in the Chapter</b>		
Sr. No.	No. of Table	Name of Table
1	33.1	Forest Cover Estimates (All India)
2	33.1	Forest Cover Estimates (Statewise)
3	33.2	Statewise Forests Cover of the Country (All India)
4	33.2	Statewise Forests Cover of the Country (Statewise)
5	33.3	Statewise Recorded Forest Area of the Country (All India)
6	33.3	Statewise Recorded Forest Area of the Country (Statewise)
7	33.4 (A)	Estimates of Wastelands in India
8	33.4 (B)	Category-Wise Wastelands of India
9	33.5	Estimates of Tree and Mangrove Cover (All India)
10	33.5	Estimates of Tree and Mangrove Cover (Statewise)
11	33.6	Number of Area of National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries of India
12	33.7	Estimated Number of Species by Various Taxonomic Groups - 2012-2016
13	33.8	Forest Occupancy and Population Estimates of Tigers as per the Refined Methodology
14	33.9 (A)	Estimated Population of Wild Elephants
15	33.9 (B)	Estimated Population of Wild Elephants (List of Elephants Reserve in India)
16	33.10	Global Average Temperature and Atmospheric Concentration of Carbon Dioxide
17	33.11 (A)	Air Quality in States and Uts Under National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Programme For a Few States
18	33.11(B)	Air Quality in Industrial Areas Under National Ambient Air Quality
19	33.11 (C)	Air Quality in Residential Areas Under National Ambient Air Quality
20	33.12	Water Quality of a Few Indian Rivers During (2001-2011)

21	33.13	Production of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) in India
22	33.14	Total Consumption of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) in India
23	33.15	Total Export/Import of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) in India
24	33.16	Average Gaseous Composition of Dry Air
25	33.17	Mass Emission Standard For Petrol & Diesel Driven Vehicles
26	33.18	Statewise Revenue and Expenditure From/On Forests
27	33.19	Progress of Afforestation Through Successive Plans
28	33.20	Comprehensive Environment Pollution Index For Critically Polluted Industrial Area/Cluster
29	33.21	Summer Average Values (March-June) for Water Quality on River Ganga under Ganga Action Plan

### Sources & References:

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4. Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education.
5. Various issues of Annual Report of Ministry of Environment & Forest
6. Compendium of Environment Statistics, 2007
7. Wildlife Division, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
8. Animal Discovery 2015 Zoological Survey of India
9. Tata Energy and Resource Institute (TERI)
10. Central Pollution Control Board
11. Ozone Cell, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
12. Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune
13. Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers
14. Statistics related to different domains of environment & forests are collected, compiled and disseminated by various entities of **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Environment Change** by monitoring different subjects like **Ozone Cell** (information on Ozone Depleting substances production use & trade etc), **Central Pollution Control Board** (information on air & water quality, noise pollution etc), **Forest Survey of India** ( forest, tree and mangrove cover including socio economic contribution of forests, published in **Indian State of Forest Reports** ), **Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education (ICFRE)** (information on wasteland, forest produce, revenue from & expenditure on forests etc), **National Afforestation & Eco Development Board, NAEB** (information on afforestation ) etc . Besides these **Annual Report** of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change & its publications like **State of Environment Report** provide some consolidated information.