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GS-III: ENVIRONMENT

Previous Year Questions

UPSC Mains 2013 – 2024

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Environment

01. Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment

Sub-Theme	UPSC PYQs (GS-III Science & Environment)	Year	Marks
Biodiversity, Wetlands & Ecosystem Conservation	How does biodiversity vary in India? How is the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 helpful in conservation of flora and fauna?	2018	**15**
	Define the concept of carrying capacity of an ecosystem as relevant to an environment. Explain how understanding this concept is vital while planning for sustainable development of a region.	2019	**15**
	Comment on the National Wetland Conservation Programme initiated by the Government of India and name a few India's wetlands of international importance included in the Ramsar Sites.	2023	**15**
	What is wetland? Explain the Ramsar concept of 'wise use' in the context of wetland conservation. Cite two examples of Ramsar sites from India.	2018	**10**
Climate Change Impacts, IPCC & Green Mobility (EVs)	'Climate Change' is a global problem. How India will be affected by climate change? How Himalayan and coastal states of India will be affected by climate change?	2017	**15**
	The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change(IPCC) has predicted a global sea level rise of about one metre by AD 2100. What would be its impact in India and the other countries in the Indian Ocean region?	2023	**15**
	The adoption of electric vehicles is rapidly growing worldwide. How do electric vehicles contribute to reducing carbon emissions and what are the key benefits they offer compared to traditional combustion engine vehicles?	2023	**15**
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Project Clearances	Environmental impact assessment studies are increasingly undertaken before project is cleared by the government. Discuss the environmental impacts of coal-fired thermal plants located at Pitheads.	2014	**12.5**
	How does the draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020 differ from the existing EIA Notification, 2006?	2020	**10**
	Rehabilitation of human settlements is one of the important environmental impacts which always attracts controversy while planning major projects. Discuss the measures suggested for mitigation of this impact while proposing major developmental projects.	2016	**12.5**
	What role do environmental NGOs and activists play in influencing Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) outcomes for major projects in India? Cite four examples with all important details.	2024	**10**
Air Pollution, Solid Waste & Industrial Contamination	Describe the key points of the revised Global Air-Quality Guidelines (AQGs) recently released by the World Health Organisation (WHO). How are these different from its last update in 2005? What changes in India's	2021	**10**

	National Clean Air Programme are required to achieve these revised standards?		
	Discuss in detail the photochemical smog emphasizing its formation, effects and mitigation. Explain the 1999 Gothenburg Protocol.	2022	10
	What are the impediments in disposing the huge quantities of discarded solid wastes which are continuously being generated? How do we remove safely the toxic wastes that have been accumulating in our habitable environment?	2018	10
	What are the key features of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) initiated by the Government of India?	2020	15
	What is oil pollution? What are its impacts on the marine ecosystem? In what way is oil pollution particularly harmful for a country like India?	2023	10
River & Water Pollution: Ganga, NMCG & Industrial Effluents	Enumerate the National Water Policy of India. Taking river Ganges as an example, discuss the strategies which may be adopted for river water pollution control and management. What are the legal provisions for management and handling of hazardous wastes in India?	2013	10
	Industrial pollution of river water is a significant environmental issue in India. Discuss the various mitigation measures to deal with this problem and also the government's initiatives in this regard.	2024	10
	The Namami Gange and National mission for clean Ganga (NMCG) programmes and causes of mixed results from the previous schemes. What quantum leaps can help preserve the river Ganga better than incremental inputs?	2015	12.5
Mining, Coastal Erosion & River Linking Impacts	Coastal sand mining, whether legal or illegal, poses one of the biggest threats to our environment. Analyse the impact of sand mining along the Indian coasts, citing specific examples.	2019	10
	Explain the causes and effects of coastal erosion in India. What are the available coastal management techniques for combating the hazard?	2022	15
	What are the consequences of illegal mining? Discuss the ministry of environment and forests' concept of "GO AND NO GO" zones for coal mining.	2013	10
	Not many years ago, river linking was a concept but it is becoming reality in the country. Discuss the advantages of river linking and its possible impact on the environment.	2017	10
UNFCCC, COP, Kyoto Protocol & Carbon Credits	Describe the major outcomes of the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). What are the commitments made by India in this conference?	2021	15
	Discuss global warming and mention its effects on the global climate. Explain the control measures to bring	2022	15

	down the level of greenhouse gases which cause global warming, in the light of the Kyoto Protocol, 1997.		
	Explain the purpose of the Green Grid Initiative launched at world leaders Summit of the COP 26 UN Climate Change Conference in Glassgow in November, 2021. When was this idea first floated in the International Solar Alliance (ISA)?	2021	**10**
	Should the pursuit of carbon credit and clean development mechanism set up under UNFCCC be maintained even through there has been a massive slide in the value of carbon credit? Discuss with respect to India's energy needs for economic growth.	2014	**12.5**

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