

Forest Certification in India

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What's in today's article?

- Context
- What is Forest Certification?
- Forest Certification in India
- Significance of Forest Certification Industry w.r.t. India

Context

- Large-scale destruction of forests has always been a concern for the environment.
- However, with climate change, deforestation has become a critically sensitive issue globally in recent years.
 - Forests absorb large amounts of carbon dioxide that is emitted in various economic activities, keeping a check on global warming.
- At the initiative of the UK Government, more than 30 countries signed a declaration at the **COP26** (26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of Parties) held in **Glasgow, UK** in 2021.
 - The declaration aims to **stop, and start reversing, deforestation by 2030**.

- The Conference of Parties (COP) is the apex decision-making body of the United Nations Climate Change Framework Convention (UNFCCC).
- Several ***countries and corporates now try to ensure that they avoid consumption of any product that might be the result of deforestation or illegal logging.***
- The **European Union** and the **United States of America** have passed laws that regulate the entry and sale of forest-based products in their markets.

What is Forest Certification?

- Forest certification is a ***mechanism for forest monitoring, tracing and labelling timber, wood and pulp products and non-timber forest products.***
- It is a process through which quality of management from environmental, social and economic perspectives is judged against a series of agreed standards.
- It leads to the issuing of a certificate by an independent party, which verifies that an area of forest is managed to a defined standard.
- There are **two major international standards** for sustainable management of forests and forest-based products –
 - One has been developed by **Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)**;
 - The other by **Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certifications (PEFC)**.
 - **FSC** certification is more popular and in demand, and also more expensive.

Forest Certification in India

- The forest certification industry has been operating in India for the last 15 years.
- Currently, **forests in only one state — Uttar Pradesh — are certified.**
- Forty one divisions of the UP Forest Corporation (UPFC) are **PEFC-certified**, meaning they are being managed according to standards endorsed by PEFC.
- Forest certification in India is **still at an early stage** and therefore the nation has not been able to make use of the benefits of forest certification.

Significance of Forest Certification Industry w.r.t. India

- As several developed countries have put trade restrictions on import of non-certified timber, non-timber forest products and wood-based goods into their countries, ***getting sustainable forest management certificates has become mandatory for exports.***
- India allows the export of only processed wood, not timber.
- ***India is the 3rd largest exporter of wood in the world. India exports most of its wood to United States, Germany and United Kingdom.***

- Forest-based industries in India, particularly those for paper, boards, plywood, medium density fibreboard, furniture and handicrafts etc, have been pushing for forest certification to enhance their market accessibility to western markets.
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Q1) What do you mean by Forest Management?

Forest management is **the process of planning and implementing practices for the stewardship and use of forests to meet specific environmental, economic, social and cultural objectives.**

Q2) What is Forest Degradation?

Forest management is **the process of planning and implementing practices for the stewardship and use of forests to meet specific environmental, economic, social and cultural objectives.**

Source: [Our forests are under threat — here's how they are certified](#) | [downtoearth](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/forest-certification-in-india/>

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