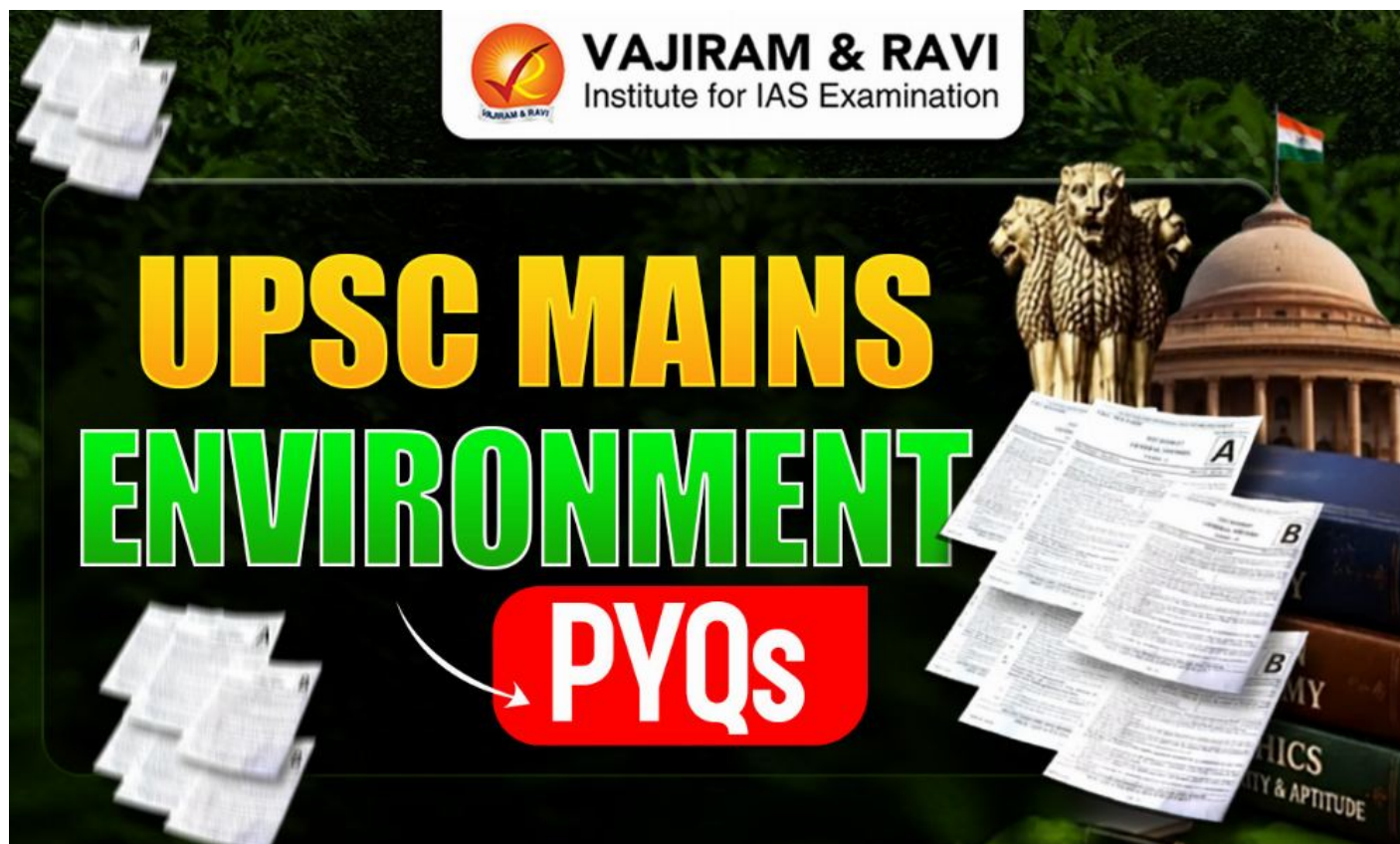


UPSC Mains Environment PYQs (2013-2025), Year-Wise Questions

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Analysing UPSC Mains Environment PYQs (2013-2025) helps aspirants understand UPSC's evolving question trends, identify recurring themes, and improve answer-writing skills. These questions cover important topics such as climate change, biodiversity, pollution, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), renewable energy, wetlands, water conservation, environmental governance, and international environmental agreements. Regular practice of PYQs strengthens conceptual clarity, develops analytical thinking, and enhances exam-oriented preparation.

UPSC Mains Environment PYQs (2013-2025)

1. What is Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage (CCUS)? What is the potential role of CCUS in tackling **climate change**? (Answer in 150 words) 2025 (10 Marks)
2. Mineral resources are fundamental to the country's economy and these are exploited by mining. Why is mining considered an environmental hazard? Explain the remedial measures required to reduce the environmental hazard due to mining. (Answer in 250 words) 2025 (15 Marks)
3. Write a review on India's climate commitments under the **Paris Agreement** (2015) and mention how these have been further strengthened in COP26 (2021). In this direction, how has the first Nationally Determined

Contribution intended by India been updated in 2022? (Answer in 250 words) 2025 (15 Marks)

4. Examine the factors responsible for depleting groundwater in India. What are the steps taken by the government to mitigate such depletion of groundwater? (Answer in 250 words) 2025 (15 Marks)
5. 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 Marks)
6. 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 Marks)
7. What is oil pollution? What are its impacts on the marine ecosystem? In what way is pollution particularly harmful for a country like India? 2023 (10 Marks)
8. 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 Marks)
9. 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 Marks)
10. Each year a large amount of plant material, cellulose, is deposited on the surface of Planet Earth. What are the natural processes this cellulose undergoes before yielding carbon dioxide, water and other end products? 2022 (10 Marks)
11. Discuss in detail the photochemical smog emphasizing its formation, effects and mitigation. Explain the 1999 Gothenburg Protocol. 2022 (10 Marks)
12. Discuss global warming and mention its effects on the global climate. Explain the control measures to bring down the level of greenhouse gases which cause global warming, in the light of the Kyoto Protocol, 1997. 2022 (15 Marks)
13. Explain the purpose of the Green Grid Initiative launched at the World Leaders Summit of the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November 2021. When was this idea first floated in the **International Solar Alliance** (ISA)? 2021 (10 Marks)
14. 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 National Clean Air Programme are required to achieve these revised standards? 2021 (10 Marks)
15. 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 Marks)
16. How does the draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020 differ from the existing EIA Notification, 2006? 2020 (10 Marks)
17. What are the salient features of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan launched by the Government of India for water conservation and water security? 2020 (10 Marks)
18. Describe the benefits of deriving electric energy from sunlight in contrast to conventional energy generation. What are the initiatives offered by our Government for this purpose? 2020 (15 Marks)
19. What are the key features of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) initiated by the Government of India? 2020 (15 Marks)
20. 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 Marks)

21. 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 Marks)
22. 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 Marks)
23. 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 Marks)
24. How does biodiversity vary in India? How is the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 helpful in conservation of flora and fauna? 2018 (15 Marks)
25. 'Climate Change' is a global problem. How will India be affected by climate change? How will Himalayan and coastal states of India be affected by climate change? 2017 (15 Marks)
26. 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 Marks)
27. 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 Marks)
28. Give an account of the current status and the targets to be achieved pertaining to renewable energy sources in the country. Discuss in brief the importance of National Programme on Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs). 2016 (12.5 Marks)
29. To what factors can the recent dramatic fall in equipment costs and tariff of solar energy be attributed? What implications does the trend have for the thermal power producers and the related industry? 2015 (12.5 Marks)
30. 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 Marks)
31. Should the pursuit of carbon credit and Clean Development Mechanism set up under UNFCCC be maintained even though 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 Marks)
32. Environmental Impact Assessment studies are increasingly undertaken before projects are cleared by the government. Discuss the environmental impacts of coal-fired thermal plants located at pitheads. 2014 (12.5 Marks)
33. 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 Marks)
34. Enumerate the National Water Policy of India. Taking river Ganga 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 Marks)

Benefits of Practicing UPSC Mains Environment Previous Year Questions

Practising UPSC Mains Environment Previous Year Questions (PYQs) helps candidates understand the exam pattern, strengthen concepts, and develop effective answer-writing skills for GS Paper III.

- Understand the UPSC exam pattern and the type of Environment questions asked over the years.

- Identify important topics such as climate change, biodiversity, pollution, EIA, renewable energy, wetlands, and environmental governance.
- Improve answer-writing skills by learning how to structure analytical and balanced answers.
- Enhance conceptual clarity through repeated exposure to core environmental concepts.
- Recognise recurring themes and focus on high-weightage topics.
- Develop analytical thinking by practising application-based and issue-oriented questions.
- Strengthen current affairs integration by linking static concepts with recent environmental developments.
- Boost time management through regular timed practice.
- Increase confidence by becoming familiar with the UPSC Mains question style.
- Revise effectively using PYQs as a reliable revision resource before the examination.

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/upsc-exam/upsc-mains-environment-pyqs/>

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