

ACTION PLAN FOR ARAVALLI LANDSCAPE RESTORATION – GEOGRAPHY

NEWS: Recently, **A national-level workshop on the revival of the Aravalli mountains** was inaugurated in Udaipur, Rajasthan on the eve of **International Day for Biodiversity**.

- The workshop outlined a detailed Action Plan for Aravalli Landscape Restoration.

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

Key Highlights of the Action Plan for Restoration

The released Action Plan adopts a **science-based, community-led, and policy-supported** roadmap to promote ecological restoration. It is structured around five main pillars:

1. Ecological Restoration

- Emphasizes **natural regeneration** of degraded ecosystems.
- Promotes **plantation of native species** to preserve ecological integrity.
- Supports **soil and moisture conservation** measures to improve land productivity and resilience.

2. Community Participation

- Ensures active involvement of **local communities**, especially **women and youth**, in conservation activities.
- Strengthens **ownership and stewardship** over natural resources through participatory approaches.

3. Policy and Governance

- Focuses on **enhancing regulatory frameworks** to support restoration efforts.
- Encourages **integration of restoration goals** into existing government schemes and policies.

4. Sustainable Livelihoods

- Aims to **promote eco-tourism, agroforestry, and non-timber forest product (NTFP)** based enterprises.
- Enhances income opportunities for local populations while conserving natural ecosystems.

5. Research and Innovation

- Leverages **GIS mapping and remote sensing technologies** to monitor restoration progress.
- Promotes the use of **ecological restoration techniques** informed by scientific research.

International Day for Biodiversity 2025

1. Purpose and Establishment

- Celebrated annually to **raise global awareness** on the importance of biodiversity.
- **Established by the United Nations** to promote conservation and the **sustainable use of biological resources**.

2. Historical Background

- Originally observed on **29 December**, marking the date of the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** entry into force.
- The date was shifted to **22 May** in the year **2000** to commemorate the **1992 signing of the CBD** at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

3. Theme for 2025

- **“Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development”**—underscoring the vital link between biodiversity conservation and sustainable human development.

ARAVALI GREEN WALL PROJECT

▪ About:

It is an ambitious plan to create a **1,400km long and 5km wide green belt buffer around the Aravali Mountain range covering states of Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Delhi.**

- In the initial phase, **75 water bodies will be rejuvenated**, starting with five waterbodies each in every district of Aravalli landscape.
 - It will cover degraded land in Gurgaon, Faridabad, Bhiwani, Mahendergarh and in Rewari districts of Haryana.
- The plan is inspired by **Africa’s ‘Great Green Wall’ project**, running from Senegal (West) to Djibouti (East), which came into effect in 2007.



- **Objectives:**

- 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.
- It aims to **enhance the biodiversity and ecosystem services** of the Aravalli range by **planting native trees**, which will help in **carbon sequestration**, provide **habitat for wildlife**, and **improve water quality** and quantity.
- The involvement of local communities in afforestation, agro-forestry, and water conservation activities can **promote sustainable development**.
 - Further, it will help generate **income and employment opportunities**, improve **food security**, and provide **social benefits**.

- **Background:**

- According to **Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas** by **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**, some **97.85 million hectares (29.7%)** of India's total geographical area (TGA) of 328.72 mha **underwent land degradation during 2018-19**.
- 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 ISRO had also indicated that Delhi, Gujarat and Rajasthan had already degraded over 50% of their land.

About the Aravalli Landscape

1. Geographical Spread

- The **Aravalli Range** is located in **north-western India**.
- It extends approximately **670 km** in a **south-west direction** from near **Delhi**, through **southern Haryana and Rajasthan**, to near **Ahmedabad in Gujarat**.

2. Ecological Significance

- Acts as a **natural barrier against desertification**, especially from the Thar Desert.
- Supports **diverse flora and fauna**, contributing to regional ecological balance.

3. Aravalli Green Wall Project

- A **large-scale ecological restoration initiative** aimed at reviving the health of the Aravalli ecosystem.
- Focus areas include:
 - **Afforestation and biodiversity conservation**

- **Water restoration through rejuvenation of water bodies**
- **Climate resilience through green cover expansion**
- **Removal of invasive species**
- **Promotion of eco-tourism and water conservation efforts**

4. Coverage

- Encompasses four states: **Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat.**
- Designed to **combat deforestation and land degradation** in the Aravalli belt.

5. Geological Importance

- The Aravalli Range is one of the **oldest mountain ranges in the world**, formed during the **Proterozoic Era**.
- Its geological history reflects **billions of years of Earth's evolution**.
- **Guru Shikhar**, located in **Mount Abu (Rajasthan)**, is the **highest peak** of the range.

GREAT GREEN WALL OF AFRICA (GGW)

▪ **About:**

- GGW is a project launched **by African union** to restore the continent's degraded landscapes and transform millions of lives in the **Sahel**.
- The project plans **8km wide band** of trees **stretching 8,000km** across Africa.

▪ **Objectives:**

- It aims to **restore 100 million hectares** of currently degraded land.
- Also, the project envisages to **sequester 250 million tons of carbon** and create **10 million green jobs by 2030**.

- **Participating countries:**

Eleven countries in the Sahel-Saharan region—**Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Senegal** have joined to combat land degradation and restore native plant life to the landscape.



Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/plan-to-restore-ecology-of-aravallis-flagged-off-101747854179191.html>