Development - Impact on Forest

What is the issue?

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As India’s economy and demand for natural resources grows, its impact on forests across the globe is also increasing.

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What is the link?

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- Research shows strong links between Indian imports of these forest-based commodities and some of the world’s most high conservation value landscapes.
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- These commodities go into the making of everyday goods such as paper, tyres, furniture and even FMCG products.
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- Forests in these countries are home to some of the most endangered species and also among the world’s major **‘deforestation fronts’** i.e., areas which is predicted to witness the highest forest loss and degradation over the next two decades.
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- Two of the countries that feature prominently across India’s forest-based commodity trade flows reported the highest net loss of annual forest area in the world are **Indonesia and Myanmar.**
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- Additionally, countries like Cambodia, Vietnam and Malaysia are also clocking among the fastest rates of acceleration of tree-cover loss in the world.
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What are the steps taken?

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- Regulatory frameworks such as the **Lacey Act** in the US and **FLEGT and EUTR** in the EU have been introduced, aimed at driving greater legality and transparency in global forestry supply chains.
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- At a global level, **the Paris Climate Agreement in 2015** recognised and acknowledged the key role that resilient forests and landscapes play in mitigating climate change.
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- Nearly 80 countries have identified the land sector, which covers agriculture and forestry, in their climate action plans as an area of focus for reducing emissions.
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- At the corporate level, **the 2014 Climate Summit** in New York saw 53 of the world's largest companies sign the **New York Declaration on Forests** (NYDF), through which they committed to eliminate deforestation from their supply chains.
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- Since the adoption of the NYDF, the movement to tackle deforestation linked to agricultural commodities has developed rapidly, particularly within the private sector.
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What we could do?

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- Change in India will require a **combination of policy and corporate commitment** to responsible trade.
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- Manufacturers of products like furniture must complement growing actions on energy efficiency and renewable energy by also working with their suppliers on **deforestation-free sourcing.**
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- Through a more responsible approach Indian industry can play a key role in curbing global carbon emissions and in helping to protect some of the world's most valuable forests.
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Source: Business Line

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