

Global Importance of Greenland

Why in News?

US President-elect Donald Trump has expressed interest in acquiring Greenland.

- **Greenland** - It is world's largest island.
- It is a semiautonomous territory of Denmark, a longtime U.S. ally and a founding member of NATO.



- **Environmental importance** - It holds enough ice that if it all melts, the world's seas would rise by 7.4 meters.
- Melting of ice would reshape coastlines across the globe and potentially shift weather patterns.
- It plays a role in the dramatic freeze that two-thirds of the United States is currently experiencing.

*In 2012, weather patterns over Greenland helped steer **Superstorm Sandy** into New York and New Jersey in the United States.*

- It also changes patterns in the jet stream, which brings storms across the globe and dictates daily weather.
- **Role in AMOC Ocean current** - It serves as the engine & on/off switch for Atlantic

Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) that influences Earth's climate like hurricane and winter storms.

- **Economic importance** - It has valuable rare earth minerals needed for telecommunications, as well as uranium, billions of untapped barrels of oil and a vast supply of natural gas.
- **Concerns** - It is warming 4 times faster than the rest of the globe.
- Since 1992, Greenland has lost about 182 billion tons of ice each year, with losses hitting 489 billion tons a year in 2019.
- AMOC is slowing down because more fresh water is being dumped into the ocean by melting ice in Greenland.
- It is also changing color as it melts from the white of ice, which reflects sunlight, heat and energy away from the planet, to the blue and green of the ocean and land, which absorb much more energy.

Greenland is also home to a large U.S. military base.

Reference

[The Hindu| Importance of Greenland](#)

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