Role of Bamboo cultivation in India

What is the issue?

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- India’s per person emission of carbon dioxide was 1,900 kg a year in 2016 and Yamuna is consider to be the most polluted river.
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- Bamboo plantations can help India to achieve carbon neutral status and also provides economic benefits.
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What are the characteristic features of bamboo?

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- Bamboo can growth in dry land areas, but it yields best when well-irrigated.
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- Bamboo requires the same amount of water as sugarcane, about 10-20 litres per day per plant.
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- Bamboo can tolerate both heavy and low rainfall, every year it gives out 8-10 shoots.
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- Every bamboo plant has a capacity to absorb about 400 kg of CO2 a year.
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How India can use bamboo for addressing pollution?

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- Dense planting of bamboo on the banks of the Yamuna, will absorb CO2 but also bring down particulate matter.
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- The plant is an “excellent scavenger,” its roots do not go below two feet, so it can absorb rich nutrients in raw sewage that flow untreated into the Yamuna

and raise its biological oxygen demand.
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- A kg of bamboo produces 4,000 kilocalories compared to 3,000-5,000 kcal for coal.
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- Bamboo has 1% ash content, compared to coal's 10-30% which poses a problem of disposal, it also emits no sulphur this makes it as a perfect replacement of coal.
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What are the bamboo related initiatives in India?

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- India has the largest area under bamboo 11.4 million hectares, but most of the bamboo are in Indian forests.
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- Recently Indian government issued an ordinance to dispense categorise cultivated bamboo as non-forest produce that can be transported without transit permits.
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- There are about 1,200 bamboo species of which 136 are in India.
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- The National Bamboo Mission has identified 16 for commercial purposes.
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- The board wants to encourage large block plantations, Farmers will be supplied tissue cultured saplings.
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- The board is working with NABARD and State Bank of India to provide loans to them, with a three-year moratorium on payment of interest, and repayment over five years thereafter.
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What are the economic benefits of Bamboo?

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- Bamboo is more profitable than rice and sugarcane and per capita fertilizer consumption of the plant is also less.
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- Bamboo is a better alternative to coal which is already being used in Sri Lankan power plants.
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- Bamboo has a big role in the agarbatti industry, India produces 3,000 tonnes of them creating employment around north eastern states.
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- Bamboo is most widely used in Paper industry and new form of fibre is being derived from bamboo to weave clothes.
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Source: Financial Express

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