

Samauma tree

Prelims: Current events of national and international relations | Conservation

Why in news?

Queen of the rainforest, the sacred Samauma tree is key to what makes Amazon the planet's lungs.

- **Scientific name** - Ceiba pentandra.
- **Family** - Malvaceae.
- **Distribution** - It covers 40% of Latin America, including large parts of Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela, among others.
- **Height** - It is also known as the ***Kapok tree***, can grow up to a height of 70 metres and 3-4 meters in diameter forming a natural canopy and towering over other trees in the rainforest.



- **Life span** - These trees have an average lifespan varying from **300-400 years**, its buttress roots sturdy in nature and taller than a full-grown human.

- **Used for** - Its fluffy white fibers have been traditionally used to make pillows, mattresses, and insulation for clothing.
- **Ecological Importance**
 - **Carbon Sink** - As one of the tallest trees in the Amazon (up to 70 meters), Samauma stores vast amounts of carbon, aiding climate regulation.
 - **Rainmaker Role** - Its deep roots and expansive canopy help recycle moisture, contributing to the Amazon's self-sustaining rainfall system.
 - **Biodiversity Hub** - Provides habitat for birds, bats, monkeys, and insects, supporting complex food webs.
- **Cultural significance** - The Amazon is home to over 400 indigenous communities whose cultures are closely connected to the region's plants and animals, which they also worship and consider spiritually important.
- **Threats** - Deforestation and habitat loss, primarily due to human activities such as logging, infrastructure projects as well as commercial ventures like mining and agricultural business.
- **Global Relevance** - Protecting Samauma aligns with SDGs on climate action, biodiversity, and indigenous rights.

References

1. [Indian Express | Queen of the rainforest, the sacred Samauma tree](#)
2. [Queen of Forest | Samauma tree](#)