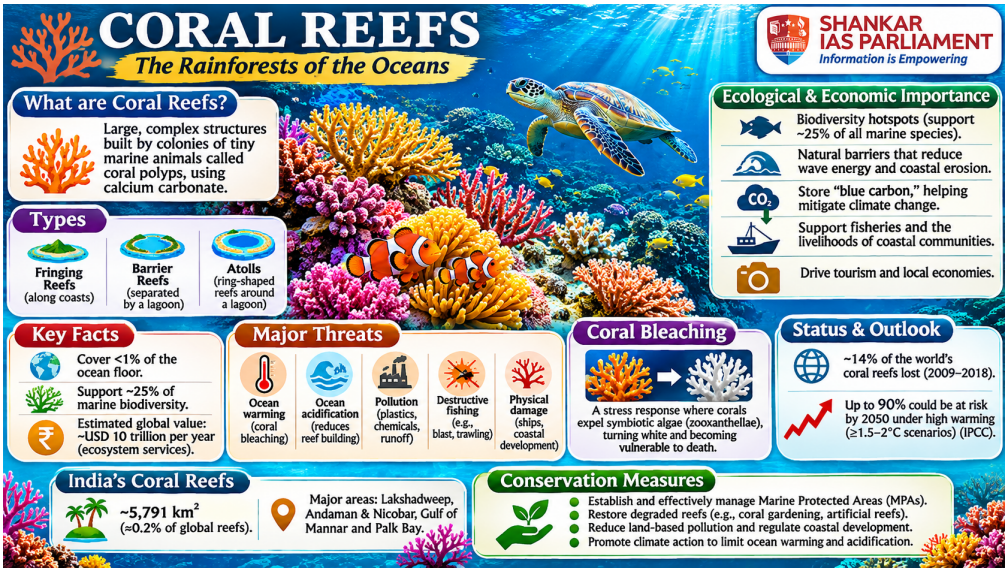
South Asian Coral Reef Ecoregions

Prelims: *Current events of National and International Importance| Environment*

Why in News?

All 13 South Asian coral reef ecoregions have been classified as **Critically Endangered** under the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems.

- Unveiled at the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP17) in Yerevan, Armenia, the assessment titled "*Red List of Ecosystems Assessment of South Asian Coral Reefs*" was co-authored by scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI).
- **Coverage –** Spans about 8,282.6 square kilometers across **India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and the Chagos Archipelago**—accounting for roughly 4% of the world's coral reefs.
- **Historical vs. Future Risk–**
  - Based on the past 50 years alone, the ecoregions were categorized as 7 Vulnerable, 4 Endangered, and 2 Critically Endangered (Northern Bay of Bengal – Bangladesh and Sri Lanka South).
  - When factoring in projected marine heat stress and ocean warming over the next 50 years under IPCC climate scenarios, all 13 ecoregions jump to **Critically Endangered**.
- **Indian Ecoregions (All 4 Classified Critically Endangered)–**
  - Andaman and Nicobar Islands
  - Lakshadweep Islands
  - South coast (Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay)
  - West coast (Gulf of Kutch)
- **Global Context–** Globally, 96% of assessed coral reef units (representing 99.8% of total assessed reef area) face this same Critically Endangered designation under future climate projections.



Reference

[PIB| South Asian coral reef ecoregions]

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