Tuvalu Island

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | World Geography*

Why in News?

As rising sea levels threaten to submerge much of Tuvalu by the end of this century, its citizens are striving to secure their future.

Location & Geography

- It is a ***Polynesian island nation*** in the west-central Pacific Ocean, halfway between Australia and Hawaii.
- It Comprises 9 islands (4 reef islands + 5 coral atolls).
- **Main Islands -** Nanumanga, Niutao, Niulakita.
- **Neighbours -** Kiribati (north), Fiji (south).
- **Capital** - Funafuti Atoll (most populous).
- **Area – *4th smallest country globally.***
- **Topography -** Entirely low-lying; the highest point is only 4.5 m above sea level, highly vulnerable to sea-level rise.
- **Climate -** Hot and rainy; ***no rivers.***

Demographics

- **Population -** Among the world's smallest, only larger than Vatican City.
- **Languages** - Tuvaluan (official), English widely used.
- **Currency -** Tuvalu dollar (pegged to the Australian dollar).

Political System

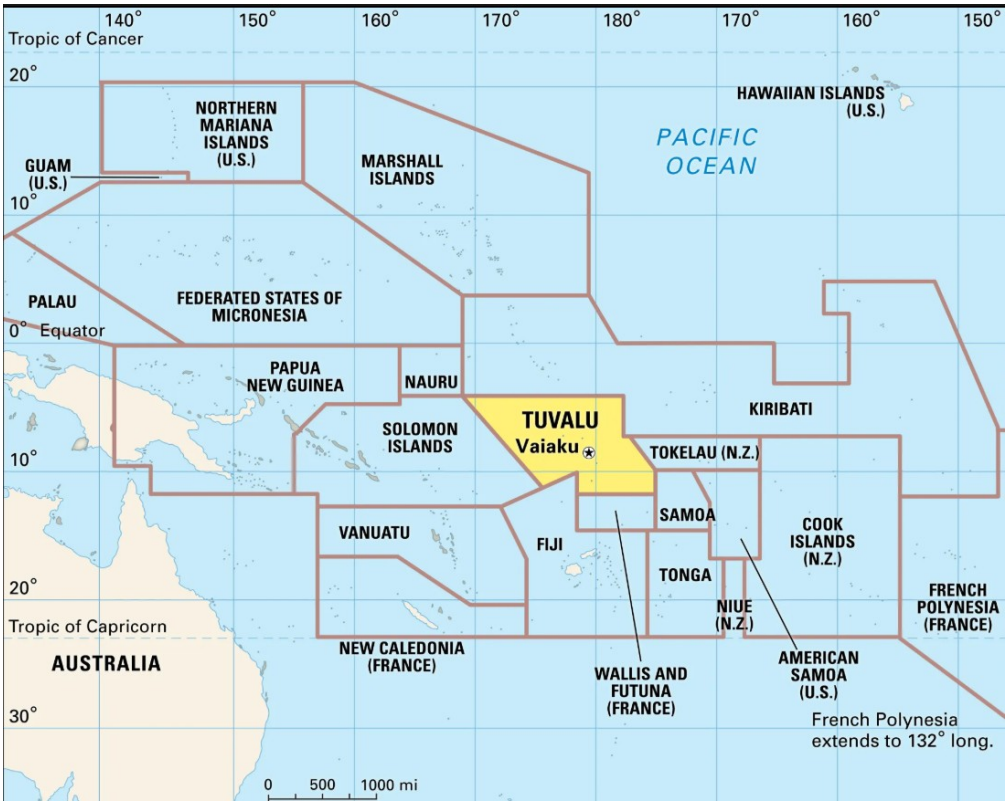
- **Independence** - 1978 from the UK.
- **Governance -** Parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarchy.
- Part of the Commonwealth Realm; King Charles III is head of state, represented by a Governor-General.
- No political parties; the Prime Minister is chosen by the legislature.

Economy

- Predominantly subsistence farming & fishing.
- Relies ***heavily on remittances from overseas workers.***
- **Exports -** Small quantities of copra.
- **Revenue sources -** Sale of postage stamps, fees from foreign fishing fleets, and foreign aid.
- **Imports-** Most food, fuel, and manufactured goods.

Strategic & Environmental Concerns

- **Climate Change Threat -** Rising sea levels pose an existential risk; Tuvalu may face climate-induced displacement.
- **Blue Economy -** Fishing rights and maritime resources are crucial for revenue.
- **Geopolitical Importance -** Located in a strategic Pacific zone, often courted by larger powers (Australia, China, US) for influence.
- **Migration & Diaspora -** Tuvaluans migrate to New Zealand and Australia under special agreements.



Reference

[UN ORG | Tuvalu battles rising sea levels]



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