

UNCCD COP17

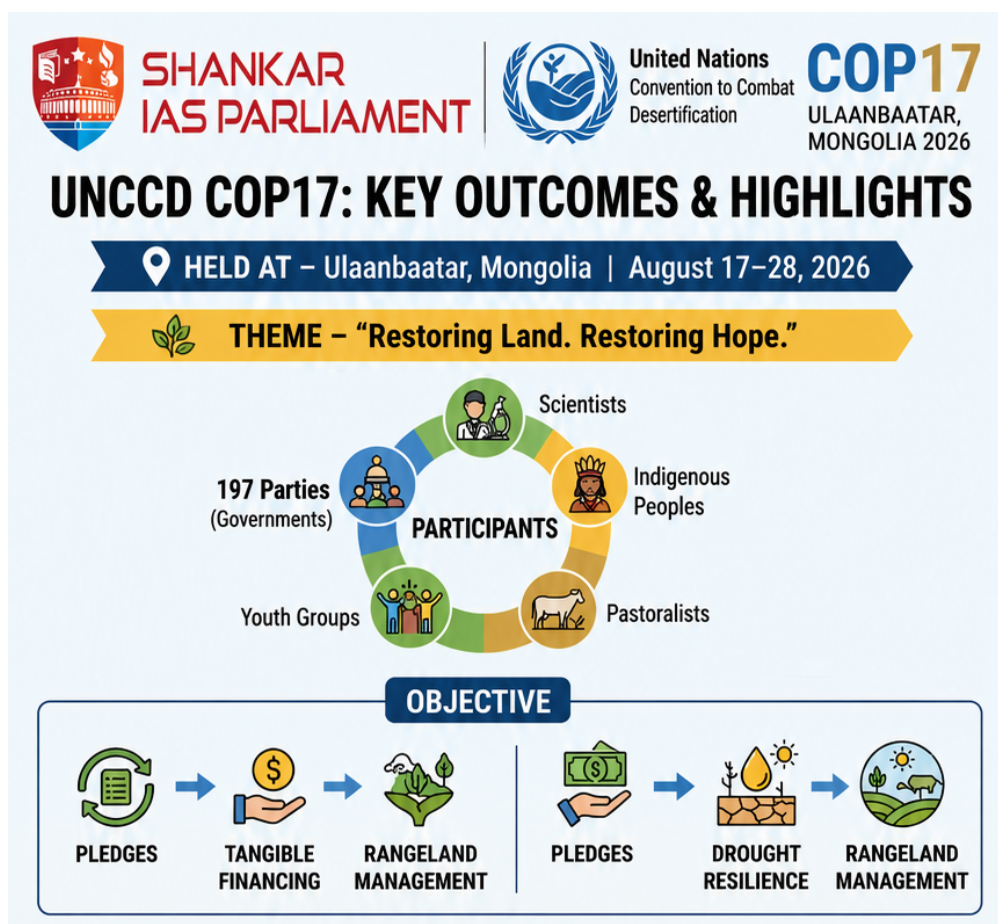
Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Environment

Why in News?

Recent, UNCCD COP17 concluded with new drought resilience and land restoration initiatives, but once again stalled on adopting a global drought framework despite intensifying drought threats.

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification: COP17

- **Held at** - Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, on August 17-28, 2026.
- **Theme** - "Restoring Land. Restoring Hope."
- **Participants** - Representatives from 197 Parties, scientists, Indigenous Peoples, pastoralists, and youth groups.
- **Objective** - To convert global land pledges into tangible financing, drought resilience, and rangeland management.



- **UNCCD COP17 outcome**
- **Global drought Framework Stalled** - Despite two years of talks and worsening droughts, Parties at COP17 failed to agree on a global drought framework, binding or voluntary.
- Parties decided to continue negotiations at COP18, keeping drought as a stand-alone agenda item at future sessions.

Reasons for the Global Drought Framework Stalling

- **Sovereignty Argument** - The US insisted drought is a national/domestic issue, not requiring a global instrument, and should be managed through national policies or bilateral cooperation.
- **Existing Tools Sufficient** - Pointed to the UNCCD Drought Toolbox and WMO early-warning system, arguing these should be used before creating new frameworks.
- **Red Line Position** - Categorically opposed any international drought instrument (binding or voluntary), blocking consensus.
- **Broader Objections** - Also resisted agenda items on gender, civil society participation, and Rio Convention synergies, reflecting opposition to new multilateral commitments.

- **Drought Resilience Investment Facility (DRIF)** - Launched by UNCCD, Luxembourg, and IDRA as a global catalytic platform.
- **Objective** - It aims to mobilise up to \$400 million in public and private capital for water security, sustainable agriculture, nature-based solutions, and land restoration.
- **Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership** - Moved toward implementation; the first Assembly advanced a pooled fund concept to support ~70 low/lower middle-income countries.
- **Drought Resilience Index (DRI)** - Introduced as a technical monitoring tool to help countries assess vulnerabilities and guide investments.
- Land restoration and rangelands: major funding push
- **Global Portfolio** - Governments, banks, and companies announced a \$1.3 billion package for land restoration and drought resilience across 23 countries on five continents.
- **Funding** - This includes \$644.5 million in new finance and \$216.4 million already confirmed for implementation.
- **Rangelands Flagship Initiative** - Launched with ~\$1.2 billion across 45 projects to support resilient rangelands and pastoralist livelihoods, aligned with the 2026 International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists.

Reference

[Down to Earth | UNCCD COP13](#)