Vithoot Programme

Why in News?

Prelims- Environmental ecology, Bio-diversity

Mains - conservation

Kerala's forest department launched an innovative afforestation effort, the Vithoot programme, coinciding with World Environment Day this year.

- Vithoot is the ***aerial distribution of thousands of seed balls*** across the state's woods and vacant land.
- **Aim** - It is designed to rehabilitate Kerala's natural ecology and mitigate human-wildlife conflicts.
- **Done by** – It is a community effort facilitated by the Kerala Forest Research Institute.
- The plan prioritises fruit-bearing trees, specific grass species such as bamboo, and seeds with potential for quick development.
- Initially, the effort will incorporate indigenous plants, shrubs, and herbs.
- In the forthcoming years, seeds of uncommon, endangered, and endemic species will be integrated.
- The plan emphasises the use of site-specific seeds aimed at rehabilitating the ecosystem.
- This project will initially concentrate on forest land but may subsequently expand to include paddy fields, agricultural lands, and other green areas.
- It relies on community engagement, meticulous planning, and the strategic application of technology, including drones and helicopters.
- **Advantages -** This effort mitigates human-wildlife conflict, addresses climate change, improves water security, and fosters forest health.
- Ultimately, these initiatives will guarantee food accessibility for both wildlife and humans.
- **Disadvantages -** Not all seed balls will germinate successfully and dispersing them can be challenging in certain situations.
- Moreover, they exhibit sensitivity to environmental variables, rendering seed distribution impracticable in some circumstances.

Reference

Down to Earth | Vithoot Programme



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