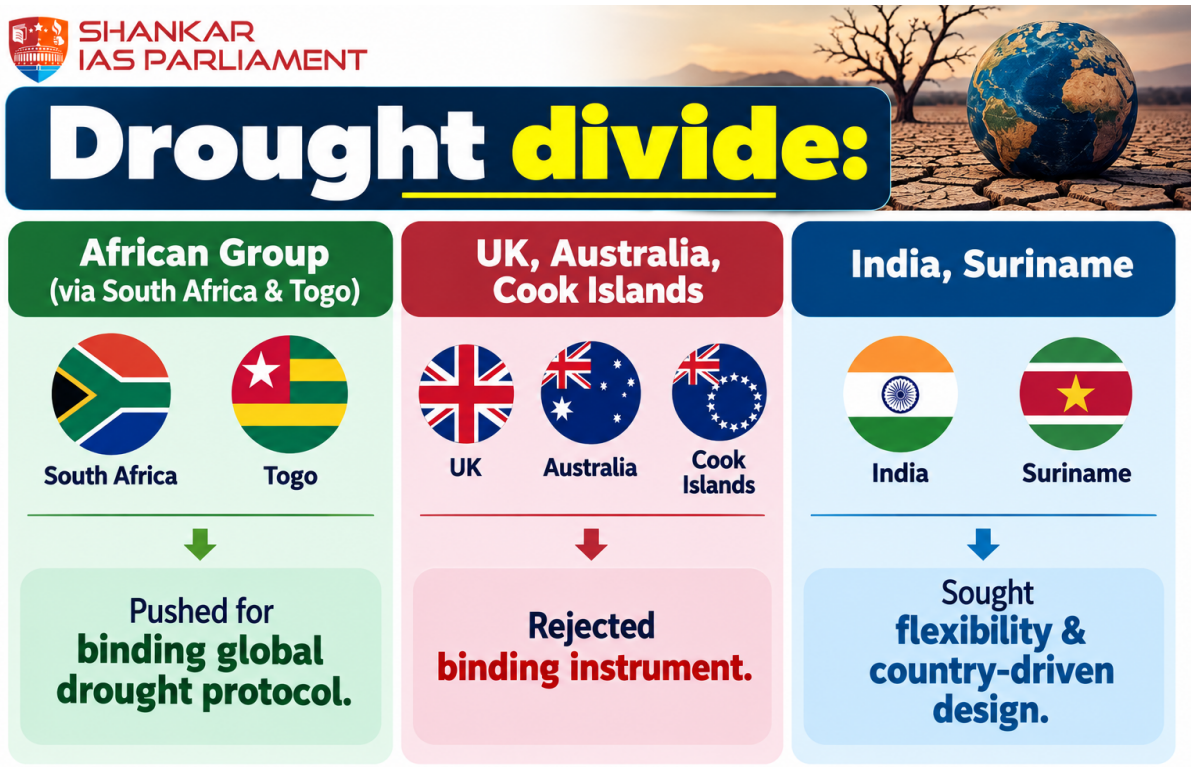
World on Drought

> ***Prelims:*** *Current events of national and international importance | Polity & Governance*

Why in News?

Recently, Delegates from 196 nations plus EU officials have met in Mongolia to discuss how best to tackle drought and desertification.



- **Outcome –** No resolution was reached, and the debate has been deferred to COP18, scheduled to take place in Egypt in 2027.

Key Areas of Disagreement

- The debate centers on whether agreements should be **binding, with strict global rules, or voluntary,** allowing for flexible national goals.
- There is disagreement regarding problem framing, specifically whether to emphasize **universal impacts or focus on region-specific consequences.**
- Responsibility is contested between advocates of **global collective action and proponents of national sovereignty.**

Global Drought Conditions
• In the United Kingdom, severe drought conditions have resulted in empty reservoirs and the implementation of hosepipe bans following the hottest summer since 1884. Currently, **71.3% of England remains affected by drought.** • Globally, all continents, including Antarctica, are experiencing extreme drought and flood events. • In the Himalayas, floods in the **Nepal-Tibet** region following a glacial collapse have led to an increasing death toll.

UNCCD and Institutional Fragmentation

- The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), established in 1994 as part of the **Rio Conventions, is the only legally binding framework addressing land degradation, desertification, and drought.**
- Institutional fragmentation persists as climate, biodiversity, and land treaties operate independently, resulting in a **lack of synergy** among these frameworks.
- The United States has opposed the inclusion of a “synergies” agenda item, thereby impeding efforts to enhance coordination among related treaties.

The ICJ Advisory Opinion of 2025 declared combating drought a binding law connected to climate obligations and human rights.

Though non-binding, exert legal and political influence, shaping treaties into domestic laws and court rulings.

Reference

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