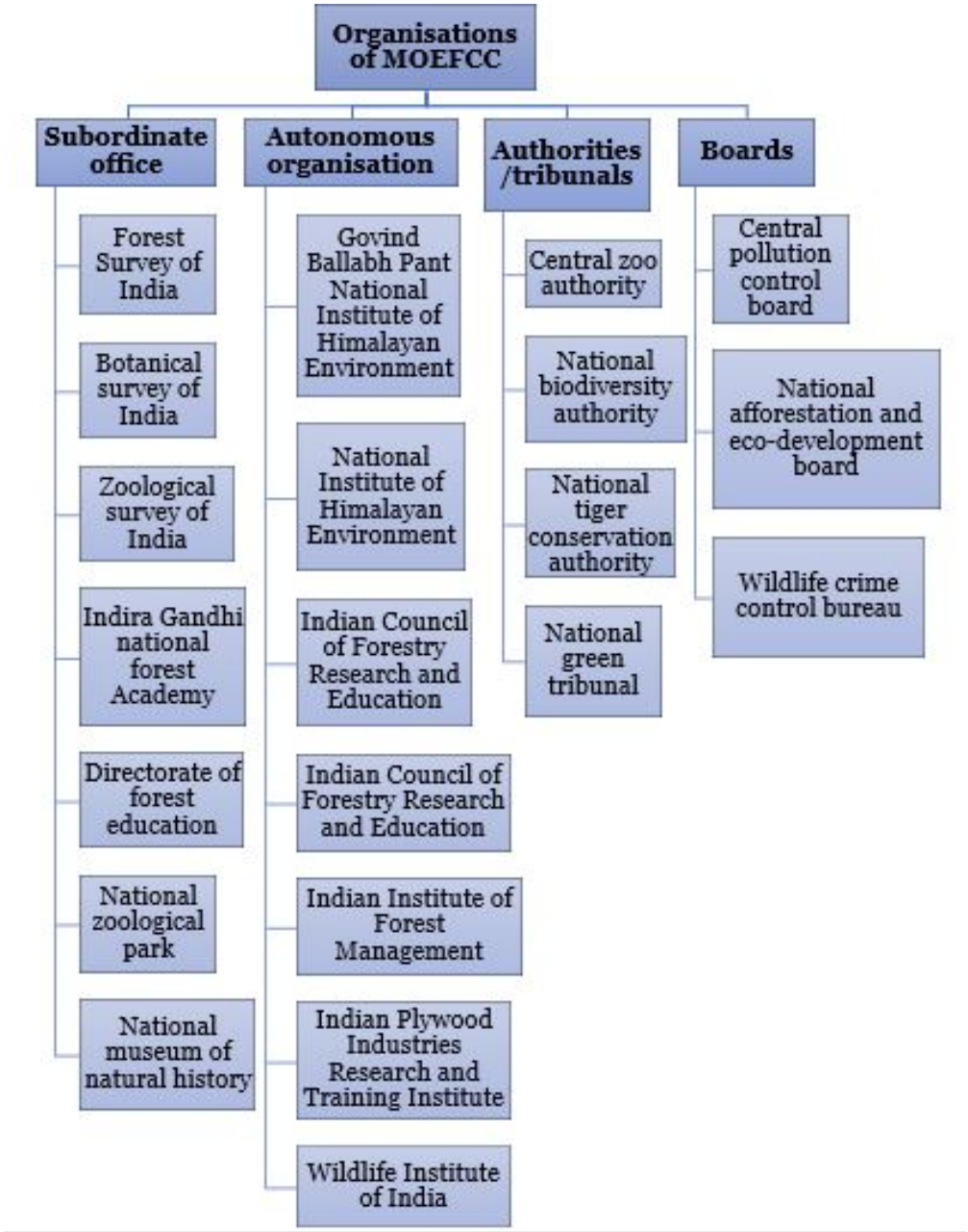
Year-end Review | Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change - Part 1

About the Ministry

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) is the nodal agency in the administrative structure of the Central Government:
    - For the planning, promotion, co-ordination and overseeing the implementation of India's environmental and forestry policies and programmes.
- **Union Minister** – Bhupender Yadav.
- **The broad objectives are**:
    - Conservation and survey of flora, fauna, forests and wildlife,
    - Prevention and control of pollution,
    - Afforestation and regeneration of degraded areas,
    - Protection of the environment and
    - Ensuring the welfare of animals.
- **Nodal agency for the following**:
    - United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP),
    - South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP),
    - International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and
    - For the follow-up of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).



Schemes/initiatives for Wildlife

International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)

- **India** *has launched the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) on 9th April, 2023* and established a demonstrative step to conserve 7 wild cats across the globe in the world.
- 5 countries namely *India, Nicaragua, Eswatini, Somalia and Liberia* have signed the Framework Agreement (FA) and have become the members of IBCA.
- The Framework Agreement is intended to establish IBCA to collectively address common challenges for the protection and conservation of seven Big Cats in the world.
- The parties to this agreement shall be guided by the principles of coordinated action for protection and conservation of 7 big cats, seeking the benefits of collective action under the IBCA.

National Tiger Conservation Authority

• NTCA gave final approval for notification of the *Madhav National Park, Madhya Pradesh, as a tiger reserve*.
• **Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitat** – A component under the Project Tiger was approved by the Government of India for 15th Finance Commission Cycle.
• **Web-portal on invasive plants** – It was launched on Global Tiger Day (29 Jul, 2025).
• It will help prioritize conservation investments for nature conservation.

First-ever Ganges River Dolphin Tagging

- First-ever Ganges River Dolphin (Platanista gangetica) was tagged in ***Assam***.
- This is the *first tagging, not only in India, but also for the species*, and this milestone is a significant advancement of Project Dolphin.
- **Implementation** – By the *Wildlife Institute of India (WII)* in collaboration with the Assam Forest Department and Aaranyak.
- **Funding** – from the National Authority Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning (CAMPA) Authority.

Schemes/initiatives for Climate Action

Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage (CCUS)

- CCUS has an important and critical role to play in decarbonising the industrial and power sector.
- CCUS is key to ensuring sustainable development and growth in India, particularly for the production of clean products and energy, leading to an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)

- NCAP was launched in 2019 covers 130 cities in 24 States and UTs.
- **Objective** – To achieve substantial improvement in air quality, up to 40% reduction in particulate matter by 2025-26 from 2017-18.
- **PRANA portal** – Has been launched to update the air quality data in real time.
- Portal for Regulation of Air-pollution in non-attainment cities, is a portal for monitoring of implementation of National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).

India Cooling Action Plan

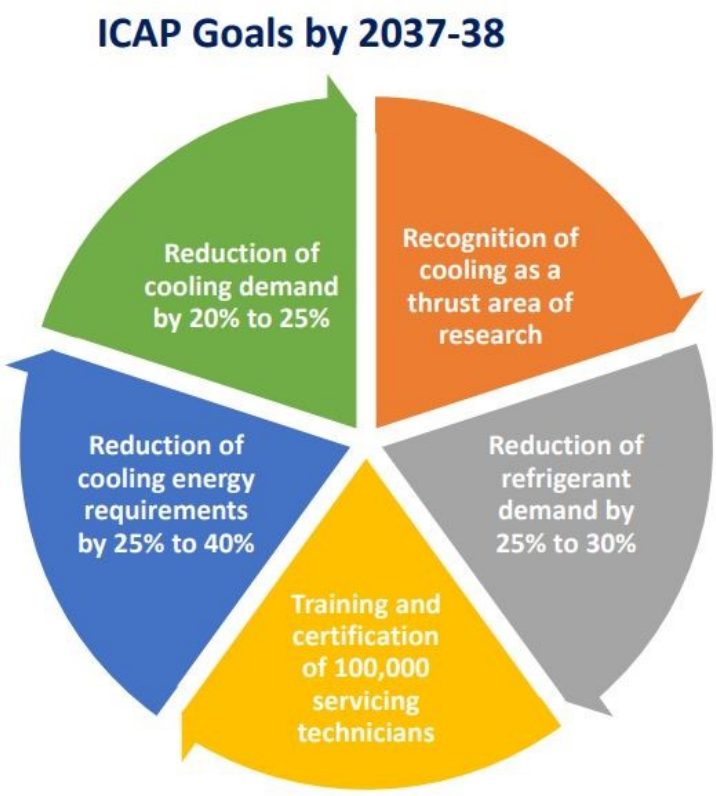
- ICAP provides an integrated vision towards cooling across sectors by reduction of cooling demand, refrigerant transition, enhancing energy efficiency and better technology options ***by 2037-38***.

*India is the **first Country** in the World to develop a comprehensive cooling action plan.*

- The **7 thematic groups** are:
    1. Space Cooling in Buildings
    2. Air-conditioning Technology
    3. Cold-chain and Refrigeration

4. Transport Air-conditioning
5. Refrigeration and Air-conditioning Servicing Sector
6. Refrigerant Demand and Indigenous Production
7. Research & Development

- As against 35% phase out reduction target of Hydro chlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) during 2020-24, as per Montreal Protocol reduction schedule,
  - India achieved *reduction of 50% of Hydro chlorofluorocarbons in the consumption sector*.
- Use of HCFCs in manufacturing of new equipment will be phased out as on 31.12.2024.



Schemes/initiatives for Biodiversity

- The Biological Diversity (Amendment) Act, 2023 came into force on 1st April, 2024.
- India submitted its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan on 31st October, 2024 during the COP-16 to the Convention on Biological Diversity meetings.
  - Both the National Biodiversity Targets and Action Plan are aligned with the goals and targets set under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- The Biological Diversity Rules, 2024 were notified in the Gazette of India on 22 October 2024.

Forest Protection

• MoEFCC along with the Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal, *organized a two-day National Workshop* on "Application of Space Technology in Forest and Wildlife Management in India".
• It was organised at Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal on 21st - 22nd August, 2024 with the all the States / UTs.
• In the last fire season (November, 2023-June 2024), the *percentage of large forest fires doused within 24 hours increased to 67% from the 33%* recorded in the previous forest fire season.
• This was achieved majorly due to the enhanced speed of dissemination of information and coordination on the ground.

Protected Areas

- *MoEFCC is mandated to protect and improve the environment* and to safeguard the forest and wildlife of the country under ***Article 48-A of the Constitution***.
- Conservation planning in India is based on the philosophy of identifying and protecting representative wild habitats across all the ecosystems.
- The number of Protected Areas in the country, which stood at 745 in the year 2014 have *risen to 1022*.
    - This accounts for 5.43% of the country's total geographic area. Participation of people are given more impetus.
- The numbers of *Community Reserves* in the country has increased *from 43 in the year 2014 to 220* as of now.
- Apart from the protected areas, the country also has ***57 tiger reserves*** notified under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 with the prime focus of conservation of tigers and its habitat.
- States have also declared ***33 elephant reserves*** for providing safer habitats to the elephants.
- Since 2014, 59 wetlands have been added to the list of Ramsar Sites, taking the tally to ***85 Ramsar Sites*** in the country covering an area of 1.35 million ha.
- As per All India Tiger Estimation 2022 report, ***the estimated tiger population in India is 3,682***, which ***accounts for 70% of wild tiger population of the World***.

India boasts the largest Ramsar site network in Asia and the 3rd largest in the world in terms of number of sites.

"Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" Campaign

- The campaign 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' translates to 'Plant4Mother'.
- **Aim** – It exhorts people to plant trees as a mark of love and respect for one's own Mother and for protecting and preserving the Mother Earth.
- **Launched by** – Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- **Launched** – On the occasion of 'World Environment Day'-5th June, 2024.
- MoEFCC has reached out to Central Government Ministries/Departments, State Governments and Organizations to ensure the *plantation of 140 crore trees* by March, 2025.
- As of now, more than 102 crore trees have been planted under the campaign.

Amrit Dharohar

- The initiative is a part of the 2023-24 budget announcement and was launched during June 2023 to promote unique conservation values of the Ramsar Sites in the country.
- The Amrit Dharohar is implementation strategy, launched on the 5th June, 2023, focuses on ***4 key components***, which are:
    1. Species and Habitat Conservation
    2. Nature Tourism
    3. Wetlands Livelihoods
    4. Wetlands Carbon

Various initiatives under the Amrit Dharohar
• Paryavaran Naavik Certificate (PNC) training programs have been held at Bhitarkanika Mangroves and Chilika Lake. • A comprehensive training module for Nature Guides has also been developed under the Green Skill Development Programme (GSDP). • MoEF&CC has released a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for assessing carbon stock in wetlands. • A methodology for assessing climate co-benefits is being developed with knowledge partners like Wetlands International South Asia (WISA) and GIZ. • Considering the high carbon storage capacity of peatlands, a Peatland Inventory and Assessment initiative has been launched with the support of these partners.

MISHTI – Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes

- **Aim** – To restore and promote mangroves as a unique, natural eco-system and for preserving and enhancing the sustainability of the coastal habitats.
- **Launched** – On 5th June, 2024.
- **Objective** – To 'restore mangrove forests' by undertaking mangrove reforestation/afforestation measures along the coast of India.

Decriminalization of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
• The penal provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 was amended to decriminalize and rationalize offences to enhance trust based governance for ease of living and doing business. - The Act was amended as a part of Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provision) Act, 2023. • The salient features of the amendments in EPA are as follows:- - Penal provision mentioned under EPA, 1986 have been completely decriminalized. - Appointment of adjudicating officer proposed for determining the penalties under EPA, 1986. - Provision made for creation and management of fund for collection as well as proper utilization of fund collected from penalty.

Nagar Van Yojana (NVY)

- Nagar Van Yojana (NVY) which envisages developing 600 Nagar Vans and 400 Nagar Vatikas in the country during the period from 2020-21 to 2026-27.
- **Objective** – To significantly enhance the trees outside forests and green cover, enhancement of biodiversity and ecological benefits to the urban and peri-urban areas apart from improving quality of life of city dwellers.

- **Implementation** – By the National Afforestation and Eco-development Board (NAEB).
- It envisages developing 600 Nagar Vans and 400 Nagar Vatikas in the country during the period from 2020-21 to 2026-27.
- **National Authority of CAMPA** – The Central grants from CAMPA is provided to cover mainly the cost of fencing, soil-moisture conservation measures & related activities, administrative activities, plantation and maintenance.
- **Financial assistance** – The Scheme provides financial assistance of Rs.4 lakh per hectare for the creation and maintenance of these urban forests.
- It encourages the involvement of citizens, students and other stakeholders in the creation and management of these green spaces.
- **Range** – Nagar Van areas range from a minimum of 10 hectare to 50 hectare.

Reference

1. PIB | Year-end review

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