

Date: 30-07-2023. (GS-III Environment)

1) Examine the Pros and Cons of the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill 2023. (150 words).

Forest Conservation (Amendment) Bill 2023

The Bill seeks to amend the existing Forest Conservation Act, 1980. The preamble of the Bill explains that its objective is to create net zero emission by 2070, increasing the forest cover & develop the livelihoods of the forest dwellers.

Pros :-

1) Achieve Net zero emission :-

The Bill seeks to achieve net zero emissions by 2070 by increasing the area of forest cover. It is optimistic for India to achieve its climate change target.

2) Security :

The Bill allows construction works along the border areas up to 100 Km.

It would enhance our security in the most fragile areas like LAC, LOC and north-eastern states.

Cons :

1) Goes against Supreme Court Judgement :

The Bill goes against the top court Judgement in Godavarman case, 1997.

The Judgement orders that the govt should consider the dictionary meaning of forest rather than in the official records while clearing the forest.

This means that forest are the areas which are full of trees.

This Bill defines the forest that are registered only on/after 25th October 1980. It would impact 28% of India's forest cover.

2) Affecting the Ecologically Sensitive areas :

By allowing the construction in the border areas, it affects the ecologically sensitive areas like Himalayas, Aravalli range etc...

It would also affect the forest dwellers who rely on these sensitive areas.

Conclusion :

Security is the most vital thing to consider and just more than that forests and Bio-diversity are the indispensable thing not only for humans but also for many other living species.