Syllabus subtopic: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

News: The German parliament has passed the Climate Protection Act in an attempt to reach its climate target by 2030. This will be Germany’s first climate action law.

Prelims and Mains focus: Key features and significance of the programme.

Key highlights of the bill:

1. With this bill, a price on carbon emissions in the transport and heating sectors will be imposed along with some other measures to combat climate change.
2. The bill consists of emissions targets for different sectors of the economy such as transport, energy and housing.
3. Pollution rights: From 2021, companies that market diesel and petrol, heating oil and natural gas in the country will need to obtain pollution rights for the amount of greenhouse gases they emit.
4. This will be regulated through a national emissions trading mechanism. The cost of these emissions will drive up the cost of using fossil fuels, making the usage of such fuels more expensive for the citizens and hence, discouraging their use and paving the way for climate-friendly technologies.
5. The aviation tax will be increased.

Criticisms of the bill:

- Climate package was not sufficient and that the goals were not achievable.
- The price of CO2 was kept too low to dissuade its emissions and the increased burden on the citizens.