

Daily Answer Writing

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Structure:

- Explain LDN.
- A state whereby the amount and quality of land resources, necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security, remains stable or increases within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems.
- Conclusion.

Context

- Discuss what the key elements that require change are.
- What changes are required in terms of policies and programme to address the challenges?

Introduction

Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) has been defined by the Parties to the Convention A state whereby the amount and quality of land resources, necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security, remains stable or increases within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems.

To date, over **120 countries** have engaged with the LDN Target Setting Programme and considerable progress has been made since the 2030 Agenda was adopted in 2015.

It strategically places the measures to conserve, sustainably manage and restore land in the context of land use planning.

Because land is fixed in quantity, there is ever-increasing competition to control land resources and capitalize on the flows of goods and services from the land. This has the potential to cause social and political instability, fueling poverty, conflict and migration.

Implementation:

- LDN requires multi-stakeholder engagement and planning across scales and sectors, supported by national-scale coordination that utilizes existing local and regional governance structures.
- UNCCD and the UN Environment Programme (UN Environment) came together to mark the United Nations General Assembly adoption of the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

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Key elements that require change are:

- Nearly **24 billion tonnes** of fertile soil and 27, 000 bio-species are lost every year
- Nearly 30 per cent of the world's population lives in dry areas
- 8 out of 21 UNESCO World Heritage Sites are in drylands.

Schemes launched for capacity-building of the stakeholders at multiple levels to arrest Land Degradation:

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY):

- To provide insurance coverage and financial support to the farmers in the event of failure of any of the notified crop as a result of natural calamities, pests & diseases.
- To stabilise the income of farmers to ensure their continuance in farming.

National Food Security Mission (NFSM):

To bring about significant yield gain to the farmers resulting into increase in their income level; the Mission has target of additional production of 25 million tonnes of foodgrains comprising 10 million tonnes of rice, 8 million tonnes of wheat, 4 million tonnes of pulses and 3 million tonnes of coarse cereals.

Soil Health Card Scheme:

Meant to give each farmer soil nutrient status of his/her holding and advice him/her on the dosage of fertilizers and also the needed soil amendments, that s/he should apply to maintain soil health in the long run.

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PKSY):

To ensure access to some means of protective irrigation to all agricultural farms in the country, to produce 'per drop more crop', thus bringing much desired rural prosperity.

Swachh Bharat mission:

Eliminating open defecation through the construction of household-owned and community-owned toilets and establishing an accountable mechanism of monitoring toilet use.

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Conclusion:

To achieve the UN-mandated sustainable development goals (SDG 15.3) of restoring degraded land and soil by 2030, there is a need for “synergy between scientists, farming communities and their institutions that are the land users and managers. Research can help restoration initiatives to scale-up globally but only if farmers, their livelihoods and communities are at the heart of such initiatives.

Soil carbon management is an important strategy for improving soil quality, increasing crop yields, and reducing soil loss. Capturing carbon in the soil helps improve soil health and productivity, and stabilize the global carbon cycle, benefiting agricultural production. Because of its multifunctional roles and its sensitivity to land management, SOC is one of the three global indicators of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN). Hence, predicting and monitoring change in SOC is vital to achieving LDN targets.

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