



21 August 2024

National and International News

<p>National Geoscience Awards</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The President of India will confer the prestigious National Geoscience Awards 2023 at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre in New Delhi. <p>About National Geoscience Awards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the oldest and most prestigious national awards in the field of geosciences. Instituted: The award was instituted by the Ministry of Mines in 1966. Previous Name: Before 2009, these awards were known as the National Mineral Awards. Objective: To honor individuals and teams for extraordinary achievements and outstanding contributions in various fields of geosciences. Award Categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Geoscience Award for Lifetime Achievement National Geoscience Award National Young Geoscientist Award Recognition: The award symbolizes recognition and appreciation for exceptional individuals and organizations demonstrating excellence, dedication, and innovation in geosciences.
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Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

Banni grasslands

Why in the news?

- Researchers in **Bhuj** have recently **conducted a study to assess the suitability of different areas in Banni** for **sustainable grassland restoration**, with ecological value as the primary criterion.

About Banni grasslands:

- **Location:** The Banni Grasslands are located along the northern border of **Kachchh district in Gujarat**.
- **Ethnic Groups:** Home to **22 ethnic groups**, the majority of whom are pastoralists.
- **Biodiversity:** The area is rich in biological diversity, featuring:
 - **Wildlife:** Includes Nilgai, Chinkara, Blackbuck, Wild boar, Golden Jackal, Indian Hare, Indian Wolf, Caracal, Asiatic Wildcat, and Desert Fox.
- **Protected Areas:** The **Kutch Desert Wildlife Sanctuary** and **Chhari Dhand Conservation Reserve** are part of the Banni Grasslands.

Miyawaki Method

Why in the news?

- The **Chhattisgarh Forest Department** recently organized a **Van Mahotsav program** in the **Manendragarh-Chirmiri-Bharatpur (MCB) district**, where saplings were planted using the Miyawaki method.

About Miyawaki Method:

- **Origin:** Developed by Japanese botanist and plant ecology expert, Professor **Akira Miyawaki**.
- **Planting Technique:**
 - Involves **planting two to four types of indigenous trees within every square meter**.
 - **Only native species that naturally occur in the area**, based on the specific climate condition, are used.
- **Growth Process:**
 - **Dense planting leads to seedlings competing for sunlight**, resulting in rapid growth.
 - **Trees become self-sustainable** and grow to their full length within three years.
- **Speed and Density:** Miyawaki forests **grow 10x faster**, are **30x denser**, and contain **100x more biodiversity** compared to conventional methods.



Sustainable agriculture

Why in the news?

- A number of issues such as climate change, environmental sustainability and food security accelerated the transition to sustainable agriculture.

About Sustainable agriculture:

- **Key Principles of Sustainable Agriculture:**
 - **Increasing Productivity:** Enhance productivity while reducing reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and focus on water- and energy-efficient systems.
 - **Protecting Natural Resources:** Sustainable use and conservation of soil and water resources.
 - **Improving Livelihoods:** Increase agricultural income, reduce poverty.
 - **Enhancing Resilience:** Build resilience to extreme weather events and market volatility.
- **Methods of Sustainable Agriculture:**
 - **Organic Farming:** Focus on ecological balance, natural inputs, crop rotation, and organic fertilizers.
 - **Crop Rotation:** Enhances soil health, breaks pest cycles, and reduces chemical inputs.
 - **Agroforestry:** Integrates trees with crops/animals, promotes biodiversity, and supplements income.
 - **Integrated Pest Management (IPM):** Minimizes pesticide use, manages pests while preserving beneficial organisms.
 - **Zero Tillage:** Preserves soil structure, reduces erosion, and improves water retention.
 - **Hydroponics and Aquaponics:** Efficient resource use, reduces land degradation, and combines plant and fish farming in a symbiotic system.



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Yaks

Why in the news?

- Recently, around **40 Chinese yaks** entered Indian territory in the **Demchok area of eastern Ladakh** and are currently under the control of the local villagers.

About Yaks:

- **Geographical Distribution:** Found throughout the **Himalayan region of south-central Asia**, the **Tibetan plateau**, and **Mongolia**.
- **Species:**
 - **Scientific Name:** Wild yaks (*Bos mutus*) and domestic yaks (*Bos grunniens*).
 - **Wild yaks and domestic yaks are sometimes considered separate species** but can interbreed with various kinds of cattle.
- **Habitat:**
 - Wild yaks inhabit **alpine tundra** at altitudes of 5000 to 7000 meters.
 - Domestic yaks can **survive at much lower altitudes**.
 - **Habitat consists of three vegetation types:** Alpine meadow, alpine steppe, and desert steppe.
- **Yak-Rearing States in India:** Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.
- **Conservation Status:** Wild Yaks are classified as **'Vulnerable'** under the **IUCN Red List**.

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