

## 22. NATURAL VEGETATION OF INDIA & FORESTS

---

- India is a country of a variety of climates and soils.
- Here different types of natural vegetations, ranging from tropical forests to tundra vegetation, are found.
- Natural vegetations of India can be classified into following six types:

### **Tropical Evergreen Forests**

- These forests are found in the areas receiving more than 200 cm of rainfall.
- Major regions having this vegetation are Sahyadri (Western Ghats), Plateau of Shillong, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.
- Like the equatorial forests, the trees of these forests are also wood type and various species of trees are found.
- The average height of the trees is more than 60 m.
- Major trees found here are Mahogany, Bamboo, Cane, Cinchona, Rubber, etc.
- These forests are important for spices.
- 95% of the land area in Andaman & Nicobar Islands is covered with these forests.

### **Tropical wet Deciduous Forests**

- These are found in the area with 100-200 cm. of rainfall.
- Major areas are eastern slopes of Sahyadri, north-eastern parts of peninsular plateau, bhabar and Terai region along the foothills of Shiwalik.
- These are characterised as Monsoon forests.
- Major trees of these forests are – Teak, Sal, Mango, Mahua, Bamboo, Shisham, Khari and Sandal. All these trees are economically very important.
- Teak, Sal and Shisham are used for making furniture.
- Sal wood is used for making railway sleeper berths.

### **Tropical Dry Deciduous Forests:**

- These forests are found in the regions with 70-100 cm. of rainfall.
- Trees of these forests are not very high.
- At the dry margins, these forests are replaced by thorny bushes.
- Excessive grazing is the most important problem

of these forests.

### **Thorny Forests and Bushes(Desert Forests)-**

- These vegetations are found in those parts of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab & Haryana where the rainfall is less than 60 cm.
- These forests are also found in a crescent belt extending from Indore district of Madhya Pradesh to Plateau regions of Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh.
- Important trees are Babool, Khair, Date, Cactii, etc.

### **Mountain Vegetation**

- Since climatic conditions change with increasing height, the change in vegetation cover at different heights in mountains is also observed.
- Here the vegetation ranges from tropical to alpine type.
- At a height of 1500 m., deciduous forests are found.
- At a height of 1500- 3500 m. coniferous forests are found which have trees with soft wood.
- Here, important trees are Deodar, Spruce, Silver fir, chir, etc., whose leaves are pointed at the ends.
- Broad leaf evergreen trees like oak, magnolia and Lawrell are found in the heavy rainfall regions of the eastern Himalays.
- Alpine vegetation is found at a height of about 2800-4800 m.
- Initially only chinara and apricot trees and pastures are found and at a higher altitude, no vegetation is found.

### **Tidal Forests**

- These forests are found in those marshy areas where the fresh water of rivers continuously mixes with the saline water of sea.
- The deltaic tracts of Ganga, Godavari, Krishna, etc. are ideally suited for this type of forests.
- Major trees of these forests prevent the erosion of coastal areas by the sea waves.
- The wood of these trees does not get spoiled in water.
- These are also evergreen forests.

**Grasses-**

- In India 60 species of grasses are found.
- Bamboo is the longest grass. Its main use is in Handicraft industry.
- Indian survey of forest report-2011 (ISFR - 2011) was issued on 7th Feb. 2012 .
- First National Forest Policy came in 1952.
- Present National Forest Policy is of 1988.
- According to this policy there should be atleast 33% forests. If the area is hilly or tribal then it becomes 66%.

**Land use in India -**

(a) Very Dense Forests (More than 70%)	2.54%
(b) Medium Dense Forests (40%-70%)	9.76%
(c) Open Forests (10%-40%)	8.75%
(d) Tree Cover	2.75%
(e) Shurbs	1.28%
(f) Non Forests	77.67%

**Data****A. Maximum Forest Cover Area (Statewise):-**

1. Madhya Pradesh
2. Arunachal Pradesh
3. Chattisgarh

**B. Maximum Forest Cover Area (Union Territories):-**

1. Andaman Nicobar
2. Dadar Nagar Hveli
3. Puduchhery

**C. Maximum Forest Cover Percentage:-**

1. Mizoram (90.68%)
2. Lakshdweep (84.56%)
3. Andaman & Nicobar Islands (81.51%)
4. Arunachal Pradesh (80.50%)
5. Nagaland (80.33%)

**D. Minimum Forest Cover Area (Statewise):-**

1. Sikkim
2. Tripura
3. Mizoram

**E. Minimum Forest Cover Area (Union Territories):-**

1. Daman & Diu
2. Puduchhery
3. Delhi

**F. Minimum Forest Cover Percentage:-**

1. Punjab (3.50%)
2. Haryana (3.64%)
3. Rajasthan (4.70%)
4. Daman & Diu (5.40%)
5. Puduchhery (10.40%)