



Research Unit
Press Information Bureau
Government of India

International Day of Forests 2025

India's Integrated Vision for Forests, Food, and Sustainability

(Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change)

20th March, 2025

Introduction

Forests are the lifelines of our planet, providing oxygen, food, medicine, and livelihoods to millions. Beyond their ecological significance, forests are pillars of global food security, offering essential resources such as fruits, seeds, roots, and wild meat, which support indigenous and rural communities. Every year on March 21, the world celebrates the International Day of Forests to celebrate all types of forests, recognize the importance of trees and forests, and take action to protect them.



In year 2012, the United Nations declared March 21 as the International Day of Forests (IDF) to celebrate and raise awareness about the vital role of forests. Every year a new theme is chosen by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. The theme for this year is **"Forests and Food,"** which emphasizes the deep connection between forests and global food security.

In India forests are deeply intertwined with culture, economy, and biodiversity, and their protection is not just an environmental necessity but a fundamental responsibility. In this direction, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and related ministries of Government of India have launched various schemes that link **forests to food security, nutrition, and livelihoods**.



National Agroforestry Policy

Agroforestry is a sustainable land-use system that integrates trees and crops to enhance agricultural productivity, improve soil fertility, and provide an additional income source for farmers. Recognizing its potential, the Government of India introduced the National Agroforestry Policy in 2014 to promote tree plantation in farmland.








Objectives of the Scheme

The National Agroforestry Scheme aims to encourage farmers to adopt agroforestry for climate resilience, environmental conservation, and economic benefits.

Objectives of National Agroforestry Scheme

- Expanding tree plantations alongside crops to improve farm productivity and income.
- Ensuring the availability of Quality Planting Material (QPM) such as improved seeds, seedlings, clones, and hybrid varieties.
- Popularizing agroforestry models suited for different regions and land-use conditions.
- Creating a database and knowledge system for research and farmer guidance.
- Strengthening market linkages for agroforestry products like timber, biofuels, fiber, silk, and medicinal plants.
- Promoting value addition and processing to enhance profitability.
- Using modern technology such as geo-tagging, AI, and satellite imagery for monitoring plantations.



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Implementation Strategy

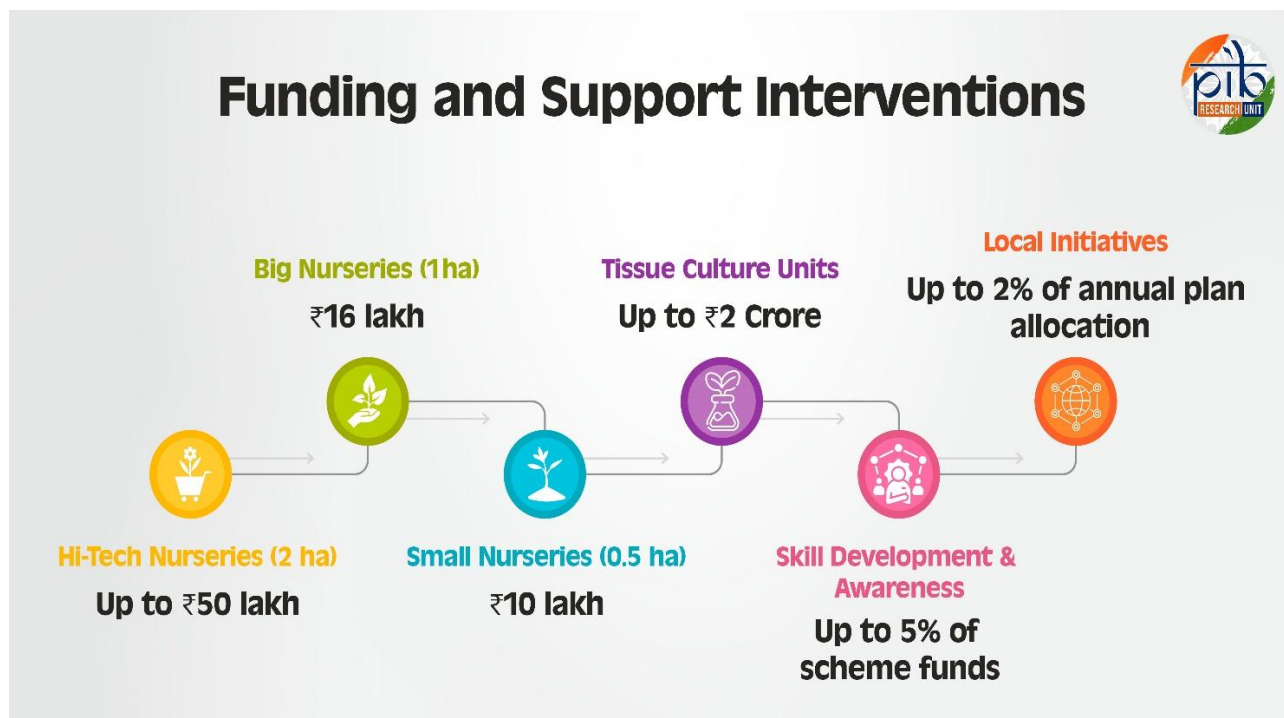
The scheme emphasizes the production and distribution of **Quality Planting Material (QPM)** through nurseries and tissue culture units. The **ICAR-Central Agroforestry Research Institute (CAFRI)** is the nodal agency responsible for providing technical support, certification, and training. Various institutions such as **ICFRE, CSIR, ICRAF, and state agricultural universities** collaborate to implement the program effectively.

Market and Economic Support

To make agroforestry profitable, the scheme supports farmers through **price guarantees and buy-back options** for farm-grown trees. It also encourages private sector participation in the marketing and processing of agroforestry products. Additionally, agroforestry integrates well with India's strategy to promote **millets**, as millets thrive in tree-based farming systems.

Funding and Support Interventions

The government provides **financial assistance** for the establishment of nurseries and research projects.



Green India Mission

The Green India Mission (GIM) also known as National Mission for a Green India, is a key part of India's National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). It is one of the eight missions under NAPCC. The mission aims to protect, restore, and enhance India's forest cover while tackling climate change. GIM focuses on improving biodiversity, water resources, and ecosystems like mangroves and wetlands, all while helping absorb carbon. The activities under GIM were started in the FY 2015-16.

Mission Goals:

- Expand forest/tree cover by 5 million hectares (mha) and improve the quality of another 5 mha of forest and non-forest land.
- Boost ecosystem services like carbon storage, water management, and biodiversity.
- Improve livelihoods for 3 million households by increasing income from forest-based activities.

Sub-Missions:

GIM has five sub-missions, each focused on a different aspect of greening:

1. **Enhancing Forest Cover** – Improving Forest quality and ecosystem services.
2. **Ecosystem Restoration** – Reforesting and increasing forest cover.
3. **Urban Greening** – Adding more trees in cities and nearby areas.
4. **Agro-Forestry & Social Forestry** – Boosting biomass and creating carbon sinks.
5. **Wetland Restoration** – Reviving critical wetlands.



Ecosystem Services Improvement Project (ESIP)

The Green India Mission is working on the **Ecosystem Services Improvement Project (ESIP)**, a World Bank-backed initiative in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

Funding and Expenditure

As of July 2024, Rs. 909.82 crores have been allocated to 17 states and one Union Territory for plantation and eco-restoration over 155,130 hectares. In Maharashtra's Palghar district, 464.20 hectares in Dahanu Division have been covered under GIM for plantation and eco-restoration.

Forest Fire Prevention & Management Scheme

The **Forest Fire Prevention & Management** is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** that supports states and Union Territories in preventing and controlling forest fires. The Ministry provides financial assistance to help implement various fire prevention and management measures.

India has a forest fire detection system managed by the Forest Survey of India, Dehradun. It uses remote sensing technology to detect and share information about forest fires in near real-time. This system plays a crucial role in the early detection and effective management of forest fires across the country. The Ministry has also constituted a Crisis Management Group under the chairmanship of Secretary (EF&CC) to deal with crises arising as a result of forest fires.



Source: India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023

Objectives of the scheme

The scheme aims to reduce forest fire incidents and restore productivity in affected areas. It emphasizes the involvement of local communities in forest protection and contributes to maintaining environmental stability. Developing a fire danger rating system and forecasting methods is also a key objective. The scheme encourages the use of modern technology, such as Remote Sensing, GPS, and GIS, to enhance fire prevention efforts. Additionally, it seeks to improve knowledge about the impact and behaviour of forest fires.

Implementation

Following the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee and NGT's directions, the Ministry has developed the **National Action Plan on Forest Fire**. It is based on a study with the World Bank and consultations with key stakeholders like State Forest Departments and the National Disaster Management Authority. In addition to forest fire detection, the Forest Survey of India (FSI), under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, has developed a satellite-based **Forest Fire Monitoring and Alert System**. This system helps in the timely detection and monitoring of forest fires. Fire alerts are sent via SMS and email to registered users, ensuring quick response and better fire management.

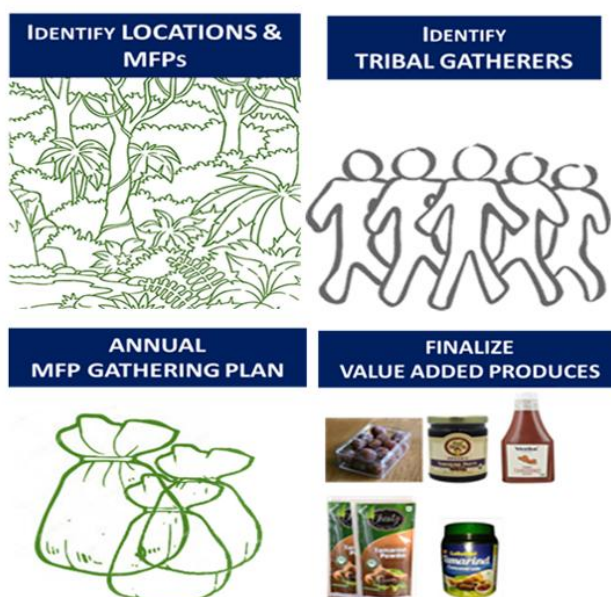
Van Dhan Yojana

Launched in 2018 by the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** and **TRIFED**, the **Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY)** aims to improve the livelihood of tribal communities by enhancing the value of forest produce. The scheme helps tribal gatherers become entrepreneurs through skill training, infrastructure support, and market linkages.



Formation of Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs)

Under this initiative, tribal communities form **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs)**, each consisting of **300 members from 15 Self-Help Groups (SHGs)**. These Kendras serve as hubs for processing, value addition, and marketing of **Minor Forest Produce (MFPs)**.



Financial Support and Implementation

The scheme is **a centrally funded**, with **₹15 lakh allocated per Kendra**. Tribal members contribute **₹1,000 each** to ensure ownership. The government also supports branding, packaging, and global market access for tribal products.

Two-Stage Implementation

1. **Stage I:** Establishment of **6,000 Kendras** across tribal districts with basic facilities.
2. **Stage II:** Scaling up successful Kendras with better infrastructure, such as storage and processing units.

Impact and Benefits

PMVDY generates **sustainable livelihoods**, promotes **forest conservation**, discourages **tribal migration**, and strengthens the **tribal economy**, making it a key initiative for India's tribal development.

Conclusion

India's commitment to forest conservation and sustainable development is evident through various initiatives like the **National Agroforestry Policy, Green India Mission, Forest Fire Prevention & Management Scheme, and Van Dhan Yojana**. These programs not only help restore and protect forest ecosystems but also enhance livelihoods, promote climate resilience, and strengthen food security. On **International Day of Forests 2025**, it is crucial to reaffirm our dedication to preserving forests as vital resources for future generations. By integrating conservation efforts with community participation and sustainable policies, India continues to pave the way for a greener, healthier, and more prosperous future.

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