

Forest Plus 2.0

April 3, 2020

Why in news?

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) and India's Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) officially launched Forest-PLUS 2.0 in September 2019.

About Forest Plus 2.0:

- It is a **five-year programme initiated in December 2018** that focuses on developing tools and techniques to bolster ecosystem management and harnessing ecosystem services in forest landscape management.
- **Tetra Tech ARD**, a consulting and engineering company of US implements the programme and **IORA Ecological Solutions**, a New Delhi-based environmental advisory group, is its implementation partner.
- It is the second set of pilot projects, **meant to enhance sustainable forest landscape management after Forest-PLUS completed its five years in 2017.**
- The **first set focused on capacity building to help India participate in REDD+** which included four pilot projects in Sikkim, Rampur, Shivamogga and Hoshangabad.
- Forest-PLUS 2.0 comprises **pilot project in three landscapes – Gaya in Bihar, Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala and Medak in Telangana.**
- These sites were chosen due to the contrast in their landscapes – Bihar is a forest deficit area, Telangana is a relatively drier area where there is ample scope for community livelihood enhancement and Kerala is rich in biodiversity.
- The **targets of this set are –**
 - 1,20,000 hectares of land under improved management

- New, inclusive economic activity worth \$12 million
- Measurable benefits accrued to 800,000 households
- To achieve these targets, the programme has **three focal points of action** –
 - Developing tools for multiple services in forests management like innovative apps for automating forest planning processes, model forest management plans.
 - Developing incentive-based instruments for leveraging finance.
 - Unlocking economic opportunities for forest-dependent people by modeling and setting up conservation enterprises and mobilizing investment from the private sector.