

Green wall of India

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Why in news?

The Centre is planning to create a 1,400km long and 5km wide green belt from Gujarat to the Delhi-Haryana border.

What is it?

- It has been worked out on the lines of the **“Great Green Wall”** running through the width of Africa, from **Dakar (Senegal) to Djibouti**, to combat climate change and desertification.
- In India, **Aravali has been identified** as one of the key degraded zones to be taken up for greening under India’s target to restore 26 million hectares (mha) of its land.
- The Aravalli range, which **separates western India’s Thar Desert from the relatively green plains to its east**, has lost so much green cover that it is losing its ability to act as a natural barrier against the heat and dust that blows in from the west.
- The greener it remains, the less likely that the desert will expand into the rest of the Indian landmass.
- According to the **desertification and land degradation atlas of India**, brought out by the ISRO in 2016, **Gujarat, Rajasthan and Delhi have more than 50% of their total area as degraded land** and are under the threat of desertification.
- Hence the **green wall of India is being planned from Porbandar to Panipat** which will help in restoring degraded land through afforestation along the Aravali hill range.
- The overarching objective is to **address the rising rates of land degradation** and the **eastward expansion of the Thar Desert**.
- It will also act as a **barrier for dust coming from the**

deserts in western India and Pakistan.

- Project is yet to get a formal nod.

Similar initiatives:

- **Africa's Great Green Wall** was launched by the African Union a decade ago with the support of many partners including UNCCD, World Bank and the European Commission.
- So far, work on nearly 15% of the wall is under way.
- In COP14 of UNCCD held in India, a similar initiative called **Peace Forest Initiative (PFI) to develop forests in conflict areas between South and North Korea** including the demilitarized zone was announced.
- The PFI has been inspired from the **Peace Park between Peru and Ecuador.**