

Mangrove Alliance for Climate (MAC)

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In news– Dubbing mangrove forests the “most productive ecosystems” of the world, India has recently joined the MAC at the 27th Summit of the Conference of Parties (COP27) at Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt.

What is Mangrove Alliance for Climate(MAC)?

- **Spearheaded by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in partnership with Indonesia, MAC was launched at the COP27 Summit in Egypt** to scale up and accelerate the conservation and restoration of the mangrove forests.
- The alliance will **raise awareness about the role of mangroves** as a **“nature-based solution to climate change”**.
- The **alliance will be amplified at the G20 Summit** that will be held between November 15 and 16 in Bali under the presidency of Indonesia.
- The MAC seeks to scale up, accelerate conservation, restoration and growing plantation efforts of mangrove ecosystems for the benefit of communities globally, and recognize the importance of these ecosystems for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Significance of Mangroves-

- According to MAC, **Mangrove forests can store ten times more carbon per hectare than terrestrial forests.**
- Also, **they can store carbon up to 400 per cent faster** than land-based tropical rainforests.
- According to Global Mangrove Alliance (GMA), when the mangroves are cut, the carbon stored in these plants gets released into the air. So, preserving them to keep the carbon emissions levels low is necessary.

- Once the plants die, they take the stored carbon into the soil. This is called **“Blue Carbon”**.
- Moreover, **Mangrove forests act as natural barriers against rising tides and storms**. Each year, they prevent property damages of over \$65 billion.
- They also **provide breeding grounds for marine biodiversity and 80% of global fish populations** depend on healthy mangrove ecosystems.
- **India contributes to nearly half of the total mangrove cover in South Asia**.
- According to the Forest Survey report 2021 released in January, **mangroves cover in the country is 4,992 square km, which is 0.15 per cent of the country’s total geographical area**. Since 2019, the cover has risen by only 17 sq km.
- **West Bengal has the highest percentage of mangrove cover in India**, mainly because it has Sundarbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world.
- It is followed by Gujarat and Andaman, and Nicobar islands.
- Other states that have mangrove cover are Maharashtra, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Goa and Kerala.

Global Mangrove Alliance-

- The Global Mangrove Alliance is an ambitious initiative that seeks to increase global mangrove cover by 20% by 2030.
- Launched in June 2017, the Alliance is an unprecedented collaboration that brings together NGOs, governments, industry, local communities and funders towards a common goal.
- The goal of the Global Mangrove Alliance is to increase the global area of mangrove habitat through conservation, restoration and equitable management.
- The Alliance endeavours to implement its Global Mangrove Strategy to achieve global priorities and actions.