

Africa's Great Green Wall

Syllabus-GS 3- Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation

Why in news:

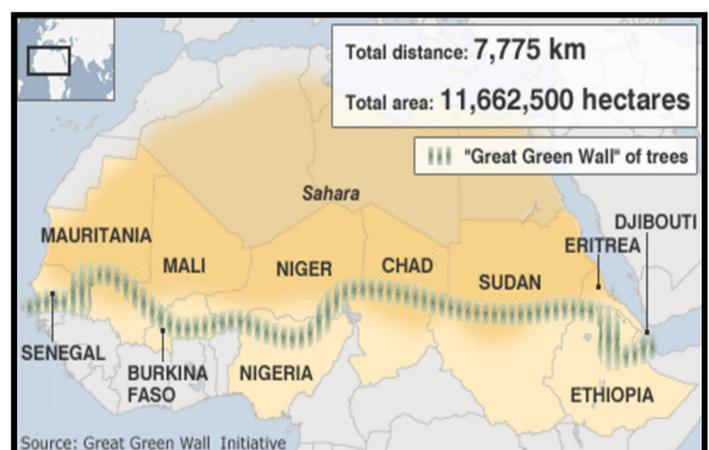
- ❖ Africa's **Great Green Wall (GGW)** programme to combat desertification in the Sahel region is an important contribution towards combating climate change, **Food and Agriculture Organization** of the United Nations (FAO) said in a study recently.

More information:

- ❖ The study showed that for every dollar invested into land restoration yields across the African continent from Senegal in the west to Djibouti in the east, investors can expect an average return of \$1.20, with outcomes ranging between \$1.10 and \$4.40.
- ❖ The Sahel extends **south of the Sahara** from **Senegal in the west** to **Ethiopia in the east** of Africa. Vast areas of the **formerly fertile region are now virtually uncultivated** due to droughts, poor agricultural cultivation methods as well as land overuse due to the growing demand for food and firewood.
- ❖ The GGW initiative, launched in 2007 by the African Union, aims to transform the lives of 100 million people by growing an 8,000-kilometre-long and 15-km-wide mosaic of trees, grasslands, vegetation and plants.
 - ✓ The **11 countries** selected as intervention zones for the Great Green Wall are **Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan.**
 - ✓ By 2030, the GGW aims to sequester 250 million tonnes of carbon, restore 100 million hectares of currently degraded land and create 10 million jobs for the world's poorest people.
 - ✓ only **four million hectares had been restored** between 2007 and 2019.
 - ✓ The GGW offers multiple (environmental, social and economic) benefits on an epic scale, touching on 15 of the 17 United Nations-mandated Sustainable Development Goals.

DO YOU KNOW

- ✚ The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- ✚ Established in 1945, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has its headquarters in **Rome, Italy.**
- ✚ **World Food Day** is celebrated every year on **16th October** to mark the anniversary of the founding of the FAO in 1945.
- ✚ **Publications:**
 - World Food Price Index.
 - The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA).
 - The State of the World's Forests (SOFO).
 - The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI).
 - The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets (SOCO).



- ✓ One of the key objectives of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification is to reach **Land Degradation Neutrality by 2030**, a target also included in the SDG 15.
- ❖ An investment of \$44 billion, according to the study, is needed to fund all proposed land restoration activities.
- ❖ The GGW countries, according to a UN report released September 2020, need to **speed up the current pace of land restoration to an average of 8.2 million hectares every year**.
 - ✓ France has rushed to help: President Emmanuel Macron January 11, 2021, announced \$14 billion to scale up work.
 - ✓ The World Bank, too, in January 2021, pledged \$5 billion for greening and development of the degraded lands in the Sahel region.

RELATED INFORMATION

Green Wall of India

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

- ✚ The plan is **inspired by Africa's 'Great Green Wall' project**.
- ✚ The **objective** of India's Green Wall is to **address the rising rates of land degradation and the eastward expansion of the Thar desert**.
- ✚ The green belt being planned from **Porbandar to Panipat** through **afforestation along the Aravali hill range**. It will also act as a barrier for dust coming from the deserts in western India and Pakistan.
 - The **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**.
 - A 2016 report from the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** had also indicated that Delhi, Gujarat and Rajasthan had already degraded over 50% of their land.



United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

- ✚ Established in **1994**.
- ✚ It is **the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management**.
- ✚ It is **the only convention stemming from a direct recommendation of the Rio Conference's Agenda 21**.
- ✚ To help publicize the Convention, **2006 was declared "International Year of Deserts and Desertification"**.



- ✚ **Focus areas:** The Convention addresses specifically the arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, known as the drylands, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples can be found.
- ✚ **Aim:** Its 197 Parties aim, through partnerships, to implement the Convention and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The end goal is to protect land from over-use and drought, so it can continue to provide food, water and energy.
- ✚ The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is ***the nodal Ministry for this Convention.***
- ✚ India for the first time hosted the 14th session of the Conference of Parties (COP-14) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in September 2019.

GUIDANCE IAS