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# CH-5 NATURAL VEGETATION AND RELIEF - FEATURES.

→ Natural vegetation refers to a plant community, which has grown naturally without human aid & has been left undisturbed by humans for a long time. This is termed as virgin vegetation.

→ The term flora is used to denote plants of a particular region/period.  
→ The species of animals are referred to as fauna.

## Relief Features

\* This high diversity in flora & fauna kingdom is due to following factors :-

LAND :- → Land affects natural vegetation directly & indirectly.

→ The fertile level is generally devoted to agriculture.

→ The undulating & rough terrains are areas where grassland & woodlands develop & give shelter to a variety of wildlife.

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Soil: → Different types of soil provide a basis for different types of vegetation.  
→ The sandy soils of the desert support cactus & thorny bushes, while wet, marshy, deltaic soils support mangroves & deltaic vegetation.

→ The soil at the hill slopes has conical trees.

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CLIMATE :- → Temperature :-

→ The character & extent of vegetation are mainly determined by temperature along with humidity in the air, precipitation & soil.

→ The fall in the temp. affects the vegetation & its growth.

→ Photoperiod (Sunlight) → The variation in the duration of sunlight at different places is due to differences in latitude, altitude, season & duration of the day.

→ Due to the longer duration of sunlight,

trees grow faster in summer.

→ Precipitation: → Areas of heavy rainfall have more dense vegetation as compared to areas of less rainfall.

## Types of Vegetation

• In India, the following major types of vegetation are found:-

- i) Tropical Evergreen Forests.
- ii) Tropical Deciduous Forests.
- iii) Tropical Thorn Forests & Scrubs.
- iv) Montane Forests.
- v) Mangrove Forests.

## TROPICAL EVERGREEN FORESTS.

→ These forests are present in the Western Ghats & the island groups of Lakshadweep, Andaman & Nicobar, upper parts of Assam & Tamil Nadu coast.

→ These forests grow best in areas having rainfall more than 200 cm with a short dry season.

- The trees reach a great height up to 60m or even above.
- It has the vegetation of all kinds like trees, shrubs & creepers giving it a multilayered structure.
- These forests appear green all the year-round.
- Imp. trees of this forest are ebony, mahogany, rosewood, rubber & cinchona.
- Common animals found in these forests are elephant, monkey, lemur & deer.

## TROPICAL DECIDUOUS FORESTS.

- These forests are called monsoon forests.
- They are spread over the region having rainfall b/w 200cm & 70cm.
- They shed their leaves about 6 to 8 weeks in dry summer.
- In these forests, the common animals found are lion, tiger, pig, deer & elephant.

→ These forests are further divided into :-  
■ Moist deciduous :- These are found in areas having rainfall b/w 200 & 100 cm.

\* Teak is the most dominant species of this forest.

\* Bamboos, sal, shisham, sandalwood, khair, kusum, arjun & mulberry are other commercially important species.

■ Dry deciduous :- These are found in areas having rainfall between 100 cm & 70 cm.

\* These are open stretches, in which teak, sal, peepal & neem grow.

### THORN FORESTS AND SCRUBS.

→ The natural vegetation consists of thorny trees & bushes. This type of vegetation is found in the north-western part of the country.

Including semi-arid areas of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh & Haryana.

→ Arid → Desertic

Semi Arid → Not Desertic

→ Precipitation - 70 to 100 cm.

→ Trees are scattered & have long roots penetrating deep into the soil to get moisture.

→ The stems are moist to conserve water.

→ leaves are mostly thick & small to minimize evaporation.

→ Acacias, Palms, euphorbias & cacti are the main plant species.

→ Common animals are rats, mice, rabbits, fox, wolf, tiger, lion, wild ass, ~~low~~ horses & camels.

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## Montane Forests.

→ Montane forests are the forests which are found in the mountains.

→ The wet temp. type of forests are found b/w a height of 1000 & 2000 mts.

→ At high altitudes, generally, more than 3600 mts above the sea level, temperate forests & grasslands

- give way to the alpine vegetation.
- Alpine grasslands are used for grazing.
  - At higher altitudes, mosses & lichens form part of tundra vegetation.
  - The common animals found are Kashmir stag, spotted deer, wild sheep, jack, rabbit, Tibetan antelope, yak, snow leopard, squirrels, shaggy horned wild ibex, bear & rare red panda, sheep & goats.

## MANGROVE FORESTS.

- Mangroves are trees that live along tropical coastlines, rooted in salty sediments, often underwater.
- Mangrove tidal forests are found in the areas of coasts influenced by tides. Mud & silt get accumulated on such ~~the~~ coasts.
- Dense mangroves are the common varieties with roots of the plants submerged underwater.

- ~~Sandari~~ trees are found in Ganga - Brahmaputra delta & provide hard timbers.
- Royal Bengal Tigere is a famous animal in these forests.



## WILDLIFE

- ★ India is rich in its fauna.
- Elephants are found in the hot wet forests of Assam, Karnataka & Kerala.
- One-horned rhinoceroses are found in Assam & West Bengal.
- Rann of Kachch is the habitat for wild ass whereas the Thar Desert is the habitat for camel.
- The natural habitat of the Indian lion is the Gir forest in Gujarat.
- Tigers are found in the forests of Madhya Pradesh, the Sunderbans of West Bengal & the Himalayan region.
- Ladakh's freezing high altitudes are home to yak, the shaggy horned wild ox, the Tibetan antelope, the bharal (blue sheep), wild sheep, & the kiang (Tibetan wild ass).
- In the rivers, lakes & coastal areas, turtles, crocodiles & gharials are found.
- Peacocks, pheasants, ducks, parakeets, cranes & pigeons are some of the birds inhabiting the forests & wetlands of the country.

## Cause Of Major Threat To flora & fauna.

→ Every species has an imp. role in the ecosystem. Hence, conservation of flora & fauna is essential. About 1300 plants species are endangered & 20 species are extinct. The main causes of this major threat to nature are:-

- Hunting for commercial purposes.
- Pollution due to chemical & industrial waste.
- Rapidly cutting of the forests for cultivation & habitation.

## Govt. Initiative To Protect Flora & Fauna.

- The govt. has taken many steps to protect the flora & fauna of ~~the~~ our country.
- 18 biosphere reserves have been set up in India to protect flora & fauna. 10 out of these have been included in the world network of biosphere reserves.
- Financial & technical assistance has been provided to many botanical gardens

by the govt. since 1992.

→ Project Tiger, Project Rhino, Project Great Indian Bustard & many other eco-developmental projects have been introduced by the govt.

→ 103 National Parks, 535 wildlife Sanctuaries & Zoological gardens are set up to take care of natural heritage.

## HOMWORK FOR WEEK

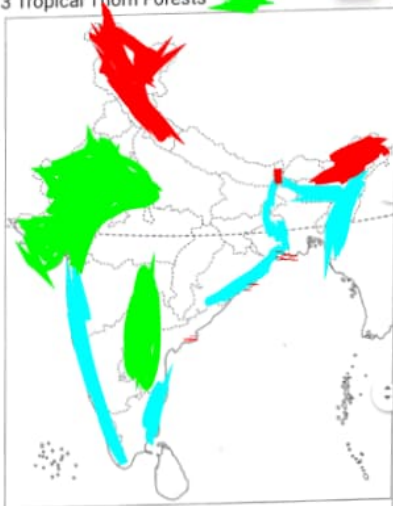
Natural vegetation in India includes Tropical Evergreen Forests, Tropical Deciduous Forests, Montane Forests, Mangrove Forests and Tropical Thorn Forests. This map shows the natural vegetation of India.



Question 1.

Locate and label the following items on the given map

- 1 Tropical Evergreen Forests
- 2 Montane Forests
- 3 Tropical Thorn Forests



Question 2.

Features are marked by numbers in the given political map of India, Identify these features with the help of the following information and write their correct names on the lines marked in the map.

- 1 A type of vegetation
- 2 A type of vegetation
- 3 A type of vegetation

