

Ch-5 : Natural Vegetation & Wildlife

Notes :-

→ Montane Forests :

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

The wet temperate type of forests are found between a height of 1000 & 2000 metres.

2. At high altitudes, generally, more than

3000m 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 horn wild ibex, bear & rare red panda, sheep & goats.

→ Mangrove Forests:

* Mangroves are trees that live along tropical coastlines, rooted in salty sediments, often underwater.

1. The mangrove tidal forests are found in the areas of coasts influenced by tides. Mud & silt get accumulated on such coasts.

2. Dense mangroves are the common varieties with roots of the plants submerged underwater.

3. Sundari trees are found in Ganga -

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Brahmaputra delta & provide hard timber

4. Royal Bengal Tiger is a famous animal in these forests.

Notes:-

Types of vegetation:

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

1. Tropical Evergreen Forests
2. Tropical Deciduous Forests
3. Tropical Thorn Forests & Scrubs
4. Montane Forests
5. 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.

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

2. The trees reach great heights up to 60m or even above.

3. It has the vegetation of all kinds i.e. trees, shrubs & creepers giving it a multilayered structure.

4. These forests appear green all the year:-

round.

5. Important trees of this forest are ebony, mahogany, rosewood, rubber & cinchona.

6. Common animals found in these forests are elephant, monkey, lemur & deer.

→ Tropical deciduous forests: these forests are also called the monsoon forests.

1. They are spread over the region having rainfall between 200cm & 70cm.

2. They shed their leaves about 6 to 8 weeks in the dry summer.

3. 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 between 200 & 100cm. 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 100cm & 70cm. There are open stretches, in which teak, sal, peepal & neem grow.

→ The thorn forests & 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.

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

2. The stems are moist to conserve water.

3. Leaves are mostly thick & small to minimise evaporation.

4. Acacias, palms, euphorbias & cacti are the main plant species.

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

→ Wildlife: India is rich in its fauna.

1. Elephants are found in the hot wet forests

of Assam, Karnataka & Kerala.

2. One-horned rhinoceroses are found in Assam & West Bengal.

3. Rann of Kachchh is the habitat for wild ass whereas the Thar Desert is the habitat for camels.

4. The natural habitat of the Indian lion is the Gir forest in Gujarat.

5. Tigers are found in the forests of Madhya Pradesh, the Sundarbans of West Bengal & the Himalayan region.

6. 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).

7. In the rivers, lakes & coastal areas, turtles, crocodiles & gharials are found.

8. 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 important role in the ecosystem. Hence, conservation of flora & fauna is essential. About 1,300 plant species are endangered & 20 species are extinct. The main causes of this major threat to nature are:

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

→ Government initiative to protect flora & fauna: the government has taken many steps to protect the flora & fauna of our country.

1. 18 biosphere reserves have been set up in India to protect flora & fauna of our country. 10 out of these have been included in the world network of biosphere reserves.

2. Financial & technical assistance has been provided to many botanical gardens by the government since 1992.

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

4. 103 National Parks, 535 Wildlife Sanctuaries & Zoological gardens are set up to take care of natural heritage.

* Q & A : Answers :-

2.a. Montane forest

b. Tropical deciduous forest

c. Tropical thorn forest