

UPSC Civil Services Examination

UPSC Notes [GS-I]

Topic: Natural Vegetation in India (Geography Notes for UPSC)

Natural Vegetation of India

India is bestowed with a wide range of flora and fauna. Due to a diverse geographical and climatic condition, an extensive range of natural vegetation grows in India.

Types of Natural Vegetation in India

(Vegetation Types of India)

1. Tropical Evergreen Rain Forests
2. Deciduous or Monsoon Type of Forests
3. Dry Deciduous Forests
4. Mountain Forests
5. Tidal or Mangrove Forests
6. Semi-Desert and Desert Vegetations

Tropical evergreen rain forests

The Tropical Evergreen rain forests are found in the areas where precipitation is more than 200 cm. They are largely found in the Northeastern regions of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Assam, Nagaland, the Western Ghats, the Tarai areas of the Himalayas and the Andaman groups of Islands. They are also found in the hills of Khasi and Jaintia. The trees in this area have intense growth. The major trees found in this area are Sandal Wood, Rosewood, Garjan, Mahogany, and bamboo. It has copious vegetation of all kinds – trees, shrubs, and creepers giving it a multilayered structure. The elephants, monkey, lemur are the common animals found in these areas.

Deciduous or Monsoon type of forests

The Deciduous forests are found on the lower slope of the Himalayas, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Orissa, Karnataka, Maharashtra Jharkhand and the adjoining areas. The precipitation in this area is between 100 cm and 200 cm. The Teak is the dominant species seen in the area. Along with that Deodar, Blue Gum, Pal Ash, Sal, Sandalwood, Ebony, Arjun, Khair, and Bamboo are also seen. The trees in this forest shed their leaves during dry winter and dry summer. On the basis of the availability of water, these forests are again divided into moist and dry deciduous.

Dry deciduous forests

These forests grow in areas where the precipitation is between 50 cm and 100 cm. These are mainly seen in the areas of the Central Deccan plateau, Punjab, Haryana, parts of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and South-east of Rajasthan.

Mountain forests

Mountain forests differ significantly along the slopes of the mountain. On the foothills of the Himalayas until a height of 1500 meters, evergreen trees like Sal, teak, and bamboo grow copiously. On the higher slope, temperate conifer trees like pine, fir, and oak grow. At the higher elevation of the Himalayas, rhododendrons and junipers are found. Further, than these vegetation zones, alpine grasslands appear up to the snowfield.

Tidal or Mangrove forests

The tidal or mangrove forests grow by the side of the coast and on the edges of the deltas e.g., the deltas of the Cauvery, Krishna, Mahanadi, Godavari, and Ganga. In West Bengal, these forests are known as 'Sundarbans'. The 'sundari' is the most major tree in these forests. The important trees of the tidal forests are hogla, garan, pasur etc. This forest is an important factor in the timber industry as they provide timber and firewood. Palm and coconut trees beautify the coastal strip.

Semi-deserts and Deserts vegetations

This area receives rainfall of less than 50 cm. Thorny bushes, acacia, and Babul are found in this vegetation region. The Indian wild date is generally found here. They have long roots and thick flesh. The plants found in this region store water in their stem to endure during the drought. These vegetations are found in parts of Gujarat's, Punjab and in Rajasthan.

