

# United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) - UPSC Notes

International conventions and protocols are important topics for the UPSC IAS exam. The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is an international convention to combat desertification and the ill-effects of drought. Learn more about this treaty for the [IAS exam](#) environment and ecology segments.

## UNCCD - Basic Facts

The UNCCD is a [United Nations](#) convention aimed at addressing desertification and droughts.

### UPSC PRELIMS FACTS

## UNCCD



**Name: United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification**

**Opened for signature: 1994**

**Entered into force: 1996**

**Sector: Combating desertification and droughts**

**Has India ratified UNCCD? Yes (in 1996)**

**Nodal agency in India: Environment Ministry**

- It is a legally binding convention linking development and environment to sustainable land management.
- The UNCCD addresses particularly the arid, semi-arid & dry sub-humid areas, called **drylands**, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples are found.
- The convention was drafted and opened for signing in 1994. It became effective in 1996 after receiving 50 ratifications.
- The convention obliges national governments to take measures to tackle the issue of desertification.
- The convention's 2018 - 2030 Strategic Framework is a comprehensive international commitment to attain Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) aiming at:
  - The restoration of productivity of degraded land.
  - Enhancing the livelihoods of people dependent on them.
  - Mitigating the impact of droughts on vulnerable populations.
- The convention focuses on having a bottom-up approach to achieve its goals, by involving the local communities.
- The UNCCD is one of the three **Rio Conventions**, the other two being:
  - [Convention on Biological Diversity \(UNCBD\)](#)
  - [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#)

- The three Rio Conventions work in close collaboration with each other.
- To spread the word about the UNCCD, 2006 was declared as "International Year of Deserts and Desertification".

## What is Desertification?

Desertification is the process by which the biological productivity of drylands (arid and semiarid lands) is reduced due to natural or manmade factors. Desertification does not imply the expansion of existing deserts. Some of the causes of desertification are deforestation, over-cultivation, overgrazing, imprudent irrigation practices, etc.

## UNCCD and India

India ratified the Convention to Combat Desertification in December 1996.

- The nodal ministry for the convention in India is the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- India faces a huge desertification problem. A 2016 ISRO report stated that 29% of the land in India was degraded.
- The 14th Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNCCD was held in India in 2019.
  - The conference which was held in Greater Noida had the theme, "Restore Land, Sustain Future".
  - India is the COP president for 2019 - 2021.
  - India is also a part of the **Bonn Challenge**, which is an international effort to bring 150 million hectares of the world's degraded and deforested land into restoration by 2020, and 350 million hectares by 2030.