

# World Biofuel Day

World Biofuel Day is observed on August 10 every year. It is observed to raise awareness about the importance of alternatives to conventional fossil fuels, additionally the government of India's efforts to enhance the biofuel sector.

The development of biofuels is in sync with schemes such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan

The World Biofuel Day was first observed by the Ministry of Petroleum and Gas in August 2015.

This article will give further details within the context of the Civil Services Examination

## What are Biofuels?

As stated earlier, the World Biofuel Day is observed to raise awareness on how alternative fuels are necessary for the environmental well being of the country. Thus it is important to know what biofuels are.

Biofuels are environmentally friendly fuels whose use would go a long way in reducing carbon emissions. They are created through renewable biomass resources and therefore make a strong case for sustainable development. As such biofuels will help meet the energy requirements of the 21st century world without damaging the environment in the process.

In India it will meet rural India's energy needs and fulfill the rising demands for transportation fuels associated with economic growth.

Biofuels also have the following benefits:

- Reducing dependence on crude oil
- Fostering a cleaner environment
- Generating additional income and employment for rural areas.

## Categories of Biofuel

The following are the categories of biofuel used in India

1. **Bioethanol:** Ethanol is an organic chemical compound derived from alcohol. In the case of biofuel ethanol is produced from materials like sugarcane, sugar beet, materials containing starch like corn, cassava, and from waste made from wood, forestry residues and industrial waste.

2. **Biodiesel:** It is a diesel with non-edible vegetable oil, acid oils or animal fat as its base ingredients.
3. **Advanced biofuels:** Fuels that are produced from feedstocks, non-food crops or industrial waste. Such fuels have low CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and do not compete with crops for land use. Fuels derived from 3G biofuels, bio hydrogen and bio-methanol can be termed as 'Advanced biofuels'
4. **Drop-in fuels :** Liquid fuel produced from biomass, agri residues, industrial wastes etc. are categorised as Drop-in Fuels. They should meet the prescribed standards in pure or blended form.
5. **Bio-CNG :** A pure form of bio-gas created whose composition is similar to that of fossil fuels. Its raw materials consist of animal dung, food waste and sewage water.

## Government Initiatives Regarding Biofuels

Several schemes and initiatives that encourage the adoption of biofuels have been adopted in India. For example, the government approved the National Policy on Biofuels in June 2011 which aimed to reach the target of 20% ethanol-blending and 5% biodiesel blending by 2030. In addition, this plan incentivizes production of advanced biofuels.

Other initiatives are as follows:

- Development of locally made Cellulolytic Enzyme for creation of biofuels
- Strengthening of cross-country collaboration through programs like Atal Innovation Mission
- Through the Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana, commercial ecosystems will be set up for projects that will boost research and development in the Ethanol sector
- **GOBAR (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources) DHAN scheme, 2018:** Focuses on managing and converting cattle dung and agricultural wastes in farms to useful compost and bio-CNG, fulfilling the dual objectives of keeping villages clean and improving rural household income
- **Repurpose Used Cooking Oil (RUCO):** It was launched by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), aims for an ecosystem that will enable the collection and conversion of used cooking oil to biodiesel.

In September 2019, the Government increased the price of C-heavy molasses-based ethanol to Rs. 43.75 from Rs. 43.46 to give a boost to the EBP Programme.

## Relevant Questions Regarding World Biofuel Day

### What was the World Biofuel Day theme for 2020 and 2019?

The World Biofuel Day themes for 2020 and 2019 were Biofuels towards Atmanirbhar Bharat and Production of Biodiesel from Used Cooking Oil (UCO) respectively.

**Which country ranks high in biofuel consumption?**

The world's largest biofuels consumer is the United States of America at 1,557.1 petajoules followed by Brazil at 999.2 petajoules.