

27 Apr 2021: PIB Summary & Analysis

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1. 'Large Area Certification' scheme

Context:

Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers' Welfare (DAC&FW) is working to identify Traditional Organic Areas to transform them into certified organic production hubs.

What's in the news?

- The Government of India has certified 14,491 ha of such area under Car Nicobar and Nancowry group of islands in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- This area becomes the first large contiguous territory to be conferred with **organic certification under the 'Large Area Certification' (LAC) scheme** of the PGS-India (Participatory Guarantee System) certification programme.

'Large Area Certification' (LAC) scheme of the PGS-India (Participatory Guarantee System) certification programme:

- Under LAC, each village in the area is considered as one cluster/group.
- All farmers with their farmland and livestock need to adhere to the standard requirements and on being verified get certified en mass without the need to go under conversion period.
- Certification is renewed on annual basis through verification by a process of peer appraisals as per the process of PGS-India.
- The LAC is a quick certification programme under the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana.

Benefits of LAC:

- As per the established norm of organic production systems, the areas having chemical input usage history are required to undergo a transition period of minimum 2-3 years to qualify as organic.
- During this period, farmers need to adopt standard organic agriculture practices and keep their farms under the certification process.
- On successful completion, such farms can be certified as organic after 2-3 years. The certification process also requires elaborate documentation and time to time verification by the certification authorities.
- Whereas under LAC requirements are simple and the area can be certified almost immediately.
- LAC is a quick certification process that is cost-effective and farmers do not have to wait for 2-3 years for marketing PGS organic certified products.

Background:

- Organic farming has been identified as a viable option promising safe and chemical residue-free food and long-term sustainability of food production systems.
 - Realising the importance of environmental and human benefits of chemical-free farming, the Government of India through the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has been promoting organic/natural farming through various schemes of Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, Organic Mission in North East, etc. since 2014.
 - The government is taking steps through the LAC to proactively transform traditional organic areas into certified organic.
 - According to the ministry, there are traditional areas in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, north-eastern states and tribal belts of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh and desert districts of Rajasthan which can be transformed to 'certified organic'.
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2. Waste Management

Context:

Integrated Solar Dryer and Pyrolysis pilot inaugurated in Chennai.

Details:

- The pilot is part of the Indo-German project 'Pyrasol' launched to transform urban organic waste into biochar and energy in smart cities.
- It was awarded to CSIR-CLRI by the Indo-German Science & Technology Centre.
- The project will ultimately lead to technology development for the joint processing of Fibrous Organic Waste (FOW) and Sewage Sludge (SS) of Indian smart cities into hygienic and highly valuable biochar associated with energy recovery, carbon sequestration and environmental improvement.

About Indo-German Science & Technology Centre:

- Indo-German Science & Technology Centre (IGSTC) was established by the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Govt. of India & Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Govt. of Germany to facilitate Indo-German R&D networking with emphasis on industry participation, applied research and technology development.
- IGSTC through its flagship program '2+2 Projects', catalyses innovation centric R&D projects by synergising the strength of research and academic institutions and public/private industries from India and Germany.

Project Pyrasol:

- The project 'Pyrasol: Smart Cities integrated energy supply, carbon sequestration and urban organic waste treatment through combined solar sludge drying and pyrolysis' was awarded by IGSTC to

CSIR-CLRI, Chennai; Ramky Enviro Engineers, Chennai; Leibniz Universität, Hannover and Biomacon GmbH, Rehburg.

- The project focuses on managing and organising collection, treatment, and disposal systems of urban wastes in Indian Smart Cities as well as in other urban centres with an integrated and interactive approach.
- Through this Pyrasol project, simple and robust processing technologies for urban organic waste will be combined in a synergetic manner and further developed to improve sanitation and welfare, supply regenerative energy, convert waste into products and reduce the carbon footprint of smart cities by an innovative organic waste drying system using the solar natural chimney effect followed by a high efficient single-chamber pyrolysis.

3. Aditya-L1 Support Cell (AL1SC)

Context:

A community service centre has been set up to bring all data on board India's first dedicated solar space mission to a single web-based interface enabling the users to quickly look at the data and identify the interesting science cases.

About AL1SC:

- The community service centre is called Aditya-L1 Support Cell (AL1SC).
- It is a joint effort of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India.
- It will be used by the guest observers in analyzing science data and preparing science observing proposals.
- AL1SC set up at the transit campus of ARIES at Haldwani, Uttarakhand, will jointly work with ISRO to maximize utilization of science data from Aditya-L1 and facilitate India's first dedicated solar space mission, [Aditya-L1](#).
- The centre will act as conduit between the users (student and faculty members from research institutes/universities/colleges, etc.) and payload teams of Aditya-L1 and the solar astronomy research community at large.
- It is slated to develop specific tools to assist guest observers/researchers to prepare observing proposals for Aditya-L1 observations and will assist ISRO with the design and development of the required analysis software for handling scientific data.
- The centre will also provide the co-aligned data from other observatories around the world that can complement the data obtained from Aditya-L1 allowing users to accomplish the science goals beyond the capabilities of the Aditya-L1.
- In addition to this, AL1SC will also build capacity by establishing periodic training of the national user community on data analysis and proposal preparation.