

International Day for the conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem 26th July 2021

The International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 2015 and celebrated each year on 26 July, aims to raise awareness of the importance of mangrove ecosystems as “a unique, special and vulnerable ecosystem”

Mangroves are rare, spectacular and prolific ecosystems on the boundary between land and sea. These extra ordinary ecosystems contribute to the wellbeing, food security, and protection of coastal communities worldwide. They support a rich biodiversity and provide a valuable nursery habitat for fish and crustaceans. Mangroves also act as a form of natural coastal defence against storm surges, tsunamis, rising sea levels and erosion. Their soils are highly effective carbon sinks, sequestering vast amounts of carbon.

Yet mangroves are disappearing three to five times faster than overall global forest losses, with serious ecological and socio-economic impacts. Current estimates indicate that mangrove coverage has been divided by two in the past 40 years.

Did you know?

- Mangroves are extraordinary ecosystems, located at the interface of land and sea in tropical regions, which offer a considerable array of ecosystem goods and services.
- Although they are found in 123 nations and territories, mangrove forests are globally rare. They represent less than 1% of all tropical forests worldwide, and less than 0.4% of the total global forest estate.
- Mangroves are disappearing three to five times faster than overall global forest losses, with serious ecological and socio-economic impacts.

Mangroves contribute to the wellbeing, food security, and protection of coastal communities worldwide.

- These forested wetlands are rich in biodiversity. They support complex communities, where thousands of other species interact. They provide a valuable nursery habitat for fish and crustaceans; a food source for monkeys, deer, birds, even kangaroos; and a source of nectar for honeybees.
- Managing and restoring mangrove ecosystems is an achievable and cost effective way to help ensure food security for many coastal communities.

Mangroves play a role in climate mitigation.

- Mangrove ecosystems are highly effective carbon sinks, sequestering vast amounts of carbon within the soil, leaves, branches, roots, etc.
- One hectare of mangrove can store 3,754 tons of carbon; it's the equivalent of taking 2,650+ cars off the road for one year.
- If destroyed, degraded or lost these coastal ecosystems become sources of carbon dioxide. Experts estimate that carbon emissions from mangrove deforestation account for up to 10% of emissions from deforestation globally, despite covering just 0.7% of land coverage.
- Mangroves act as a natural coastal defense against storm surges, tsunamis, rising sea levels and erosion.

- Mangroves play an important role in reducing vulnerability to natural hazards and increasing resilience to climate change impacts.
- A 500-meter mangrove strip reduces wave heights in 50 to 99%.

Mangrove Conservation

Mangrove conservation efforts are largely aimed at preventing destruction of mangrove ecosystems, and increasing coverage. A key issue is not just destruction but degradation of mangrove ecosystems, through pollution, siltation, changes in salinity or loss of biodiversity.

Why is it important to preserve the mangroves in our country?

They perform important ecological functions like nutrient cycling, hydrological regime, coastal protection, fish-fauna production, etc. Mangroves act as shock absorbers. They reduce high tides and waves and help prevent soil

Uses of mangrove ecosystem

Mangroves have been exploited for timber for building dwellings and boats and fuel-wood for cooking and heating. Palm species are used, especially in Southeast Asia and Brazil, to construct jetties and other submerged structures because they are resistant to rot and to attack by fungi and borers.



Ref:- <https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/mangroveday>



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