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## Explained: How India has increased its forest cover amid climate change threat

Since 1987, the Forest Survey of India (FSI), an organisation that operates under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change assesses the forest cover of the country biennially. It publishes its findings in the India State of Forest Report (ISFR).

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India's total forest cover has increased by 1,540 square kilometres. (Photo credit: Unsplash)

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**New Delhi:** Climate change is a dangerous threat that can wipe out life on this Earth. Large-scale deforestation is a reason behind climate change and global warming. But India is walking on the opposite path by increasing its forest cover to combat pollution and global warming.

It publishes its findings in the India State of Forest Report (ISFR). In 2021, the report stated that India's total forest cover is 7,13,789 square kilometres.

It means that forests cover 21.72 per cent of the total area of the country. India's total forest cover has increased by 1,540 square kilometres, tree cover has increased by 721 square kilometres, and total forest and tree cover has increased by 2,261 square kilometres at the national level as compared to the previous assessment in 2019. The Ministry has stated that more than 33 per cent of the total area of 17 states and Union Territories is covered by forest.

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## The states and UTs leading the way

When it comes to area of the forest cover, Madhya Pradesh is leading the way followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra. When it comes to forest cover as a percentage of total geographical area, Mizoram leads the way followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur and Nagaland. Five states and UTs, Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh have more than 75 per cent forest cover.

The total mangrove forest cover in India has been estimated to be 4,992 sq km, which is an increase of 17 sq km in mangrove cover from 2019. The mangrove forest cover has increased the most in Odisha, followed by Maharashtra and Karnataka. And when we consider an increase in forest cover, the most growth has been shown by Andhra Pradesh followed by Telangana and Odisha.

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## The efforts of the governments

The Central Government, along with the administration of the states and the UTs are making every effort to increase India's forest cover. The Ministry gives monetary aid to the states and UTs under several schemes including the Green India Mission to strengthen afforestation efforts. Under the National Action Plan on Climate Change, the National Mission for a Green