

Aravalli Green Wall Initiative

Posted at: 05/06/2025

Aravalli Green Wall Initiative: Reclaiming Ecology, Restoring Balance

Context:

On **World Environment Day 2025**, the **Prime Minister of India** will formally launch the **Aravalli Green Wall Initiative** to rejuvenate the **ancient Aravalli range**, one of the oldest mountain systems in the world. This initiative comes at a time when the Aravalli ecosystem faces intense pressure due to mining, deforestation, land degradation, and urban expansion. It also aligns with India's commitments to combat **climate change**, **land degradation**, and fulfill its **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** under the **UNFCCC**.

About Aravalli Green Wall Initiative

What is it?

- A large-scale **landscape restoration and afforestation programme** across the **Aravalli range**, led by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**.
 - Designed as a centrally coordinated green barrier along the **700-km Aravalli stretch**, it aims to tackle environmental degradation and desertification.
 - Inspired by global models like the **Great Green Wall of Africa**.
-

Objectives of the Initiative

- **Combat Land Degradation:** Rehabilitate degraded lands and curb the westward expansion of the **Thar Desert**.
- **Restore Ecological Balance:** Increase the region's **green cover**, improve forest health, and preserve native **biodiversity**.

- **Support Climate Action:** Enhance **carbon sequestration potential** under India's **NDCs** to fight climate change.
 - **Water Resource Revival:** Rejuvenate **surface water bodies** such as ponds and lakes to strengthen **groundwater recharge**.
 - **Promote Public Participation:** Engage local communities in greening efforts, ensuring long-term sustainability and livelihood generation.
-

Key Features of the Initiative

- **Area Covered:** Targets **29 districts** across **Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat**, which fall within or around the Aravalli range.
- **Nursery Establishment:** Development of **1,000 nurseries** using **native and climate-resilient plant species**.
- **Funding Sources:** Supported through multiple schemes such as:
 - **CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund)**
 - **MNREGA**
 - **State afforestation and rural development programs**
- **Agroforestry and Pasture Development:** Emphasis on integrating **farming with forestry**, promoting **grazing lands** and **fodder security**.
- **Water Body Rejuvenation:** Revival of **traditional ponds and lakes** to restore the local hydrological cycle.
- **Integration with National Missions:** Linked with campaigns such as **'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam'** for mass tree plantation.
- **Promotion of Eco-Tourism:**
 - Development of **nature parks, trekking trails, and eco-safaris** to boost tourism and rural employment.

- **Implementation Timeline:**

- **Phase I** is targeted for completion by **2027**.
- A comprehensive **action plan** will be released during **COP16 of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)** in **Riyadh**.

Significance of the Aravalli Range

States Covered

- The Aravalli range spans **Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat**, extending over **670 km**.

Geographical and Ecological Importance

- **Ancient Origin:** Among the **oldest fold mountain ranges** in the world, formed during the **Proterozoic Era** (over 2.5 billion years ago).
- **Desert Barrier:** Acts as a **natural shield**, preventing the **Thar Desert** from advancing into the **National Capital Region (NCR)**.
- **Biodiversity Hotspot:** Home to diverse species of flora and fauna, many of which are endemic or threatened.
- **Source of Rivers:**
 - **Banas and Sahibi** (tributaries of the Yamuna)
 - **Luni River** (flows into the **Rann of Kutch**)
- **Mineral-Rich Zone:** Known for deposits of **copper, zinc, lead, and marble**, contributing to the region's economic and industrial development.
- **Fragile Ecosystem:** Facing threats from **illegal mining, urbanization, and deforestation**, making conservation urgent.

Sub-Divisions of the Aravalli Range

1. Sambhar-Sirohi Range:

- Includes the highest point, **Guru Shikhar (1,722 metres)**, located in **Mount Abu**, Rajasthan.

2. Sambhar-Khetri Range:

- Consists of **discontinuous ridges**, more fragmented due to erosion and geological shifts.

Conclusion: Greening the Aravallis for a Sustainable Future

The **Aravalli Green Wall Initiative** represents a strategic and ecological intervention to address **land degradation**, strengthen **climate resilience**, and enhance **biodiversity conservation** in one of India's most critical ecosystems. With its integration into national climate goals and grassroots participation, it holds the potential to transform degraded landscapes into **thriving green corridors**, contributing to India's long-term **environmental security and sustainable development**.

