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04 September 2026

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Daily Current Affairs Quiz 04 September 2026

Q1. What was the theme of UNCCD COP17?

- (a) Land for Life
- (b) Restoring Land. Restoring Hope.
- (c) Land Restoration for Climate Action
- (d) Combating Desertification Together

Ans.(b)

Sol. The correct answer is (B) Restoring Land. Restoring Hope.

Explanation:

- The official theme for the 17th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was set as 'Restoring Land. Restoring Hope.'
- This theme underscores the vital, inseparable link between sustainable land restoration practices and the overarching hope for global food security, climate resilience, and socio-economic stability.
- UNCCD COP summits act as the supreme decision-making body for the convention, driving multilateral negotiations on combating land degradation and mitigating the impacts of severe droughts.
- The theme highlights a paradigm shift from merely combating degradation to actively restoring affected ecosystems, which aligns with the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030).
- Such conventions emphasize that land is the foundational element for human survival, housing 99% of our caloric intake and acting as a massive carbon sink.

Information Booster:

- The UNCCD is one of the three "Rio Conventions" resulting from the 1992 Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The other two are the UNFCCC (Climate Change) and the UNCBD (Biological Diversity).
- UNCCD is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management.
- Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) is a core concept championed by the UNCCD, defined as a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources remain stable or increase.
- Standard environmental science texts (like NCERT Class 12 Biology - Environmental Issues) stress the severe consequences of desertification, primarily driven by overgrazing, deforestation, and poor agricultural practices.
- The UNCCD aims to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world by 2030, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 15.3.

Additional Knowledge:

- Land for Life (Option A): While "Land for Life" is an ongoing, prominent UNCCD advocacy program and a prestigious award given for sustainable land management, it was not the specific theme for the COP17 conference.
- Land Restoration for Climate Action (Option C): This phrase encapsulates a general scientific rationale linking soil health to carbon sequestration but was not the officially designated motto for this particular COP session.
- Combating Desertification Together (Option D): This is a generic environmental slogan often used in earlier awareness campaigns (such as the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought) but not the formal theme of COP17.

Q2. Where was the 17th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) held?

- (a) New Delhi, India
- (b) Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
- (c) Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt
- (d) Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Ans.(b)

Sol. The correct answer is (B) Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Explanation:

- The 17th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the UNCCD is scheduled to take place in Ulaanbaatar, the capital city of Mongolia.
- Mongolia was selected as the host nation because it offers a stark, real-world case study of the ravaging effects of desertification, land degradation, and extreme climate events on traditional nomadic livelihoods.
- Approximately 76% of Mongolia's total land area is currently affected by desertification, largely driven by climate change and severe overgrazing by livestock.
- The Ulaanbaatar COP17 acts as a strategic global platform for world leaders, scientists, and civil society to formulate binding policies to halt soil erosion and restore degraded ecosystems before the 2030 deadline.
- The nation has proactively launched the 'Billion Tree' national movement to combat desertification, aligning perfectly with UNCCD objectives.

Information Booster:

- Mongolia's landscape is dominated by the massive Gobi Desert in the south and extensive steppe grasslands in the center and east. (Covered in regional world geography).
- A phenomenon unique to Mongolia is the 'Dzud'—a severely harsh winter following a summer drought, which leads to mass starvation of millions of livestock, severely exacerbating land degradation and poverty.
- The UNCCD emphasizes that combating desertification is inextricably linked to poverty eradication and ensuring food and water security for vulnerable populations.
- Decisions made at COPs are implemented globally through National Action Programmes (NAPs), which are customized national strategies for sustainable land management.
- Mongolia's COP presidency aims to spotlight the intricate linkages between preserving traditional pastoralism and ensuring ecological balance.

Additional Knowledge:

- New Delhi, India (Option A): India hosted the COP14 of the UNCCD in September 2019, where Prime Minister Modi announced the raising of India's land restoration target from 21 million hectares to 26 million hectares by 2030.
- Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt (Option C): Egypt is a prominent environmental summit host (having hosted the UNFCCC COP27 climate summit in 2022) and is slated to host the future UNCCD COP18 in 2028.
- Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (Option D): Saudi Arabia was chosen as the host for the UNCCD COP16 in 2024, focusing on land restoration and drought resilience in the Middle East region.

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding India's initiatives at the UNCCD COP17:

1. India launched its first-ever "Guide to Grasslands and Other Open Natural Ecosystems (ONEs)".
2. India has brought 21.76 million hectares of degraded and deforested land under restoration under the Bonn Challenge.
3. India highlighted Sovereign Green Bonds and the Green Credit Programme while calling for adequate, predictable and sustained international finance for land restoration.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans.(d)

Sol. The correct answer is (D) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct: To address the neglect of non-forest ecosystems, India launched the "Guide to Grasslands and Other Open Natural Ecosystems (ONEs)". This document provides crucial ecological strategies to protect savannas, grasslands, and ravines from being misclassified as "wastelands".
- Statement 2 is correct: As part of its international commitments under the Bonn Challenge, India has successfully brought 21.76 million hectares of degraded and deforested land under restoration, progressing steadily towards its ultimate target of 26 million hectares by 2030.
- Statement 3 is correct: During international financial dialogues at the COP, India strongly advocated for systemic financial reforms. It showcased its domestic innovations like Sovereign Green Bonds and the MoEFCC's Green Credit Programme as models, while urging developed nations to provide adequate and sustained climate and land finance.
- All statements accurately reflect India's official stance, achievements, and policy releases showcased at recent UNCCD COP sessions.

Information Booster:

- The Bonn Challenge is a global goal initiated in 2011 to bring 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested landscapes into restoration by 2020, and 350 million hectares by 2030.
- The Green Credit Programme (GCP) is an innovative market-based mechanism launched under the 'LiFE' (Lifestyle for Environment) movement. It incentivizes voluntary environmental actions across sectors like water conservation, afforestation, and waste management.
- Sovereign Green Bonds are financial instruments issued by the Government of India to mobilize domestic and foreign capital specifically tailored for green infrastructure projects.
- According to standard NCERT biological and geographical classifications, open natural ecosystems (ONEs) harbor immense biodiversity (e.g., the Great Indian Bustard in dry grasslands) and are critical for the livelihoods of pastoralist communities.
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) acts as the nodal agency for implementing UNCCD obligations in India.

Additional Knowledge:

- 1 and 2 only (Option A): Incorrect because omitting Statement 3 ignores India's leading diplomatic effort at the COP regarding climate finance and market-based environmental mechanisms.

- 2 and 3 only (Option B): Incorrect because it excludes Statement 1, failing to recognize India's groundbreaking ecological paradigm shift in officially documenting and protecting Grasslands and ONEs.
- 1 and 3 only (Option C): Incorrect because it overlooks India's quantifiable, physical progress (21.76 Mha) under the internationally monitored Bonn Challenge targets.

Q4. In which year was the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) adopted?

- (a) 1992
- (b) 1994
- (c) 1996
- (d) 1998

Ans.(b)

Sol. The correct answer is (B) 1994

Explanation:

- The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was formally adopted in Paris, France, on June 17, 1994.
- Following its adoption, the convention was opened for signature in October 1994 and subsequently entered into legal force on December 26, 1996, after receiving the necessary ratifications.
- The origins of the UNCCD trace directly back to the direct recommendations made by the international community during the historic 1992 Earth Summit (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development) in Rio de Janeiro.
- The convention focuses specifically on arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid areas, known as drylands, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples can be found.
- It is currently the only internationally legally binding framework set up to address the problem of desertification.

Information Booster:

- June 17, the date the Convention was adopted, is globally observed every year as the "World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought" to promote public awareness of land degradation issues.
- The convention heavily emphasizes a bottom-up approach, encouraging the active participation of local communities, indigenous populations, and non-governmental organizations in combating desertification.
- NCERT curriculum in Geography (Class 10 and 12) details how desertification is not the natural expansion of existing deserts, but the degradation of land in drylands due to various factors including climatic variations and human activities.
- The convention holds regular Conference of the Parties (COP) sessions to monitor progress, update science-based targets, and negotiate financial resource mobilizations.
- To date, the UNCCD boasts near-universal membership with 197 Parties (196 individual countries and the European Union).

Additional Knowledge:

- 1992 (Option A): This is the year of the Rio Earth Summit, where the idea and recommendation for the UNCCD was born (as part of Agenda 21), but the convention itself was drafted and adopted two years later.

- 1996 (Option C): This is the year the UNCCD officially entered into force (became legally binding upon its ratifying members), not the year of its initial adoption.
- 1998 (Option D): This year holds no primary significance for the foundational adoption or entry into force of the UNCCD framework; the first COP was actually held in 1997 in Rome.

Q5. Which country will host the 18th session of the UNCCD COP (COP18) in 2028?

- (a) India
- (b) Mongolia
- (c) Egypt
- (d) Luxembourg

Ans.(c)

Sol. The correct answer is (C) Egypt

Explanation:

- It was officially decided and announced that the Arab Republic of Egypt will host the 18th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP18) to the UNCCD in the year 2028.
- Egypt's hosting of this critical desertification summit follows a broader pattern of the nation playing a leading role in global environmental diplomacy, notably having recently hosted the UNFCCC COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh in 2022.
- Hosting the UNCCD COP requires the host nation to facilitate high-level ministerial meetings, scientific committee reviews, and global stakeholder dialogues concerning land restoration frameworks.
- Egypt, a country where over 95% of the land area is classified as hyper-arid desert, deeply understands the existential threats of land degradation and water scarcity on agriculture (specifically along the Nile Delta).
- This COP is expected to critically review the progress toward the 2030 Land Degradation Neutrality targets.

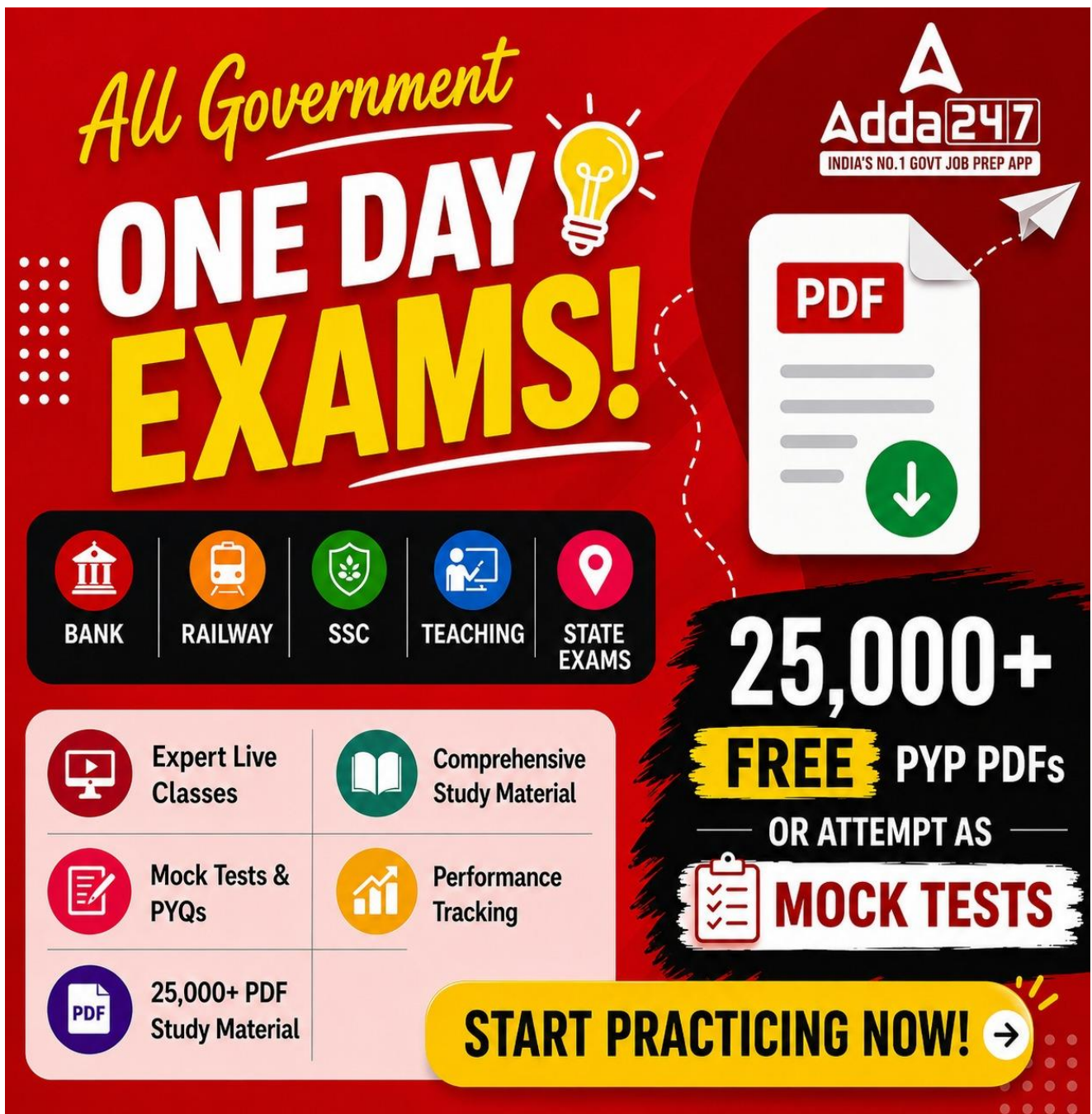
Information Booster:

- The UNCCD Conferences of the Parties are generally held biennially (every two years).
- Recent UNCCD COPs highlight the shifting focus of environmental conventions: COP14 (2019) was held in New Delhi, India; COP15 (2022) in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; COP16 (2024) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; and COP17 (2026) in Mongolia.
- Africa is one of the most severely impacted continents regarding desertification, particularly the Sahel region. The Great Green Wall initiative is a flagship UNCCD-backed project spanning the width of Africa to halt the expanding Sahara desert.
- Sahara Desert's natural boundaries fluctuate due to both climatic regimes and anthropogenic land mismanagement.
- A key outcome of COP meetings includes replenishing funds for the Global Mechanism, which helps countries mobilize resources for sustainable land management.

Additional Knowledge:

- India (Option A): India hosted the UNCCD COP14 in 2019 in New Delhi, where the 'New Delhi Declaration' was adopted, committing to massive land restoration targets.

- Mongolia (Option B): Mongolia is the designated host for the UNCCD COP17 in 2026, not COP18. Mongolia faces severe desertification threats from the expanding Gobi Desert and overgrazing.
- Luxembourg (Option D): Luxembourg is a small, highly developed European nation with minimal direct desertification threats, though it participates as a donor party. It is not hosting COP18.



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