

## 1. Living Planet report

### Topic: Reports and Indices

**In News:** The Living Planet Report was published by World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

#### More on the Topic:

- There has been a **69 per cent decline in the wildlife populations** of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish, across the globe in the last 50 years.
- **Biodiversity loss and climate crisis should be dealt with as one instead of two different issues as they are intertwined.**
- The highest decline (94 per cent) was in the Latin America and the Caribbean region.
- **Freshwater species populations globally reduced by 83 per cent**, confirming that the planet is experiencing a “biodiversity and climate crisis”.
- **About 50% of warm water corals have already been lost** and warming of 1.5 degrees celsius will lead to a loss of 70-90% of warm water corals.
- Mangroves continue to be lost to aquaculture, agriculture and coastal development at a rate of 0.13 per cent per year, according to the findings.
- Many mangroves are also degraded by overexploitation and pollution, alongside natural stressors such as storms and coastal erosion.

#### About Living Planet Report:

- Living Planet Report is WWF’s flagship publication.
- It is released every two years.

#### Suggestions:

- The Living Planet Report 2022 shows how climate change and biodiversity loss are not only environmental issues but economic, development, security and social issues too.
- They must therefore be addressed together.
- Climate Change in India will impact key areas, such as water resources, agriculture, natural ecosystems, health and the food chain.
- **We need an all-inclusive collective approach** that empowers each of us to act, that can put us on a more sustainable path, and ensures that the costs and benefits from our actions are socially just and equitably shared.
- We have to **manage our existing dams and reservoirs better**, keeping in mind the ecology of the rivers as well as flood risk from last minute releases.
- We have to reduce our dependence on a few water guzzling crops in favour of diversity and seriously reconsider proposed new dams.

**Source:** Indian Express

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## 2. Interoperable Regulatory Sandbox

### Topic: Economy



**In News:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a standard operating procedure (SOP) for interoperable regulatory sandbox to regulate newer fintech products and services falling in the ambit of more than one regulator.

**More on the Topic:**

- The move is aimed at developing a clear jurisdiction where there are overlapping areas involving multiple regulators.
- The overlapping regulators include the RBI, Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (Irdai), Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).
- The initial scrutiny of the product or the service will be done by the coordination group, which is the fintech department of the RBI while detailed examination will be done by the principal regulator based on its framework.
- The latter will have the final say in admitting a product or service in the sandbox and other regulators will provide their inputs in 30 days.

**About Regulatory Sand Box:**

- A regulatory sandbox **usually refers to live testing of new products or services** in a controlled/test regulatory environment for which regulators may permit certain regulatory relaxations for the limited purpose of the testing.
- The objective of the sandbox is **to foster responsible innovation in financial services, promote efficiency and bring benefits to consumers.**
- The framework will **likely be a positive step for financial technology start-ups and companies looking to innovate in the fast changing and highly regulated sector.**
- Also, it will **enable authorities to take a considered view on the regulatory changes or new regulations** that may be needed to support useful innovation, while containing the attendant risks.

**Source: Business Standard**

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### 3. Lead Poisoning

**Topic: Environment and Ecology**

**In News:** A report prepared jointly by government think tank Niti Aayog and the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) has stated that India bears world's highest health, economic burden due to lead poisoning.

**More on the Topic:**

- Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh had the highest average blood lead levels (BLL) among Indian states.



- These states account for 40 per cent of India's population that is plagued with this poor health indicator.
- Some 23 states have an average BLL that goes beyond five microgram per decilitre ( $\mu\text{g} / \text{dl}$ ) — the standard used to gauge poisoning.
- A Unicef report also noted that **lead poisoning shaved off an estimated five per cent of Indian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) due to lower economic productivity and reduced lifetime earnings.** It also caused 230,000 premature deaths in India.

#### Source of Lead:

- Deaths due to lead poisoning have continued to rise in India even though **lead use in petrol — a key source — was phased out by 2000 in the country. This indicates other sources.**
- The government report includes **battery recycling, occupational sources such as lead mining, smelting, welding, soldering and automobile repatriating.**
- Other inconspicuous sources include adulterated spices, cosmetics and traditional medicines.

#### Way Ahead:

- There is a **desperate need for policy changes** at the national and state levels given the severe health implications including, but not limited to, the central nervous, hematopoietic, hepatic and renal systems.
- We **need to devise implementable strategies on a state level**, through regional bureaucracy, local press and vernacular language to have a tangible impact.
- Undertake **targeted research and intervention studies** to identify potential newer sources which policy makers and the scientific community can address head on.
- **Identifying at-risk populations** through BLL monitoring, investigating sources of elevated BLLs and healthcare workforce training to sensitise them to monitor, detect and treat lead poisoning.

Source: Hindu

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## 4. Convergent Evolution

### Topic: Science and Technology

**In News:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the United Nations World Geospatial Congress (UNWGIC) 2022 in Hyderabad.

#### More on the Topic:

- The Phase-I of the 'Mahakal Lok' project **will help in enriching the experience of pilgrims visiting the temple by providing them with world-class modern amenities.**
- Project aims to decongest the entire area and also put special emphasis on conservation and restoration of heritage structures.
- Under the project, the temple precinct will be expanded nearly seven times. The total cost of the entire project is around ₹850 crore.

- The existing footfall of the temple, which is currently around 1.5 crore per annum, is expected to be doubled. Development of the project has been planned under two phases.

#### **Mahakal Temple:**

- The Mahakal Path contains 108 stambhs (pillars) which depict Anand Tandav Swaroop (Dance form) of Lord Shiva.
- Many religious sculptures depicting the life of Lord Shiva are installed along the Mahakal Path.
- The mural wall along the Path is based on Shiva Purana stories such as the Act of creation, the Birth of Ganesha, Story of Sati and Daksha among others.
- The Plaza area, which is spread over 2.5 hectares, is surrounded by a lotus pond and contains the statue of Shiva along with fountains.
- The entire premise will be monitored 24x7 by Integrated Command and Control Centre with the help of artificial intelligence and surveillance cameras.

#### **About Mahakal Temple:**

- Mahakal temple is **one of the 12 jyotirlinga sites in India**. Jyotirlinga sites are considered to be the manifestation of Shiva.
- Mahakal temple is the only jyotirlinga that faces south. Other sites face east. South is held by religious belief as the direction of death.
- **Mahakaleshwar is worshipped by people to prevent untimely death**. This temple is mentioned in several ancient poetic texts that originated in India.
- It was described in the early part of **Meghadutam (Purva Megha)**, which was composed by Kalidasa in the 4th century.

Source: Hindu

## **5. Tana Bhagat sect tribals**

### **Topic: Culture**



**In News:** Tana Bhagat sect is demanding complete self-rule with no role of courts or governments.

#### **More on the Topic:**

- Tana Bhag is an important sect of Oraon tribes of Jharkhand. They are ardent followers of Gandhian philosophy and are known for the Tana bhagat Movement (1914-1919).
- It was a civil disobedience movement under the leadership of **Jatra Oraon of Ranchi in the Chotanagpur region** against the exploitative practices by Britishers and the feudal lords (diku).

Source: Hindu

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## 6. SALT project - Andhra Pradesh

Topic: Government Schemes



**In News:** The World Bank has extended unconditional loan of \$250 million for SALT project in Andhra Pradesh.

**More on the Topic:**

- The project was undertaken by Government of Andhra Pradesh aimed to transform the state's school education system by strengthening the quality of foundational learning through various pathways
- Train teachers, facilitate State-level assessment and establish an effective education management & information system.

Source: IE

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## 7. Kadavur Slender Loris Sanctuary

Topic: Environment and Ecology



**In News:** Tamil Nadu is gearing up to set up Kaduvur Slender Loris Sanctuary in an area shared by Karur and Dindigul districts.

**More on the Topic:**



- The Tamil Nadu government has notified the sanctuary under **Wildlife Protection Act of 1972**.
- Recently, the Tamil Nadu government has also notified India's first Dugong Conservation Reserve in Palk Bay, an elephant reserve at Agasthyamalai (Tirunelveli), Nanjarayan Tank Birds Sanctuary in Tiruppur and Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary in Villipuram.
- Also, a total of 13 wetland areas were declared recently as Ramsar Sites in Tamil Nadu.

**About Slender Loris:**

- The slender lorises are a genus of loris native to India and Sri Lanka.
- The genus comprises two species, the red slender loris found in Sri Lanka and the gray slender loris from Sri Lanka and India.
- Slender lorises spend most of their life in trees, traveling along the tops of branches with slow and precise movements.

**Protection Status:**

- IUCN: Endangered,
- Wildlife (Protection) Act of India, 1972: Schedule I
- CITES: Appendix II

**Source: Hindu**

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