

Business Standard

India among top 3 countries in most significant forest area gains: FAO

The report, released on Monday, said that China led the world with the maximum forest area gain of 1,937,000 hectares, followed by Australia with 4,46,000 hectares, and then India

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The FAO Report Also Said That The Rate Of Gross Global Mangrove Loss Decreased By 23 Per Cent During The Periods From 2000 To 2010 And 2010 To 2020.

India gained 2,66,000 hectares of forest area annually from 2010 to 2020, securing the third spot among the top 10 countries with the most significant forest area gains during this period, according to a new report by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

The report, released on Monday, said that China led the world with the maximum forest area gain of 1,937,000 hectares, followed by Australia with 4,46,000 hectares, and then India. Other countries in the top 10 include Chile, Vietnam, Turkey, the United States, France, Italy and Romania.

The UN agency praised India for its efforts in restoring degraded lands and expanding agroforestry through innovative approaches. This includes the development of a new national policy aimed at better supporting agroforestry in the country.

The report highlighted a significant reduction in deforestation in some countries. For example, Indonesia saw an 8.4 per cent decline in deforestation from 2021 to 2022, while Brazil's Amazon experienced a 50 per cent reduction in deforestation in 2023.

The FAO report also said that the rate of gross global mangrove loss decreased by 23 per cent during the periods from 2000 to 2010 and 2010 to 2020.

However, the FAO stressed that climate change is increasing the vulnerability of forests to various stressors, including wildfires and pests.

"Wildfire intensity and frequency are rising. Boreal forests accounted for nearly one-quarter of carbon dioxide emissions due to wildfires in 2021. In 2023, wildfires emitted an estimated 6,687 megatonnes of carbon dioxide globally, more than double the carbon dioxide emissions from the European Union due to fossil fuel burning that year," the report read.

In the United States, 25 million hectares of forestlands are projected to experience losses exceeding 20 per cent of host tree basal area due to insects and disease by 2027, according to the report.

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