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News: State of World's Forests 2022

- Recently, the **State of the World's Forests 2022 (SOFO 2022)** was released by the **United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**.

State of the World's Forests

- The report is **published bi-annually** and is widely regarded as one of the most important stock takes on forest ecosystems.
- The 2022 edition of **SOFO** explores the potential of three forest pathways for achieving green recovery and tackling multidimensional planetary crises, including climate change and biodiversity loss.

Key Highlights of the State of World's Forests Report

Loss of Forests

- The **420 million hectares (mha)** of forests have been lost between **1990 and 2020, due to deforestation**, though forests cover 4.06 billion ha of the earth's geographical area.

- Although the **rate of deforestation was declining**, 10 mha of forests were lost every year between 2015 and 2020.
- An **estimated 289 mha of forests would be deforested between 2016 and 2050 in the tropics alone**, resulting in the emission of 169 GtCO₂e if additional action is not taken.
- The **greenhouse gas total is expressed in terms of billions of tonnes of global annual CO₂ equivalent emissions (GtCO₂e/year)**.

Rise in Infectious Diseases

- **15% of 250 emerging infectious diseases have been linked to forests.**
- Example: Covid-19, Drug-resistant infections (Antimicrobials), Zika Virus, etc.
- 30% of new diseases, reported since 1960, can be attributed to deforestation and land-use-change.

Rise in Poverty

- The **cost of global strategies to prevent pandemics based on reducing the illegal wildlife trade, avoiding land-use change and increasing surveillance was estimated to be USD22 billion to USD31 billion.**
- **Approximately 124 million more people fell into extreme poverty after Covid-19** and this may have longer term impacts on wood based fuel (such as

firewood, charcoal) due to increase in wood based fuel use in some countries during the pandemic.

Consumption of Natural Resources

- The world population is projected to reach 9.7 billion people by 2050, which will increase competition for land, as the demand for food for this large population will rise by 35 to 56% by the 2050s.
- The annual global consumption of all natural resources combined is expected to more than double from 92 billion tonnes in 2017 to 190 billion tonnes in 2060 due to increases in population size and affluence.
- Annual biomass extraction is expected to reach 44 billion tonnes by 2060, from 24 billion tonnes in 2017.
- Demand for forest-based biomass is expected to rise further, mainly due to construction and packaging.

GDP Dependence on Forests

- It is estimated that more than half of world Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (USD 84.4 trillion in 2020) depends moderately (USD 31 trillion per year) or highly (USD 13 trillion per year) on ecosystem services, including those provided by forests.