

**27– 11 – 2023**

**News:** International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

- The 59<sup>th</sup> session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC), the governing body of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), recently concluded with significant decisions shaping the future of sustainable tropical forest management and the trade of sustainably produced tropical timber.

### **Key Outcomes of the 59<sup>th</sup> session of the ITTC**

- The countries agreed to endorse eight projects related to sustainable forest management and related objectives.
- The session also approved and adopted a budget of USD 7.1 million for the coming financial year 2024-25.
- The council also approved a trial measure that will allow ineligible members to submit project proposals and concept notes.
- Members who have fallen behind on their financial contributions and are thus ineligible will be allowed to submit one project and concept note for every two years of arrears paid.

- The Council also adopted the work programme for 2024-25, which emphasizes collaboration with the members of Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other partners for effective implementation.

## **International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO)**

- The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) is an intergovernmental organization promoting the sustainable management and conservation of tropical forests and the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests.

### **Functions of ITTO**

- Develops internationally agreed policy guidelines and norms to encourage sustainable forest management (SFM) and sustainable tropical timber industries and trade.
- Assists tropical member countries to adapt such guidelines and norms to local circumstances and to implement them in the field through projects and other activities.
- Collects, analyzes, and disseminates data on the production and trade of tropical timber.
- Promotes sustainable tropical timber supply chains.

- Helps develop capacity in tropical forestry.

## Forest Certification

- Forest certification is a way of verifying whether a forest area is well managed and, through labelling, of assuring consumers that in purchasing labelled products they are supporting sustainable forest management (SFM).
- Certification is, therefore, a tool for promoting trade in timber from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests. ITTO assists its member countries, including many small and medium-sized forest enterprises (SMEs), to pursue certification, but it remains a daunting task, especially in the tropics.
- Tropical forests are highly diverse, and the criteria and indicators for sustainable management (C&I) are complex; moreover, many SMEs lack the resources need to implement the exacting standards of SFM and the financial means to obtain certification for their operations.
- There are a total of 37 Timber producing member countries and 38 timber consuming member countries making a total of 75 member countries, including India.
- India is classified as a timber-producing member country of this organization.
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