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News: Global Nature Conservation Index (NCI)

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- Global Nature Conservation Index (NCI) is developed by the Goldman Sonnenfeldt School of Sustainability and Climate Change at Ben-Gurion University and BioDB.com, a biodiversity database.
- The first NCI was launched in October 2024 to evaluate conservation efforts.
- It assesses four key markers: land management, biodiversity threats, capacity and governance, and future trends.

Observation of the NCI

- Sustainable land use is crucial, as 53% of land is converted for urban, industrial, and agricultural purposes.
- The index highlights high pesticide use and warns about soil pollution.
- Marine conservation needs improvement, with only 0.2% of national waterways protected and none within India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

- India ranks 176th in the 2024 Global Nature Conservation Index. It is among the five lowest-ranked countries, along with Kiribati (180), Turkey (179), Iraq (178), and Micronesia (177), out of 180 nations.
- India's low ranking is due to inefficient land management and increasing biodiversity threats.
- India ranks as the fourth-largest illegal wildlife trading nation globally, with annual sales totaling approximately 15 billion Euros.
- Deforestation resulted in the loss of 23,300 sq. km of tree cover between 2001 and 2019.
- India's ecological wealth is constantly threatened by overpopulation.

Global scenario

- Luxembourg is leading the way forward in the rankings with a score of 70.8 out of 100.
- Luxembourg is followed by Estonia, Denmark and Finland.
- The United States—the largest and most developed economy in the world—has a vast and diverse landscape, with 13% of its land covered by protected lands.
- It ranks 37th globally with a score of 60.13. Its biodiversity, though rich, is facing serious threats, with about 41% of ecosystems at risk of collapsing, 40% of animal species, and 34% of plant species facing extinction.

- On the contrary, China, the world's second-largest economy and one of the mega-biodiverse countries, is at the bottom, ranked 164th with a score of 48.34.
- It's noteworthy to mention that Bhutan, a global biodiversity hotspot, is the only country in Asia that has performed remarkably, ranking 15th globally with a score of 63.1.