

India's Arctic Policy for Sustainable Development Released

written by iasexam.com | 21/03/2022



[GS Paper 3 - Environment and Climate Change]

The Centre released India's Arctic Policy, with the aim of enhancing the country's cooperation with the resource-rich and rapidly transforming region. The policy also seeks to combat climate change and protect the environment in the region, which is warming three times faster than the rest of the world.

Key Highlights of the Policy

- **The policy document lays down six pillars:**

1. Strengthening India's scientific research and cooperation
2. Climate and environmental protection
3. Economic and human development
4. Transportation and connectivity
5. Governance and international cooperation
6. National capacity building in the Arctic region.

- **The policy aims to promote the following agenda:**

1. Strengthening national capabilities and competencies in science and exploration, climate and environmental protection, maritime and economic cooperation with the Arctic region.
2. Inter-ministerial coordination in pursuit of India's interests in the Arctic.
3. Enhancing understanding of the impact of climate change in the Arctic Region on India's climate, economic and energy security.
4. Contributing better analysis, prediction, and coordinated policymaking on the implications of ice melting in the Arctic on India's economic, military and strategic interests related to global shipping routes, energy security, and exploitation of mineral wealth.
5. Studying linkages between polar regions and Himalayas.
6. Deepen cooperation between India and countries of the Arctic region under various Arctic Forums, drawing expertise from scientific and traditional knowledge.
7. Increase India's participation in the Arctic Council and improve understanding of the complex governance structures in the Arctic, relevant international laws, and geopolitics of the region.

The policy documents the history of India's relationship with the region, which can be traced back to February 1920, when it signed the Svalbard treaty in Paris. In 2007, India launched its first scientific expedition to the Arctic. Since then, India has been able to set up an observatory in Kongsfjorden as well as an atmospheric laboratory at Gruvebadet.

About Arctic Council

The Arctic Council is the leading intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues, in particular on issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic.

The Arctic Council works as a consensus-based body to deal with issues such as the change in biodiversity, melting sea ice, plastic pollution and black carbon.