



MAJOR GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PHENOMENA



Phenomenon	What to remember
 Global warming / Climate change	● Long-term changes in climate; anthropogenic greenhouse-gas emissions are the dominant driver of recent warming.
 Greenhouse effect	● Natural warming mechanism; enhanced greenhouse effect results from increased greenhouse-gas concentrations.
 Ozone depletion	● Stratospheric ozone reduction, especially linked historically to CFCs/halons; Montreal Protocol response.
 El Niño / La Niña (ENSO)	● Pacific Ocean–atmosphere variability affecting global rainfall, temperature, agriculture and hazards.
 Acid rain	● Mainly sulfur/nitrogen compounds forming acidic deposition; damages ecosystems, soils, water bodies and buildings.
 Eutrophication	● Excess nutrients → algal growth → decomposition → oxygen depletion.
 Biomagnification	● Persistent pollutants become more concentrated at higher trophic levels.
 Bioaccumulation	● Substance accumulates within an organism over time.
 Desertification	● Land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas.
 Biodiversity loss	● Decline in species, genetic and ecosystem diversity; habitat loss and land/sea-use change are major drivers.
 Urban Heat Island	● Built-up urban areas often become warmer than surrounding rural areas.
 Ecological footprint	● Human demand on biologically productive land/water; compare with biocapacity.
 Carrying capacity	● Population/resource-use level an environment can sustainably support under specified conditions.

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IMPORTANT INDIAN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS

Movement	Region / Period	Core issue / Association
Chipko 	Uttarakhand Himalaya; 1970s	Community protection of forests; tree-hugging protests; Gaura Devi and others associated with movement.
Appiko 	Karnataka; 1983	Forest conservation; inspired partly by Chipko.
Silent Valley 	Kerala; 1970s–80s	Protection of tropical evergreen forest; opposed hydel project.
Narmada Bachao Andolan 	Narmada Valley; 1980s onward	Debates around large dams, displacement, rehabilitation and environmental impacts.
Jungle Bachao Andolan 	Jharkhand/ Bihar region; 1980s	Resistance to replacement of natural forests with commercial plantations.
Bishnoi conservation tradition 	Rajasthan; historic	Community-based protection of trees and wildlife; Khejarli sacrifice (1730) is a major historical episode.

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INDIA: MAJOR EVENTS, LAWS, MOVEMENTS & PROGRAMMES

Key Milestones in India's Environmental Journey



Year	National event / initiative		Key Highlights
1972		Wildlife (Protection) Act	Major legal framework for wildlife protection in India.
1973		Project Tiger	Launched to conserve Bengal tiger and its habitats; protected-area approach.
1973–74		Chipko Movement	Forest-conservation movement in Himalayan region; associated with community resistance to tree felling.
1974		Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act	Central law addressing water pollution; established CPCB/SPCB framework.
1975		Silent Valley campaign	Major movement for protection of tropical evergreen forest ecosystem in Kerala; project eventually abandoned.
1980		Forest (Conservation) Act	Central framework regulating diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes; amended later.
1981		Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act	Legal framework for prevention/control/abatement of air pollution.
1984		Bhopal Gas Disaster	Industrial disaster involving methyl isocyanate release; major turning point in Indian environmental governance.
1985		Ganga Action Plan	Major river-cleaning programme initiated to reduce pollution in the Ganga.
1986		Environment (Protection) Act	Umbrella environmental legislation enacted after Bhopal; broad central powers for environmental protection.
1988		National Forest Policy	Emphasised ecological stability, conservation and increasing tree/forest cover.
1991		Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notification	Regulated development in coastal areas under Environment (Protection) Act.
1992		National Conservation Strategy & Policy Statement on Environment and Development	Integrated environmental concerns with development planning.
1996		T.N. Godavarman case	Important Supreme Court forest-conservation jurisprudence; broad interpretation of forest and regulatory protection.

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Year	Event / Initiative	Key Highlights
2002	 Biological Diversity Act	Framework for conservation, sustainable use and fair/equitable benefit sharing; NBA created.
2006	 National Environment Policy	Policy framework integrating environmental concerns into development.
2008	 National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)	Eight national missions addressing climate mitigation/adaptation.
2010	 National Green Tribunal (NGT)	Specialised environmental tribunal established for effective and expeditious disposal of environmental cases.
2010	 National Green India Mission	One of NAPCC missions; focuses on ecosystem restoration and enhancement of forest/tree cover.
2014	 Swachh Bharat Mission	National cleanliness, sanitation and solid-waste management campaign launched 2 Oct 2014.
2014	 Namami Gange	Integrated Ganga conservation/ rejuvenation programme; pollution abatement and river ecosystem focus.
2015	 Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC)	India's pre-Paris climate commitments; later translated into NDC framework.
2018	 National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)	National strategy to improve air quality; launched with city-focused action and monitoring.
2021	 COP26 — India's Panchamrit announcement	Five climate-related commitments announced by India, including net-zero target for 2070.
2022	 Mission LiFE — Lifestyle for Environment	India-led initiative promoting behaviour change and sustainable lifestyles.
2022	 Updated Nationally Determined Contribution	India strengthened/updated 2030 climate commitments under Paris Agreement.
2023	 Green Credit Programme	Framework introduced to encourage environmentally positive actions through green credits.
2023	 Mission LiFE / G20 sustainability focus	Lifestyle, circularity, resource efficiency and climate action received strong policy emphasis.

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