

25th -31th OCT Weekly Compilation

(The Hindu+ Indian Express + PIB + Other World Wide News)

❖ FATF GREY LIST

(Source: The Hindu)

Why in News: Mauritius was placed in FATF's grey list in February 2020, however, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), has moved Mauritius out of its grey list in the October 2021 plenary held last week.

FATF had in the June 2021 plenary agreed that Mauritius had completed putting into force an action plan designed to combat and strengthen the effectiveness of its activities to combat money laundering and financing of terrorism.

FATF

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body which was established to promote effective implementation of legal and regulatory measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system. It is a policy-making body which works to generate the necessary political will to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms in these areas.

Listing by FATF

Grey List: Countries that are considered a safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering are put in the grey list. This inclusion serves as a warning to the country that it may enter the blacklist.

As many as 23 countries, including Pakistan and Cayman Islands, are in the list. While Mauritius and Botswana have been removed from the list this month, Jordan, Mali and Turkey have been added.

Black List: Countries known as Non-Cooperative are put in the blacklist. These countries support terror funding and money laundering activities. The FATF revises the blacklist regularly adding or deleting entries

❖ G7 on Digital Trade

(Source: Express)

Why in News: The Group of Seven (G7) countries have agreed on a joint set of principles to govern cross-border data use and digital trade.

Digital Trade

Digital trade is broadly defined as trade in goods and services that is either enabled or delivered digitally, encompassing activities from the distribution of films and TV to professional services.

Key provisions of the G7 Digital Trade Principles

- **Open Digital Markets:** Digital and telecommunications markets should be competitive, transparent, fair, and accessible to international trade and investment.
- **Cross Border Data Flows:** To harness the opportunities of the digital economy, data should be able to flow freely across borders with trust, including the trust of individuals and businesses.
- **Safeguards for Workers, Consumers and Businesses:** Labour protections must be in place for workers who are directly engaged in or support digital trade. They have to be provided decent conditions of work.
- **Digital Trading Systems:** To cut red tape and enable more businesses to trade, governments and industries should drive forward the digitisation of trade-related documents.
- **Fair and Inclusive Global Governance:** Common rules for digital trade should be agreed upon and upheld at the World Trade Organization (WTO).
- **Data Encryption:** Businesses should not be required or coerced to transfer technology or provide access to source code or encryption keys as a condition of market access. At the same time, governments must retain sufficient flexibility to pursue legitimate regulatory goals, including health and safety.

The deal is a first step in reducing trade barriers and could lead to a common rulebook of digital trade. The deal also sets out a middle ground between highly regulated data protection regimes used in European countries and the more open approach of the United States.

❖ INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RESILIENT ISLAND STATES(IRIS) INITIATIVES (Source: Express)

Why in News: India along with Australia, the UK and small island developing states (SIDS) will be launching a new initiative named “IRIS (Infrastructure for Resilient Island States)” on the sidelines of the upcoming Conference of Parties (COP26) in Glasgow, UK.

Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS) Initiative

The IRIS initiative is aimed at creating a coalition for putting in place infrastructure that can withstand disasters and lessen economic losses in island nations. Under this initiative, Australia, India and the UK have committed an initial funding of \$10 million. More countries including Japan are expected to contribute to the initiative.

Small Island developing states (SIDS)

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are a distinct group of 38 UN Member States and 20 Non-UN Members/Associate Members of UN regional commissions that face unique social, economic, and environmental vulnerabilities.

Why was the IRIS Initiative launched for the SIDS States?

- According to a World Bank report titled 'Climate and Disaster Resilient Transport in Small Island Developing States', SIDS countries are highly susceptible to economic losses due to disasters, with average annual losses ranging from 1% to 10% of the gross domestic product(GDP).
- According to the UN Global Assessment Report (2017), SIDS countries account for two-thirds of the countries in the world that suffer the highest relative losses due to disasters. These countries also have the highest multi-hazard risks relative to the size of their capital stock.
- Hence, that's why the IRIS Initiative is being launched to support the planning process, build capacity as well as infrastructure in an inclusive way that meets the needs of SIDS countries.

❖ STOCKHOLM+50

(Down to Earth)

Why in News: The United Nations General Assembly has agreed on the way forward for plans to host Stockholm+50 at the highest possible level in Stockholm, Sweden in June 2022.

Stockholm+50

- Stockholm+50 is an international meeting to be hosted by the Government of Sweden and convened by the United Nations General Assembly in Stockholm, Sweden.
- Theme: A healthy planet for the prosperity of all — our responsibility, our opportunity.
- The meeting will commemorate 50 years since the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment, which made the environment a pressing global issue for the first time.

Objectives of the Stockholm+50 meeting: The meeting has the following objectives:

- To reflect on the urgent need for actions towards a healthy planet and prosperity of all,

- To achieve a sustainable and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic,
- To accelerate the implementation of the environmental dimension of Sustainable Development in the context of the Decade of Action

Stockholm Conference

- The 1972 United Nations Conference on the Environment in Stockholm was the first world conference to make the environment a major issue.
- During the conference, participants adopted the Stockholm Declaration, which placed environmental issues at the forefront of international concerns. The conference also marked the start of a dialogue between industrialized and developing countries on the link between economic growth, the pollution of the air, water and oceans and the well-being of people around the world.
- One of the major results of the Stockholm conference was the creation of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).

❖ GREENHOUSE BULLETIN REPORT

(The Hindu)

Why in News: The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has released its Greenhouse Gas Bulletin Report ahead of COP26 in Glasgow, UK.

Unclean air

Key greenhouse gas emissions rose faster in 2020 than the average for the previous decade. A comparison of the key trends to pre-industrial levels:



Parameter	CO₂	CH₄	N₂O
2020 global mean abundance	413.2 ± 0.2 ppm	1889 ± 2 ppb	333.2 ± 0.1 ppb
Pre-industrial levels	278 ppm	722 ppb	270 ppb
2020 abundance relative to 1750	149%	262%	123%
2019-2020 absolute increase	2.5 ppm	11 ppb	1.2 ppb
Mean annual absolute increase over past 10 years	2.4 ppm	8 ppb	0.99 ppb

ppm: parts per million | ppb: parts per billion

Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)

- Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the most significant greenhouse gas. It has reached 413.2 parts per million in 2020 and is 149% of the pre-industrial level.
- However, the increase in CO₂ from 2019 to 2020 was slightly lower than that observed from 2018 to 2019 but higher than the average annual growth rate over the past decade. This is despite the approximately 5.6% drop in fossil fuel CO₂ emissions in 2020 due to restrictions related to the pandemic.

Absorption of CO₂

Roughly half of today's human-emitted CO₂ remains in the atmosphere and the other half is absorbed by oceans and land ecosystems, the Bulletin flagged. However, the ability of land ecosystems and oceans to act as "sinks" may become less effective in future, thus reducing their ability to absorb carbon dioxide and act as a buffer against larger temperature increases.

Methane

- Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas which remains in the atmosphere for about a decade. Methane accounts for about 16% of the warming effect of long-lived greenhouse gases.
- Approximately 40% of methane is emitted into the atmosphere by natural sources (for example, wetlands and termites), and about 60% comes from anthropogenic sources (for example, ruminants, rice agriculture, fossil fuel exploitation, landfills and biomass burning).
- Currently, Methane (CH₄) is 262% of the levels in 1750 when human activities started disrupting Earth's natural equilibrium.

Nitrous Oxide

- Nitrous Oxide is both powerful greenhouse gas and an ozone-depleting chemical. N₂O is emitted into the atmosphere from both natural sources (approximately 60%) and anthropogenic sources (approximately 40%), including biomass burning, fertilizer use, and various industrial processes.
- Currently, nitrous oxide (N₂O) is 123% of the levels in 1750 when human activities started disrupting Earth's natural equilibrium.

❖ **PM Aayush Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission**

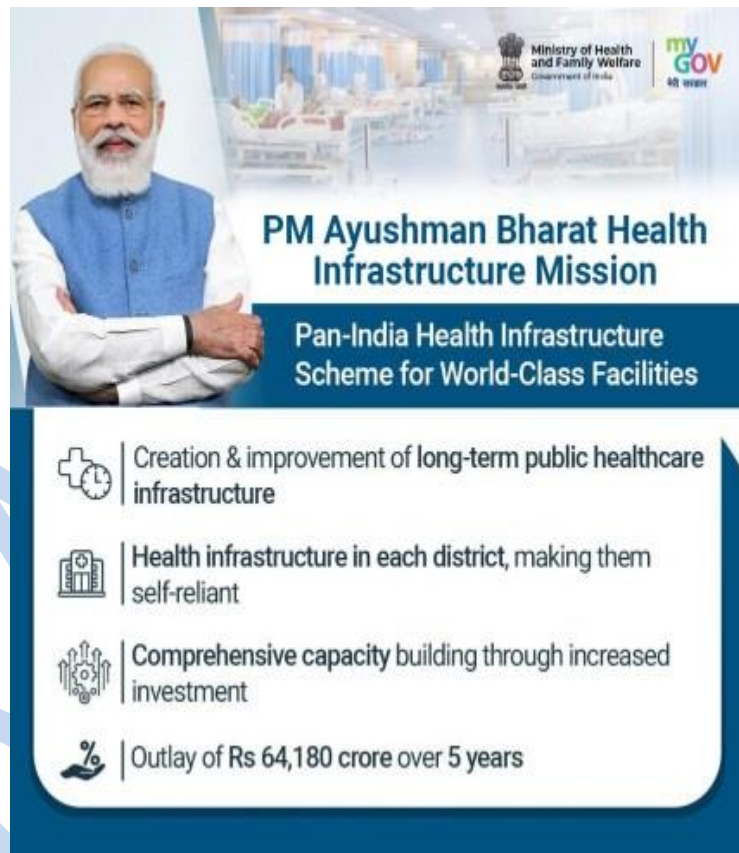
(Source: PIB)

Why in News: The Prime Minister has launched the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure. Mission also known as Pradhan Mantri Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana (PMASBY)

Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission

Objectives of the Scheme

- To strengthen the critical healthcare network from village to block to the district to the regional and national level in the next 4-5 years.
- To develop health systems and institutions at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels and prepare them to respond effectively to pandemics and disasters.
- To establish an IT-enabled disease surveillance system through a network of surveillance laboratories at block, district, regional and national levels.



Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Government of India

my GOV
4th year

PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission

Pan-India Health Infrastructure Scheme for World-Class Facilities

- Creation & improvement of long-term public healthcare infrastructure
- Health infrastructure in each district, making them self-reliant
- Comprehensive capacity building through increased investment
- Outlay of Rs 64,180 crore over 5 years

There are three significant aspects of the Program:

First Aspect: Creation of elaborate facilities for diagnostics and treatment.

Under this, health and wellness centers are being opened in villages and cities, where there will be facilities for the early detection of diseases. Facilities such as free medical consultation, tests, and medicine will be available at these centers.

For serious illnesses, 35,000 critical care beds are being added in 600 districts, and referral facilities will be given in 125 districts.

Second Aspect: Related to the diagnosis of disease

This will involve the development of testing infrastructure. All 730 districts of the country will get integrated public health labs and 3,000 blocks will get public health units. Apart from that, five centers for disease control, 20 metropolitan units, and 15 BSL labs will strengthen this network.

Third Aspect: Expansion of existing research institutions to study pandemics.

The existing 80 viral diagnostic and research labs will be strengthened, four new National Institutes of Virology and a National Institute for One Health are being established. According to the 2020 Index report by Oxfam India, India's health budget is the fourth lowest in the world. Neighbouring countries Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh spent more than India on health.

Moreover, India's healthcare infrastructure is also deplorable. According to government data, India has 1.4 beds per 1,000 people, 1 doctor per 1,445 people, and 1.7 nurses per 1,000 people. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), India ranks 184 out of 191 countries in health spending. Hence, this scheme has been launched to improve an entire ecosystem of services from treatment to critical research.

❖ **INDO-PACIFIC REGIONAL DIALOGUE** **(Source: The Hindu)**

Why in News: The Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD) 2021 is being held from 27th to 29th October 2021.

Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD)

- Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD) is the apex international annual conference of the Indian Navy. The dialogue was first conducted in 2018.
- **Aim:** To review both opportunities and challenges that arise within the Indo-Pacific.
- **The organiser of the dialogue:** National Maritime Foundation is the navy's knowledge partner and chief organiser of each edition of the dialogue.
- **The theme for 2021:** "Evolution in Maritime Strategy during the 21st Century: Imperatives, Challenges, and, Way Ahead".

National Maritime Foundation (NMF)

NMF was established in 2005 as India's first maritime think-tank for conducting independent and policy-relevant research on 'matters maritime'.

It is an autonomous think-tank. But its intellectual and organisational development is supported by the Ministry of Defence and the Indian Navy. It is Located in New Delhi.

❖ **World Bank on Air Pollution**

(Express)

- The latest “Changing Wealth of Nations” 2021 report published by the World Bank states that ‘South Asia’ suffers the most among all regions of the world in terms of loss of human capital due to air pollution.
- The latest report has measured wealth creation and distribution in 146 countries covering a 20-year period from 1995-2018.
- The World Bank included GDP, human-produced capital, human capital (as per bank, “earnings over a person’s lifetime”) and natural capital like renewable and non-renewable natural resources in its measurement of wealth.

Key findings of the Report

Global findings

Human capital was the largest source of worldwide wealth, comprising 64% of total global wealth in 2018. Middle-income countries increased their investment in human capital and in turn, saw significant increases in their share of global human capital wealth.

Globally, wealth had increased during the two decades. In fact, middle-income countries were catching up fast with high-income ones in wealth generation.

Air pollution was affecting hugely this significant wealth generator i.e human capital.

Natural assets-The growing prosperity has been accompanied by unsustainable management of some natural assets. Low- and middle-income countries saw their forest wealth per capita decline 8% from 1995 to 2018, reflecting significant deforestation.

Unequal wealth creation-This wealth creation, arguably the best in recent decades, has not been equal. Low-income countries’ share in global wealth is below 1%(same for decades), account for 8% of the world’s population.

The survey found that countries that depended more on natural resources were also reporting a decline in wealth due to the degradation of resources.

Declining wealth per capita– Over a third of low-income countries saw declining wealth per capita. These countries tend to be degrading their base of renewable natural assets. For low-income countries, appropriately managing renewable natural capital, which accounts for 23 per cent of their wealth, remains crucial.

South-Asia related findings:

- Human capital in south Asia accounts for 50 per cent of the region's wealth. This did not change during the survey period (1995-2018). It shows the importance of a healthy workforce.
- Air pollution-South Asia as a region was the most severely affected by the estimated loss of human capital due to air pollution.
- Wealth-South Asia has increased its wealth since 1995. But still, its per capita wealth is among the lowest in the world, comparable to sub-Saharan Africa due to population growth in the same period.
- Gender disparity in human capital- Over 80% of the region's wealth was attributed to men, indicating a huge gender disparity in human capital and its contribution to national wealth.

❖ SAMBHAV

(Source: PIB)

Why in News: "SAMBHAV", a National Level Awareness Programme-2021, being organised by Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises.

SAMBHAV

- SAMBHAV calls for engagement of the youth in promoting entrepreneurship, leading to the economic development of the country.
- The mass outreach program is a one-month long initiative under the Ministry of MSME in which students from different colleges/ITIs from all parts of the country will be encouraged by 130 field offices of the Ministry to take up entrepreneurship.
- During the campaign the college students will be made aware of the various schemes being implemented by the Ministry of MSME through Audio/Video film presentations.
- Awareness programs will be conducted in more than 1,300 colleges across the country in which 1, 50, 000 students are expected to participate.

Enhancing the MSME's contribution to GDP from present 30% to 50%, and employment generation in MSME sector from 11 crore to 15 crore.

EAST ASIA SUMMIT

(PIB)

Why in News: Prime Minister recently participated in the "16th East Asia Summit" via video conference, hosted by "Brunei" as EAS and ASEAN Chair. India has been an active participant of EAS.

It saw the participation of leaders from ASEAN countries and other EAS Participating Countries including Australia, China, Japan, South Korea, Russia, USA (first time since 2017) and India.

Key takeaways from the summit

- The EAS leaders adopted three Statements on Mental Health, Economic recovery through Tourism and Sustainable Recovery, which have been co-sponsored by India.
- Discussion on important regional and international issues including Indo-Pacific, South China Sea, UNCLOS, terrorism, and situation in Korean Peninsula and Myanmar was seen.

East Asia Summit: It was established in 2005. It is a premier forum in the Asia-Pacific region dealing with issues relating to security and defence.

Members: It comprises the ten member states of the ASEAN countries along with 8 members Australia, China, Japan, India, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States. India is a founding member of the East Asia Summit.

Priority Areas: There are six priority areas of regional cooperation within the framework of the EAS which are a) Environment and Energy b) Education c) Finance d) Global Health Issues and Pandemic Diseases e) Natural Disaster Management and f) ASEAN Connectivity.

Significance: The members of the EAS together represent 54% of the world population and account for 58% of the global GDP.

Views shared by India at the summit

- Reaffirmed the importance of EAS to discuss important strategic issues.
- Reiterated its support of \$1 million to “ASEAN Covid Recovery Fund” and raised the idea of developing global standards on cyber security.
- Commitment to deliver Quad-sponsored vaccines to Indo-Pacific nations.
- Stressed on “Atmanirbhar Bharat” Campaign for post-pandemic recovery and in ensuring resilient global value chains.

“ASEAN centrality” reaffirmed in the Indo-Pacific and the synergies between ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and India’s Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) highlighted.

❖ AGNI-V

(Source: PIB)

Why in News: India has successfully test-fired Agni-V Missile.

Agni-V

Agni-V is a surface-to-surface nuclear-capable InterContinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM).

ICBMs are guided missiles that can deliver nuclear and other payloads. They have a minimum range of 5,500 km, with maximum ranges varying from 7,000 to 16,000 km.

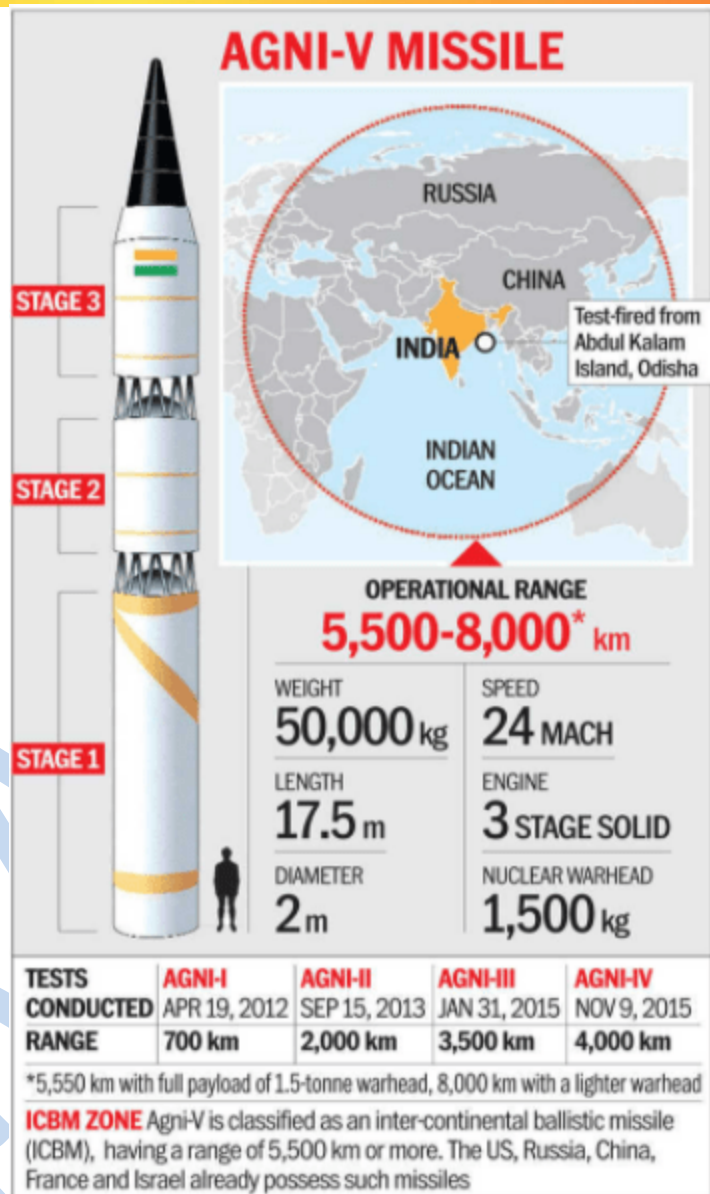
Developed by: Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Range: It is capable of striking targets at ranges up to 5,000 kilo meters with a very high degree of accuracy.

Speed: It can reach an exceptional Mach 24 speed, which is around 29,401 km/h.

Key Features of Agni-V

- The missile uses a three-stage solid-fuelled engine
- It is road-mobile and can be transported by a truck and launched via a canister.
- Satellite Guidance: The missile is equipped with a ring laser gyroscope inertial navigation system (NavIC) that works with satellite guidance. So, the missile can carry nuclear warheads with advanced navigation and guidance systems.
- MIRV Technology: The most striking feature of Agni-V is its MIRV (Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles) technology. In this technique, multiple weapons can be installed instead of one in the warhead mounted on the missile. That is, a missile can hit multiple targets simultaneously.



The Prime Minister has participated in the 18th India-ASEAN Summit.

18th India-ASEAN Summit

The 18th ASEAN-India Summit was held via video conference. The Summit was chaired by the Sultan of Brunei, the current Chair of ASEAN.

Key highlights of the summit

- Firstly, the summit highlighted the milestone of the 30th anniversary of the India-ASEAN Partnership. It announced the Year 2022 as India-ASEAN Friendship Year.
- Secondly, building upon the synergies between ASEAN Outlook for the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), PM and ASEAN leaders welcomed the adoption of the India-ASEAN Joint Statement on cooperation for peace, stability and prosperity in the region.
- Thirdly, to further strengthen India-ASEAN cultural connectivity, the Prime Minister announced India's support for establishing the ASEAN Cultural Heritage List.
- Fourthly, on COVID-19, the PM highlighted that India has contributed medical supplies worth USD 200,000 to ASEAN's humanitarian initiative for Myanmar and USD 1 million for ASEAN's Covid-19 Response Fund.
- Lastly, on trade and investment, the PM underlined the importance of diversification and resilience of supply chains for post-COVID economic recovery and in this regard, the need to revamp the India-ASEAN FTA.

❖ UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE FORESTS

(Down to Earth)

Why in News: Researchers at UNESCO, the World Resources Institute and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) have released a new assessment of greenhouse gas volumes emitted from and absorbed by forests in UNESCO World Heritage sites.

What are the key findings of the report on UNESCO World Heritage Forests?

- The researchers have assessed the gross and net carbon absorbed and emitted by 257 UNESCO World Heritage forests between 2001 and 2020.
- They found that these 257 sites stored approximately 13 billion tones of carbon. If all this stored carbon were to be released into the atmosphere as CO₂, it would be akin to emitting 1.3 times the world's total annual CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels.
- The researchers have found that 10 of 257 forests emitted more carbon than they captured between 2001 and 2020 due to different anthropogenic disturbances and pressures.

The reasons for emissions to be greater than sequestration included clearance of land for agriculture, the increasing scale and severity of wildfires due to drought, as well as extreme weather phenomena such as hurricanes.

Indian Sundarbans

- **According to the research, India's Sundarbans National Park is among five sites that have the highest blue carbon stocks globally.**
- **The other four sites are the Bangladeshi portion of the Sundarbans, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, Everglades National Park in the United States and the Banc d'Arguin National Park in Mauritania.**

Note: Blue carbon is an organic carbon that is mainly obtained from decaying plant leaves, wood, roots and animals. It is captured and stored by coastal and marine ecosystems.

What are the suggestions given by the report?

- Strong and sustained protection of UNESCO World Heritage sites and their surrounding landscapes to ensure their forests could continue to act as strong carbon sinks and stores for future generations.
- Maintaining and strengthening ecological connectivity through improved landscape management.
- Integrating the continued protection of UNESCO World Heritage sites into international, national and local climate, biodiversity and sustainable development strategies.

