

Supreme Court Mandates Mapping and Protection of Sacred Groves

The Supreme Court issued directions for mapping and protecting sacred groves to conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Sacred groves are community-protected forest patches dedicated to local deities, serving as biodiversity hotspots and ecological buffers.

KEY EXAM POINTS

- The **Supreme Court** in **2024** directed state governments to map and ensure legal protection for all sacred groves.
- Sacred groves provide vital ecosystem services, including **carbon sequestration**, soil conservation, and **groundwater recharge**.
- These groves serve as **gene pools** for endemic and threatened flora and fauna species across **India**.
- Community-led conservation in sacred groves enhances **ecological resilience** against natural disasters and climate change.
- Recent research highlights their role as **biological corridors** connecting fragmented forest landscapes.

STATICS & SYLLABUS FOCUS

Article 48A of the Indian Constitution directs the State to protect and improve the environment and safeguard forests and wildlife.

Article 51A(g) makes it a **Fundamental Duty** of every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests and lakes.

In **Tamil Nadu**, sacred groves are traditionally known as **Kovil Kadu** and are dedicated to rural folk deities like Ayyanar and Karuppasamy.

Under the **Wildlife Protection Act 1972**, amended in **2002**, sacred groves can be notified as Community Reserves or Conservation Reserves.

The **Biological Diversity Act** was enacted in **2002**, establishing the National Biodiversity Authority headquartered in **Chennai**.

Tamil Nadu has over **1,200** documented sacred groves, predominantly located in **Cuddalore**, Pudukkottai, and Kanyakumari districts.

REVISION FLASHCARD

SC ordered mapping of sacred groves; protected under Directive Principles Article 48A and Fundamental Duty Article 51A(g).

Syllabus Relevance: High relevance for Group 1, 2, 2A, 4 under Unit 5 (Polity) and Unit 3 (Environment & Geography).

Daily Current Affairs

Read the most important daily exam-relevant news summaries easily on Essaar.

[Read Online: essaaracademy.in/ca](https://essaaracademy.in/ca)