



PrepAlpine

— Preparation Meets Precision —

CURRENT AFFAIRS

For UPSC Civil Services Examination Aspirants



RESEARCH-DRIVEN
CONTENT



DAILY COVERAGE
WITH MAINS FOCUS



EXAM-READY
APPROACH

Stay **Informed**. Stay **Ahead**. Succeed.

Copyright © 2025 PrepAlpine

All Rights Reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means—whether photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods—without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law.

For permission requests, please write to:

PrepAlpine

Email: info@PrepAlpine.com

Website: PrepAlpine.com

Disclaimer

The information contained in this book has been prepared solely for educational purposes. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, PrepAlpine makes no representations or warranties of any kind and accepts no liability for any errors or omissions. The use of any content is solely at the reader's discretion and risk.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS DATED 28.07.2026

GS Paper III: Environment

1. Western Ghats Eco-Sensitive Areas: Conservation–Development Deadlock

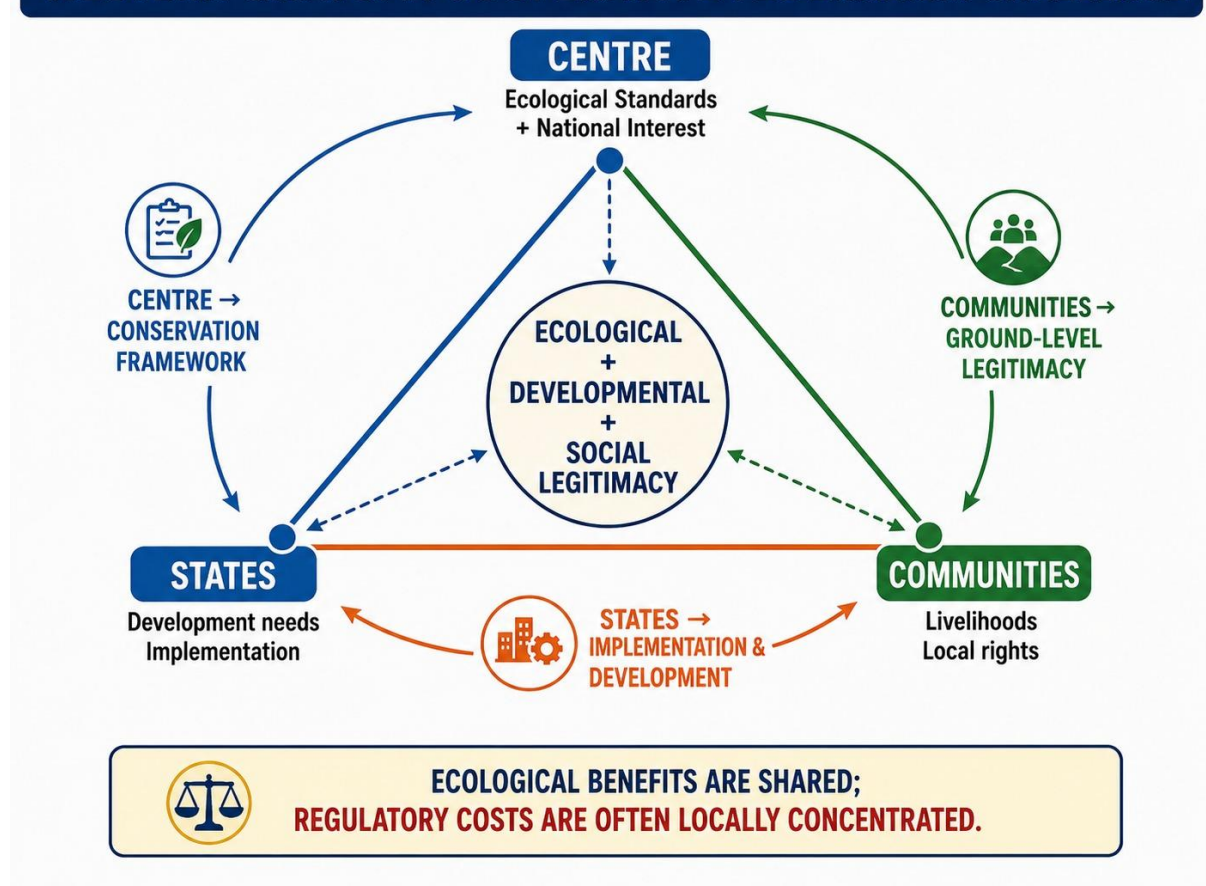
a. Introduction

The Union Environment Ministry has extended till July 2027 the tenure of the expert committee examining States' objections to the demarcation of Eco-Sensitive Areas (ESAs) in the Western Ghats. The latest 2024 draft notification, proposing 56,825.7 sq km as ESA across six States, has lapsed without finalisation.

b. Background Context:

- The first draft ESA notification was issued in 2014, but repeated drafts have failed to produce consensus.
- The 2024 draft proposed 56,825.7 sq km as ESA across Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- Negotiations with Maharashtra, Goa and Gujarat are reportedly at an advanced stage, while consultations with Kerala continue.
- The prolonged process reflects disagreements over where ecological protection should end and permissible development should begin.

WESTERN GHATS: A COOPERATIVE FEDERALISM CHALLENGE



c. Analysis/ Observations:

Why ESA protection is necessary

- **Ecological security:** The Western Ghats regulate rainfall, river systems and watershed functions across peninsular India.
- **Biodiversity conservation:** High levels of endemic flora and fauna make habitat fragmentation particularly damaging.
- **Disaster-risk reduction:** Unregulated quarrying, construction, deforestation and slope modification can aggravate vulnerability to landslides, floods and soil erosion.
- **Long-term economic value:** Ecosystem services such as water security, pollination and climate regulation underpin agriculture and livelihoods far beyond the Ghats.

Why has the notification remained deadlocked?

- **Livelihood concerns:** Local communities fear restrictions on agriculture, plantations, housing and economic activities.
- **Development pressures:** States are concerned about implications for infrastructure, mining, quarrying, tourism and urban expansion.
- **Demarcation disputes:** Satellite-based landscape classification may not adequately capture the complex ground reality of settlements, plantations and natural forests.
- **Federal dimension:** Environmental benefits often extend beyond State boundaries, while the immediate economic and political costs of restrictions are borne locally.
- **Trust deficit:** Repeated draft notifications without final settlement have created regulatory uncertainty and apprehension among affected communities.

Gadgil-Kasturirangan debate: broader policy lesson

Madhav Gadgil approach

Kasturirangan approach

More conservation-oriented	Greater attempt to balance conservation and development
Wider ecological zoning	Focused protection primarily on ecologically significant natural landscapes
Greater emphasis on decentralised/local participation	Greater reliance on scientific and geospatial identification

The debate demonstrates that ecological protection cannot be sustained solely through top-down restrictions; conservation requires social legitimacy and local participation.

d. Way Forward:

- Adopt micro-level, ground-verified demarcation rather than relying exclusively on remote-sensing classifications.
- Protect highly fragile natural landscapes strictly while allowing graded and regulated activities elsewhere.
- Institutionalise participation of Gram Sabhas, local governments and affected communities in ESA planning.
- Provide livelihood transition and compensation mechanisms where environmental restrictions impose genuine economic costs.
- Move from repeated temporary drafts towards a stable, transparent and scientifically defensible regulatory framework.

Conclusion

The Western Ghats controversy represents a wider challenge of Indian environmental governance: balancing ecological limits with development aspirations through cooperative federalism and

participatory conservation, rather than treating conservation and development as mutually exclusive choices.

Reader's Note — About This Current Affairs Compilation

Dear Aspirant,

This document is part of the PrepAlpine Current Affairs Series — designed to bring clarity, structure, and precision to your daily UPSC learning.

While every effort has been made to balance depth with brevity, please keep the following in mind:

1. Orientation & Purpose

This compilation is curated primarily from the UPSC Mains perspective — with emphasis on conceptual clarity, analytical depth, and interlinkages across GS papers.

However, the PrepAlpine team is simultaneously developing a dedicated Prelims-focused Current Affairs Series, designed for:

- factual coverage
- data recall
- Prelims-style MCQs
- objective pattern analysis

This Prelims Edition will be released separately as a standalone publication.

2. Content Length

Some sections may feel shorter or longer depending on topic relevance and news density. To fit your personal preference, you may freely resize or summarize sections using any LLM tool (ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, etc.) at your convenience.

3. Format Flexibility

The formatting combines:

- paragraphs
- lists
- tables
- visual cues

—all optimised for retention.

If you prefer a specific style (lists → paras, paras → tables, etc.), feel free to convert using any free LLM.

4. Monthly Current Affairs Release

The complete Monthly Current Affairs Module will be released soon, optimized to a compact 100–150 pages — comprehensive yet concise, exam-ready, and revision-efficient.

PrepAlpine