

25.8.21
Effects of climate change and its dramatic consequences must be a catalyst for enhanced Arctic cooperation.
Explain.

Ans: Eight countries have direct access to the Arctic resources, i.e. Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and United States. Six observer joined the council in 2013.

Impacts of climate change :

- Increasing Instances of extreme heat in North America, wildfire in Russian Siberia due to environmental transformation in the region.

- According to the WORLD CLIMATE AND SECURITY REPORT 2020, the Expert Group of the International Military Council on Climate and Security, "The Arctic is warming nearly twice as fast as the rest of the planet with consecutive record-breaking warm years since 2014".

- Rising sea levels

- changes in climate and precipitation levels

- loss of fish stocks, birds and marine mammals

Catalyst for enhanced Arctic cooperation:

- i) The existential threats posed by environmental challenges must be an absolute priority for all Arctic actors.
- ii) Military and economic issues must take the back seat in order to focus on mitigating the loss of an ecosystem.
- iii) Geopolitics of nations will not pave way for a better Arctic region unless they are climate conscious.

Way forward:

The Arctic actors should have a long-term vision and strategic goal as compared to immediate short term gains. Apart from pursuing national interests, participating nations should be concerned about the environmental implications for humanity.