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Plastic Pollution

- Following the adoption of a resolution by the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) in 2022 with the primary goal of eliminating pollution, the International Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution was created (INCPP).
- With several rounds of negotiations starting in March 2022 depending on the elimination of plastic, it is expected that 192 member countries will sign the international agreement at the end of the final round of negotiations held in South Korea at the end of 2024.
- Every day, 2,000 truckloads of plastic waste are dumped into the world's oceans, rivers, and lakes. With 1.9-2.3 crore tonnes of plastic waste being dumped into water bodies every year, the ecological degradation is intensifying.
- Plastic pollution can distort habitats and change the course of nature. It destroys the nature of ecological zones that can adapt to climate change.
- It is causing direct effects on various levels like the food production system, social welfare and is affecting the lives of millions of people.
- The UN Environment Program does not see plastic pollution as a separate problem.
- It identifies that it should be linked to climate change, ecosystem degradation etc.
- India is one of the world's leading plastic polluters. Around 26,000 tonnes of textile waste is generated in India every day.
- As one of the various measures to control plastics, the Government of India banned 19 types of 'single-use' plastics in 2022, based on the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules (2021).
- The world's population uses an average of 50,000 crore plastic bags a year. Only 14% of this is collected for reuse. Others are burned or dumped on land.
- It is practically more profitable for large companies to produce plastic from scratch than to recycle it. Thus recycling activities are largely unaffected.
- It is against this backdrop that the International Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution has intensified efforts to eradicate tobacco.
- As the talks center on how to curb global plastic production, it is strongly opposed by oil and natural gas exporters and leading oil producers.
- The reason for the opposition is that the synthetic plastic we use is made from fossil oil and coal.
- Plastic production is more closely related to the fossil fuel-based oil economy than to consumption demand.
- So, we need to go to the root of the problem. As such, it is imperative that an agreement on the eradication of plastic be developed towards a complete solution!