

Class 9 Social Science - Chapter 2

Life on Earth | NCERT Questions & Activities - Solutions

Understanding Society: India and Beyond, Part 2 • Academic Session 2026-27

Chapter Focus

Biomes • Forests • Biodiversity • Forest Dwellers • Conservation • Forest Fires • Ecological Commons

NCERT Questions and Activities - Answer Key

1. Why does India have diverse biomes? How does the local geography connect to the diversity?

India has diverse biomes because the country has great variations in climate, temperature, rainfall, landforms, altitude and soil. From the Himalayas and cold high-altitude regions to deserts, grasslands, tropical forests, coasts and islands, different physical conditions support different plants and animals. Local geography directly affects the availability of water, heat and nutrients, which influences the type of vegetation and wildlife found in a region.

2. Make a list of economically valuable native plants in your region and comment on their abundance.

This is a region-specific activity. A sample answer for a student in northern India could include neem, peepal, banyan, mango, jamun, amla and bamboo. These plants provide food, medicine, timber, shade or other useful products. Their abundance varies according to local climate, land use, water availability and conservation practices. Students should replace this sample list with plants found in their own state or Union Territory.

3. Prepare a map of your state or Union Territory showing national parks and sanctuaries.

This is a map activity. Draw or use an outline map of your state/Union Territory. Mark and label the national parks and wildlife sanctuaries located there. Use different symbols or colours for national parks and sanctuaries, and add a small legend. Students should verify the names and locations from an official or school-approved source because protected-area lists can change.

4. Study the impact of forest fires on people dependent on forests. Try to include the causes, losses, and preventive measures.

Forest fires can affect forest-dependent communities by damaging crops, homes, grazing areas, wildlife habitats and sources of forest produce. People may lose access to fuelwood, fodder, honey, fruits, medicinal plants and other non-timber forest products. Causes may include prolonged dry conditions, heat, lightning and human activities such as unattended fires. Preventive measures include fire lines, removal of excess dry vegetation, community awareness, early detection, controlled use of fire and rapid response by trained teams. Local communities can play an important role in prevention and reporting.

5. Why are forests often called the 'lungs of the Earth'?

Forests are often described as the “lungs of the Earth” because plants take in carbon dioxide during photosynthesis and release oxygen. Forest ecosystems also store carbon, influence the water cycle and help regulate climate. The phrase is a simple way of highlighting the important role of forests in maintaining environmental balance.

6. If large forest areas continue to be destroyed, what do you think would be its long-term effect on the global climate?

Continued large-scale forest loss would reduce carbon storage and release additional carbon dioxide when vegetation is burned or decomposes. It can contribute to higher greenhouse-gas concentrations, changes in rainfall patterns, rising temperatures and loss of ecosystem services. Deforestation also reduces biodiversity and can weaken the ability of ecosystems to adapt to climate changes. The exact effects vary by region and depend on the scale and nature of forest loss.

7. Discuss some traditional forest conservation methods with your grandparents or an elderly person.

Traditional conservation methods vary between communities. Examples include protecting sacred groves, restricting tree cutting, collecting forest products without destroying the plant, seasonal rules for harvesting, community-managed forests and protection of water sources. Such practices can reflect local ecological knowledge and cultural traditions. Students should interview an elder and record one or two examples from their own community.

8. How do forest dwellers contribute to the protection and conservation of forests?

Forest dwellers often possess detailed knowledge of local plants, animals and seasonal changes. They may help protect forests through community management, sustainable collection of forest produce, prevention of fires, protection of wildlife habitats and traditional conservation practices. The chapter also highlights their role as knowledge holders and participants in forest protection movements. Sustainable livelihoods and secure rights can support conservation when communities are able to participate in resource management.

9. What is a forest fire? Prepare a plan for prevention and mitigation of forest fires.

A forest fire is an uncontrolled fire that spreads through vegetation in a forest or other wooded area. A practical prevention and mitigation plan can include:

1. Prevention: create and maintain fire lines; reduce accumulated dry fuel where appropriate; regulate activities that may start fires; and spread awareness.
2. Early detection: use watchtowers, patrols, local reporting networks and other suitable monitoring methods.
3. Preparedness: train local response teams, keep equipment ready and identify evacuation routes and safe areas.
4. Rapid response: report fires quickly, establish safe access for firefighting teams and protect people first.
5. Community participation: involve local communities in prevention, reporting and preparedness.
6. Recovery: assess damage, restore affected habitats where appropriate and support affected families and livelihoods.

Quick Revision – Key Points

Topic	Key Point
Diverse biomes	India's varied climate, relief, altitude, soils and water availability support different biomes.
Biodiversity	Includes variety within species, between species and among ecosystems.
Forest conservation	Combines ecological protection with sustainable use, community participation and local knowledge.
Forest dwellers	Depend on forests for livelihoods, household needs and cultural practices and can contribute to conservation.
Forest fires	Can damage habitats, resources, property and livelihoods; prevention, early detection and rapid response are important.
Protected areas	National parks and sanctuaries help conserve important habitats and wildlife.

Study Tip: For map-based and interview-based activities, write answers using examples from your own state or local area. For exam preparation, focus on the links between geography, climate, biomes, biodiversity, forest livelihoods and conservation.