

**Definition:**

Natural vegetation refers to a plant community which has grown naturally without human aid. They have been left undisturbed by humans for a long time. We call this virgin vegetation. Thus, cultivated crops and fruits, orchards form part of vegetation but not natural vegetation. Now, we will look at some of the factors that impact the vegetation in our country. Cultivated crops and fruits, orchards form part of vegetation but not natural vegetation.

**Types of Natural Vegetation:**

The following are the principal types of natural vegetation in India:

- Tropical Evergreen Rain Forests,
- Deciduous or Monsoon Forests,
- Dry Deciduous Forests and Scrubs,
- Semi Desert and Desert Vegetation,
- Tidal or Mangrove Forests and
- Mountain Forests.

**Tropical Evergreen Rain Forests:**

The tropical evergreen forests usually occur in areas receiving more than 200 cm of rainfall and having a temperature of 15 to 30 degrees Celsius. They occupy about seven per cent of the earth's land surface and harbors more than half of the world's plants and animals. They are found mostly near the equator. Hardwood trees like rosewood, ebony, and mahogany are common here. The tropical evergreen forest in Brazil is so enormous that it is like the lungs of the earth. Its distribution in India are- North-Eastern India, Western Slopes of the Western Ghats, Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

**Deciduous or Monsoon Forests:**

Tropical Deciduous Forests in India are the most widespread. Commonly also known as Monsoon forests, in the world, they are found in the belt along the equator, between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn as well as the humid subtropics. Africa, India, South America, Central America and small islands in the Pacific are some of the places where they grow. In India, they grow in the states of Madhya Pradesh Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, and parts of Maharashtra.

**Dry Deciduous Forests and Scrubs:**

The vegetation is found in those areas where the annual rainfall is between 50 and 100 cm. It is found in Eastern Rajasthan, Northern Gujarat, Western Madhya Pradesh, South-Western Uttar Pradesh, South Punjab, Haryana and the rain-shadow area of the Western Ghats.

### Semi Desert and Desert Vegetation:

The Thar Desert is an integral part of vegetation in Indian semi-deserts and deserts and it is home to numerous plants, animals and reptiles. This desert presents a wonderful picture of natural vegetation in India and the trees in this desert are short and stout, and stunted by the scorching sun. Some of the most common trees in this region include cacti, reunjha, khejra, kanju, ak, etc. The vegetation in Thar Desert has been classed as Northern Desert Thorn Forest (Champion 1936). The density and size of vegetation in the desert increase from West to East following the increase in rainfall and the vegetation is composed of several trees, shrubs and herb species.

### Tidal or Mangrove Forests :

The mangal is particularly prevalent in the deltas of large Asian rivers. The Sundarbans is the largest **mangrove forest** in the world, located in the Ganges River delta in Bangladesh and West Bengal, **India**. The Bhitarkanika **Mangroves Forest of Odisha**, by the Bay of Bengal, is **India's** second largest **mangrove forest**.

### Mountain Forests:

Mountain Forests in India are an integral part of the country's natural vegetation. These forests are mainly located at a high altitude in the mountains and usually vary to a great extent along the slopes of mountain. The Himalayas are the main place where these mountain forests can be found in India. The forests can be found unto a height of 1500 meters, on the foothills of the Himalayas.

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