When the Amazon Turns Emitter

One issue. 4 GS papers. 3 dimensions. 1 forest carbon test.

10 NOVEMBER 2026

CURRENT AFFAIRS → MULTIDIMENSIONAL THINKING

⚡THE ISSUE IN 30 SECONDS

FACT	WHY IT MATTERS
The Amazon is a net carbon source	Aircraft data from 2010 to 2024 at four Amazon sites
Fires added 1.17 billion tonnes	Wildfires made it emit more than it absorbed, says a Nature study
Dry season rainfall fell 17%	The annual temperature rose 0.9°C from 1979 to 2018
India's forest carbon could nearly double	A study projects this by 2100 under a high-emissions scenario

CORE IDEA: A forest that turns from carbon sink to source shows that standing forests need protection through zero-deforestation policy, tighter fire controls and restoration, while India's projected forest carbon gains also depend on climate conditions and good management.

🌍THINK BEYOND

Land conversion expands → **Forest loss cuts rainfall** → **Dry seasons lengthen** → **Fires intensify in El Niño years** → **The sink turns into a source** → **Protection restores the sink**

Can climate goals hold if the largest tropical forest stops absorbing carbon?

🗂UPSC CONNECT

🌍 GS1 · SOCIETY
Land use change, forests and forest communities

Use in: Land use • Communities

🏛 GS2 · GOVERNANCE
Global forest conservation and climate cooperation

Use in: Cooperation • Forests

⚡ GS3 · ENVIRONMENT
Carbon sinks, deforestation, fires and El Niño

Use in: Carbon sinks • Biodiversity

⚖ GS4 · ETHICS
Intergenerational duty and stewardship of nature

Use in: Stewardship • Duty

🎯OPTIONAL CONNECT

PUB ADMIN	PSIR	GEOGRAPHY	ECONOMICS
Forest **management** and fire control	Global **climate** cooperation	Tropical **forests** and El Niño	Land use and **commodity** expansion

✏HOW CAN I USE THIS IN MAINS?

ESSAY *"A standing forest is worth more than a cleared one."*

GS3 *Use this to discuss carbon sinks, deforestation and climate change.*

GS2 *Use it to discuss global forest conservation and climate cooperation.*

GS4 *Use it to discuss intergenerational duty and stewardship of nature.*

👤THINK LIKE AN OFFICER

★ KEY SECTION

CASE: You are a Chief Conservator of Forests. Fire-risk alerts are rising in a forest circle during a hot, dry season, and you must protect forest carbon together with local communities.

YOU HAVE 60 SECONDS: WHAT DO YOU DO?

☐ Wait for fires to spread ☐ Ban all community access

☐ Set fire alerts and involve communities ☐ Rely on rain alone

MODEL ADMINISTRATIVE APPROACH

1 · MAP FIRE RISK
Use satellite alerts and fire-risk maps

2 · ENGAGE COMMUNITIES
Train local forest committees in fire control

3 · CONTROL BURNING
Regulate biomass burning near forest edges

4 · RESTORE DEGRADED LAND
Prioritise restoration of degraded forest areas

🔑3 THINGS TO REMEMBER

01 · CONNECT
Protect standing forests

02 · THINK
Fire and drought erode sinks

03 · APPLY
Apply this across GS1-4, Essay and optionals