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THE TIMES OF INDIA

In a first, potential climate change hotspots mapped

TNN | Jan 14, 2022, 06.19 AM IST



NEW DELHI: The India State of Forest Report (ISFR) has for the first time mapped climate change hotspots in the country in three future time period scenarios of 2030, 2050 and 2085. It observed that Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are projected to witness the highest temperature increase whereas Andaman & Nicobar Islands, West Bengal, Goa, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh may face least temperature rise over these short, medium and long time periods.

The report on the hotspots also shows that northeastern states and Upper Malabar Coast are projected to experience the highest increase in rainfall whereas part of the northeastern states like Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim and north-west parts of the country such as Ladakh, J&K and Himachal Pradesh are projected to experience “least increase and sometimes even decline” in rainfall.

Mapping of the climate change hotspots over the forest areas of the country was done by the Forest Survey of India in collaboration with the Birla Institute of Technology & Science (BITS) Pilani (Goa campus).

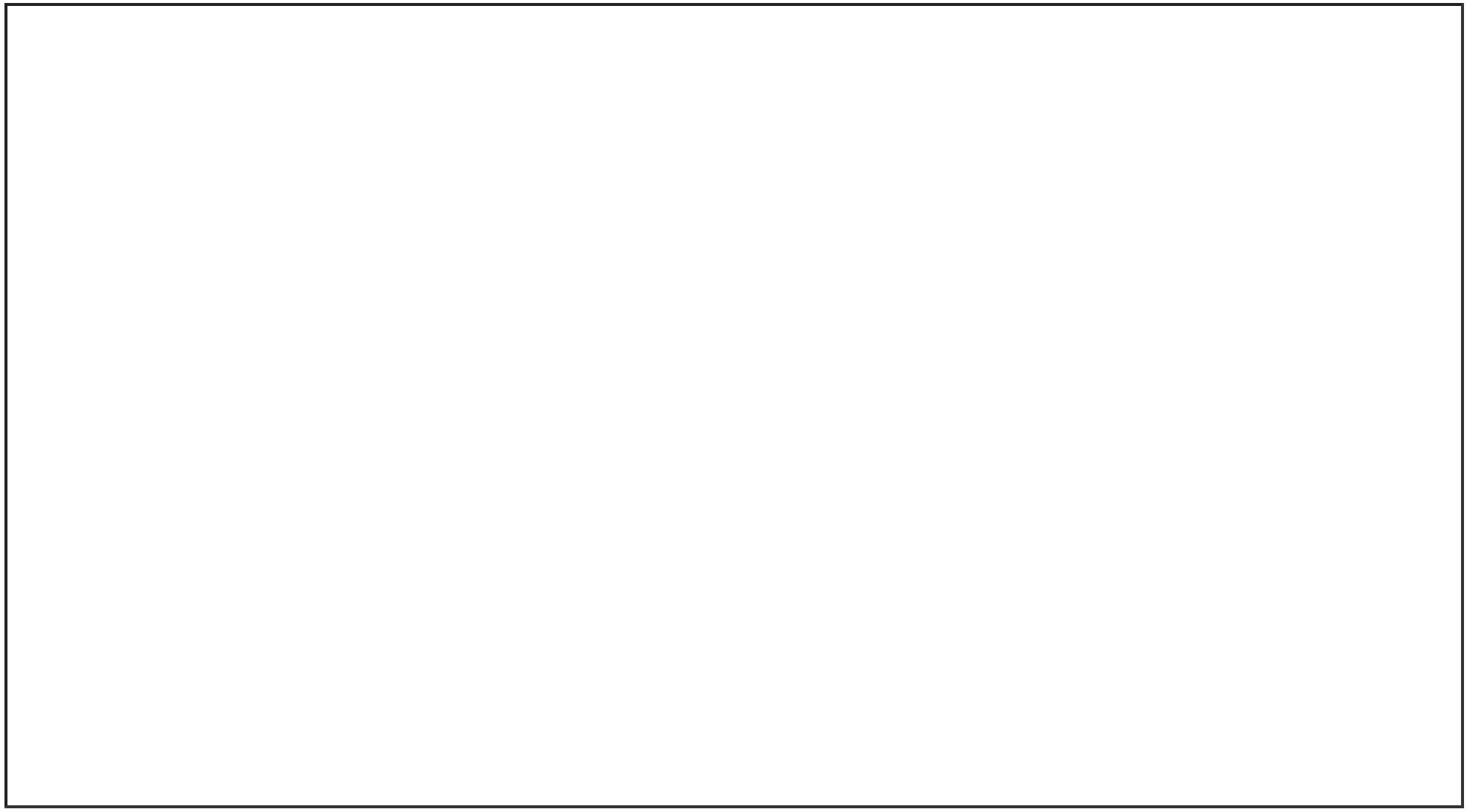
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“The collaborative study was carried out with objective to map climatic hotspots over forest cover in India, using computer model-based projection of temperature and rainfall data for the three future time periods,” said environment ministry.

The data for this purpose was obtained from the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Idea behind the mapping was to ascertain the impact of climate change on forests, species composition and related biodiversity. It will help policymakers take suitable mitigation and adaptation measures to protect the forest areas and biodiversity.



Besides, the report also shared data on its assessment of carbon stock through increase or decrease in forest covers in different parts of the country. Total carbon stock in India's forest is estimated to be 7,204 million tonnes. Overall, it shows an increase of 79.4 million tonnes in carbon stock of the country as compared to the last assessment in 2019, noting an annual increase of 39.7 million tonnes.

It shows how the increase in forest cover would increase the carbon sink -- an important natural tool to fight climate change through carbon sequestration (process of storing carbon in a carbon pool).