Environment & Ecology · GS - III

Sikkim is the first ‘Organic State’ in India. What are the ecological and economical benefits of Organic State?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2018	GS - III	Environment & Ecology

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Organic farming; soil health; biodiversity; reduced chemical pollution; premium markets; tourism; transition costs and productivity concerns

Model Answer

Introduction

Sikkim became India’s first fully organic state in 2016 after phasing out the use of synthetic chemical fertilisers and pesticides in its agricultural system.

Ecological Benefits

1. **Soil health:** Organic manure and compost improve soil structure and biological activity.
2. **Water protection:** Reduced synthetic chemical use lowers the risk of agricultural runoff contaminating water bodies.
3. **Biodiversity:** More diverse farming practices can support pollinators and beneficial organisms.
4. **Climate resilience:** Soil organic matter can improve water retention and help farms cope with certain climatic stresses.
5. **Ecosystem protection:** Lower chemical exposure benefits surrounding habitats and wildlife.

Economic Benefits

1. **Market premiums:** Certified produce may obtain higher prices in specialised markets.
2. **Tourism:** Sikkim's organic identity strengthens its image as an environmentally responsible destination.
3. **Input savings:** Farmers can reduce spending on synthetic fertilisers and pesticides over time.
4. **Value addition:** Organic branding can support local processing and marketing.
5. **Long-term sustainability:** Improved soil health can help sustain agricultural productivity.

Challenges

Conversion can initially raise costs and reduce yields in some crops. Certification, market access, labour requirements and price premiums are not uniform.

Conclusion

Sikkim demonstrates the potential of organic agriculture to combine environmental protection with rural development. Continued farmer support, market linkages and scientific agronomy are essential for lasting economic benefits.

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