

National Coastal Mission 2.0: Objectives, Features and UPSC Relevance

India's long coastline supports millions of livelihoods and is central to **trade, fisheries, tourism, biodiversity and the Blue Economy**. At the same time, coastal regions face increasing risks from **sea-level rise, coastal erosion, cyclones, flooding, pollution and ecosystem degradation**.

Against this background, the Government of India launched the **implementation guidelines for National Coastal Mission 2.0 (NCM 2.0) on 30 September 2026**. The initiative aims to strengthen coastal resilience while supporting sustainable economic development.

For UPSC aspirants, NCM 2.0 is important for **GS Paper I, GS Paper III, Environment, Disaster Management, Blue Economy and current affairs**.

What is National Coastal Mission 2.0?

National Coastal Mission 2.0 is a Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

It has an approved outlay of **₹767 crore** and will be implemented up to **2030-31** across India's **nine coastal States and four Union Territories**.

The mission seeks to integrate **coastal conservation, climate resilience, scientific planning and sustainable economic development**.

Major Objectives of NCM 2.0

The mission focuses on:

- Strengthening **coastal resilience**
- Conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems
- Biodiversity protection
- Marine pollution management
- Sustainable coastal tourism
- Coastal vulnerability assessment

- Spatial planning
- Research and scientific monitoring
- Capacity building
- Supporting India's **Blue Economy**

The approach represents a shift towards **integrated coastal management**, rather than treating individual coastal problems separately.

Why is NCM 2.0 Important?

1. Climate Change and Coastal Resilience

Coastal India is increasingly exposed to hazards such as:

Sea-level rise → Coastal erosion → Storm surges → Cyclones → Coastal flooding → Salinity intrusion

NCM 2.0 seeks to strengthen the resilience of coastal ecosystems and communities against these risks.

2. Ecosystem Restoration

Mangroves, coral reefs, wetlands and other coastal ecosystems provide important **ecosystem services**, including protection against waves and storm surges, carbon storage and habitat for biodiversity.

Restoring these ecosystems can therefore serve both **conservation and climate-adaptation objectives**.

3. Blue Economy

India's coastal and marine resources support activities such as:

- Fisheries
- Shipping
- Ports
- Coastal tourism
- Aquaculture

- Renewable energy
- Marine biotechnology

NCM 2.0 seeks to unlock this economic potential while maintaining ecological sustainability.

Spatial Planning and Scientific Management

One important feature of modern coastal management is the use of **scientific and spatial planning**.

Coastal areas have multiple and sometimes competing uses:

Ports + Fisheries + Tourism + Conservation + Settlements + Industry + Renewable Energy

Integrated planning can help reduce conflicts between development and environmental protection.

NCM 2.0 therefore emphasises **spatial planning, research, vulnerability assessments and improved institutional coordination**.

Pollution Management

Marine and coastal pollution from **plastic waste, untreated sewage, industrial discharge and other sources** threatens marine ecosystems and coastal livelihoods.

NCM 2.0 includes pollution management as one of its important intervention areas, complementing broader government initiatives for cleaner and healthier oceans.

NCM 2.0 and Disaster Management

The mission has direct relevance to disaster management because coastal ecosystems themselves can function as **natural protective infrastructure**.

For example:

Mangroves → Reduce wave energy and erosion

Coral reefs → Provide coastal protection

Wetlands → Store excess water

This approach is often described as **ecosystem-based adaptation**.

It can complement conventional infrastructure such as seawalls, embankments and cyclone shelters.

NCM 2.0 vs Traditional Coastal Development

The basic philosophy can be understood as:

Earlier approach: Development and environmental protection often considered separately.

NCM 2.0 approach: Ecology + climate resilience + livelihoods + spatial planning + Blue Economy.

This **whole-of-government and stakeholder-based approach** is intended to improve coordination between the Centre, coastal States/UTs and other stakeholders.

UPSC Relevance Prelims

Remember:

- **NCM 2.0:** National Coastal Mission 2.0
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- **Type:** Central Sector Scheme
- **Outlay:** ₹767 crore
- **Implementation period:** Till 2030-31
- **Coverage:** 9 coastal States + 4 Union Territories
- **Key themes:** Coastal resilience, ecosystem restoration, pollution management, biodiversity, sustainable tourism and Blue Economy

GS Paper I - Geography

Link NCM 2.0 with:

- Coastal geomorphology
- Coastal erosion
- Sea-level rise

- Cyclones
- Coastal ecosystems
- Human-environment interaction

GS Paper III - Environment & Disaster Management

Connect it with:

- Climate adaptation
- Marine pollution
- Mangrove conservation
- Biodiversity
- Blue Economy
- Ecosystem-based disaster management
- Sustainable coastal development

Possible UPSC Mains Question

“National Coastal Mission 2.0 seeks to balance coastal conservation with the development of India’s Blue Economy. Discuss the significance of an integrated approach to coastal management in India.”

A good answer can follow:

Coastal challenges → NCM 2.0 → Ecosystem restoration → Climate resilience → Blue Economy → Way forward

Conclusion

National Coastal Mission 2.0 represents an integrated approach to India’s coastal future, combining environmental conservation with climate resilience and sustainable economic development.

Its success will depend on **scientific planning, effective Centre-State coordination, community participation, ecosystem restoration and strong implementation mechanisms.**

For UPSC aspirants, NCM 2.0 is an excellent case study connecting **Climate Change + Coastal Geography + Biodiversity + Disaster Management + Blue Economy + Sustainable Development.**

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