

## **5. Sikkim sees surge in Butterfly Biodiversity**

**Prelims: Environment- Biodiversity**

**Mains: GS-III Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment**

### **Why in News?**

- ▶▶ From the iconic Kaiser-i-Hind to the recently rediscovered Small Woodbrown butterfly, the state of Sikkim is home to nearly 700 species of butterfly.

### **Highlights:**

- ▶▶ There were issues raised in the past that organic farming could affect butterfly diversity in the state
- ▶▶ A new study has found that the indigenous farming systems in this area are not affecting butterfly diversity. In fact, the team from Sikkim University found that organic farming has increased the species diversity.
- ▶▶ This study has helped break the stereotype that agriculture declines the Wild Biodiversity.

### **Steps needs to be Taken:**

- ▶▶ The agroecosystems need special protection in order to protect the wild biodiversity as there is no scope of extension of protected areas in lower elevation.
- ▶▶ Two, a synergy between agriculture, horticulture, forest and rural management department along with all stakeholders including farmers is required.
- ▶▶ Three, farmers should be encouraged and incentivised to maintain the diversity of the farmlands.
- ▶▶ Finally, more than monoculture systems, the focus should be on growing a variety of crops in a traditionally way and mixed crop farms to better Conserve Biodiversity.

### **Way Forward:**

- ▶▶ As the Himalayan biodiversity has recently been facing threats from habitat loss, change in land use, forest fragmentation and urbanisation, it is high time the neighbouring states take notes from Sikkim and shift to traditional organic methods to preserve the biodiversity of the region.