China dominates the global bamboo market by supplying about 83 per cent of bamboo products while India has the largest area under bamboo cultivation (about 14 million hectares)

Even though China has 6 million hectares under bamboo cultivation, it still is the main marketer.

Reasons:

The first reason is related to research in the bamboo sector, multi-participation, and overall societal awareness regarding the bamboo sector and its vast opportunities, not just economically, but also environmentally.

Multi-participation (participation by people from all walks of life and professions) in the sector becomes all the more crucial in order for it to succeed. This usually includes local communities, farmers, entrepreneurs, scientists, government and policy makers, technicians, etc.

when all the stakeholders and different groups of people involved get educated on the subject and develop an in-depth understanding of the bamboo sector and its opportunities, and become aware of the importance of bamboo for poverty alleviation, development of rural economy, and ecological and environmental benefits and protection, can the society as a whole actively participate in the bamboo industry. This will inevitably lead to the sector’s progress, both domestically and internationally.

Bamboo Mission in India

In October 2006, the Government of India (GOI) had launched the National Bamboo Mission (NBM) on the basis of the National Mission on Bamboo Technology and Trade Development Report, 2003. The NBM's key objective was to address issues relating to the development of the bamboo industry in the country, provide a new impetus and direction and enable the realisation of India's considerable potential in bamboo production. Multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional in its approach, major interventions planned under it were to focus on research and development, plantation on forest and non-forest lands through Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) or Village Development Committee (VDCs) and to ensure the supply of quality planting materials by establishing centralised and kisan/mahila nurseries.

**The way forward**

To arrest the pace of land degradation in the country, a national programme of intensive bamboo plantation involving all stake-holders needs to be undertaken beyond 2019-20.The National Housing Scheme (PMAY) should utilise bamboo as construction material. Though bamboo has been used in various pioneering structural applications in the past, it is still seen as a "poor man's material". Developing bamboo as a load-bearing structural element would pave the way for its high value application in construction, which can make bamboo cultivation an economically viable way of greening the vast wastelands. Edible bamboo has a huge demand in East Asian cuisines and medicine. Bamboo grown in the Northeast (which is 66 per cent of the growing bamboo stock in India) can be exported to East Asian countries like Japan and Taiwan for competitive prices with the GOI's support.