

Wildlife Protection in India – Part 2

Topic List

- NWAP (National Wildlife Action Plan)
- Species Recovery Programme
- CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)

1. National Wildlife Action Plan for 2017-2031

1.1. Introduction

- India unveiled the third National Wildlife Action Plan for 2017-2031 in **October 2017** spelling out the future road map for wildlife conservation.
- The first plan came in 1983 and the second was from 2002 till 2016.
- ★ The plan was initiated in February 2016 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. It was drafted by a 12-member **committee chaired by JC Kala**, a former secretary to the Ministry.

1.2. Main features of National Wildlife Action Plan for 2017-2031

- The key focus areas of this plan includes integration of climate change into wildlife planning, conservation of coastal and marine ecosystem, mitigation of human-wildlife conflict, focus on wildlife health among others.

Climate Change impact

- It is the **first wildlife action plan to recognize** concerns related to **climate change** impact on wildlife.
- It has stressed on integrating actions for its mitigation and adaptation into wildlife management planning processes.
- It recommended assisted migration of wildlife and anticipatory planting along ecological gradients, as climate change may result in die-offs of certain tree species that are unable to adapt to newer environmental conditions.

Approach

- It adopts a landscape approach in conservation of all wildlife – uncultivated flora and fauna that have an ecological value to the ecosystem and to mankind irrespective of where they occur.
- It gives **special emphasis to the recovery** of threatened species of wildlife while conserving their habitats.

Human-animal conflict concerns

- It addresses rising human-animal conflict owing to shrinkage, fragmentation and deterioration of habitats generating animosity against wild animals and protected areas.

People's support

- It underscores the increasing need for people's support for conservation of wildlife.
- It recommends eco-development, education, innovation, training, extension, and conservation awareness and outreach programs.

Participation of private sector

- It underlines the increased role of the private sector in wildlife conservation.
- It lays down that the Government will ensure that adequate and sustained funding including **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** funds are made available for implementation of the plan.

2. Species Recovery Programme

- The Species Recovery Programme is **one of the three components** of the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH).
- IDWH was **started in 2008-09 as a Centrally sponsored Scheme**. It has been made operational by adding more components and activities to the erstwhile Scheme - "Assistance for the Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries" during the 11th Plan Period.
- IDWH is meant for
 - providing support to protected areas (national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, conservation reserves and community reserves except tiger reserves),
 - protection of wildlife outside protected areas, and
 - recovery programmes for saving critically endangered species and habitats.

2.1. Number of Species under Species Recovery Programme

So far, **22 species** have been identified under the species recovery programme. These are:

1. Asian Wild Buffalo
2. Asiatic Lion
3. Brow-Antlered Deer or Sangai
4. Dugong
5. Edible Nest Swiftlet
6. Gangetic River Dolphin
7. Great Indian Bustard
8. Hangul
9. Indian Rhino or Great One-horned Rhinoceros
10. Jerdon's Courser
11. Malabar Civet
12. Marine Turtles
13. Nicobar Megapode
14. Nilgiri Tahr
15. Snow Leopard
16. Swamp Deer
17. Vultures
18. Northern River Terrapin
19. Clouded Leopard
20. Arabian Sea Humpback Whale
21. Red Panda
22. Caracal

3. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

- CITES is an international agreement to regulate worldwide commercial trade in wild animal and plant species.
- It is **legally binding** on state parties to the convention, which are obliged to adopt their own domestic legislation to implement its goals.
- Its aim is to ensure that **international trade does not threaten** the survival of the species in the wild.

3.1.1. Adoption and Secretariat

- It was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of IUCN.
- **It entered into force in July 1975.**
- Currently there are 184 Parties. **India has been a CITES Party since 1976.**
- It is administered through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- Its **secretariat** is located in **Geneva, Switzerland.**

3.1.2. CITES Appendices

It classifies plants and animals according to three categories, or appendices, based on how threatened. They are:

Appendix I

- It lists species that are the **most endangered** among CITES-listed animals and plants.
- They are threatened with extinction and CITES prohibits international trade in specimens of these species except when the purpose of the import is not commercial, for instance for scientific research.
- In these exceptional cases, trade may take place provided it is authorized by the granting of both an import permit and an export permit (or re-export certificate).

Appendix II

- It lists species that are **not necessarily now threatened with extinction but that may become so** unless trade is closely controlled.
- It **also includes** so-called "**look-alike species**", i.e. species whose specimens in trade look like those of species listed for conservation reasons.
- International trade in specimens of Appendix-II species may be authorized by the granting of an export permit or re-export certificate.
- No import permit is necessary for these species under CITES.
- Permits or certificates should only be granted if the relevant authorities are satisfied that certain conditions are met, above all that trade will not be detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild.

Appendix III

- It is a list of species **included at the request of a Party** that already regulates trade in the species and that needs the cooperation of other countries to prevent unsustainable or illegal exploitation.
- International trade in specimens of species listed in this Appendix is allowed only on presentation of the appropriate permits or certificates.

3.1.2.1. Addition or removal

- Species may be added to or removed from Appendix I and II, or moved between them, only by the Conference of the Parties, either at its regular meetings or by postal procedures.
- But species may be added to or removed from Appendix III at any time and by any Party unilaterally.