

Revision Notes
Chapter-2
Forest and Wildlife Resources

We humans along with all living organism form a complex web of ecological system in which we are only a part and very much dependent on this system for our own existence. For example, the plants, animals and microorganism recreate the quality of the air we breathe.

Flora And Fauna in India:

1. India is one of the world's richest countries in terms of its vast array of biological diversity and has nearly 8 per cent of the total number of species in the world.
2. This is possibly twice or twice or thrice the number yet to be discovered.
3. These diverse flora and fauna are so well integrated into our daily life that we take these for granted.
4. They are under great stress mainly due to insensitivity to our environment.
5. That at least 10 per cent of India's recorded wild flora and 20 per cent of its mammals are on the threatened list.

Categorisation of Species

Normal Species: Species whose population levels are considered to be normal for their survival, such as cattle, Sal, pine, rodents, etc.,

Endangered Species: These are species which are in danger of extinction the survival of such species is difficult if the negative factor that has led to a decline in their population continue to operate.

Vulnerable Species: These are species whose population has declined to levels from where it is likely to move into the endangered category in the near future if the negative factors continue to operate.

Rare Species: Species with a small population may move into the endangered or vulnerable category if the negative factors affecting them continue to operate.

Endemic Species: These are species which are only found in some particular areas usually isolated by natural or geographical barriers.

Extinct Species: These are species which are not found after searches of known or likely areas where they may occur.

Conservation: Protection of the natural environment to prevent it from further deterioration.

IUCN: The International Union for Conservation of nature and natural resources is the worlds oldest and largest global environmental organisation, founded in 1948. it is also called the world conservation union.

What are the negative factors that cause such fearful depletion of the flora and fauna:

1. We have transformed nature into a resource obtaining directly and indirectly from the forest and wildlife.
2. It is we ourselves who have depleted our forest and wildlife.
3. The major causes of depletion of forest resources between 1951 and 1980 accordingly to the forest survey of India over 26,200sq.km
4. The Large scale development project has also contributed significantly to the loss of forest.
5. 1951, over 5,000 sq km forest was cleared for river valley project.
6. Narmada Sagar project in Madhya Pradesh which would inundate 40,000 hectares of forest.
7. These protected areas thus mean different things to different people and therein lies the fertile ground for conflicts.
8. Habitat destruction, hunting, poaching over – exploitation, environmental pollution poisoning and forest fires are factors.

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9. Over population in third world countries is often cited as the cause of environmental degradation.
 10. American consumes 40 times more resources than an average Somalian.
 11. The richest five per cent of India society probably cause more ecological damage because of the amount they consume than the poorest 25 per cent.
 12. The biological loss is strongly correlated with the loss of cultural diversity.
 13. Women bear the major responsibility for collection of fuel, fodder, water and other basic subsistence needs.
 14. Poverty, in this case, is a direct outcome of environmental destruction.
 15. This is imperative to adapt to sound forest and wildlife conservation strategies.

Conservation of Forest and Wildlife in India:

1. Conservation in the background of a rapid decline in wildlife population and forestry has become essential.
2. In the 1960s and 1970s conservation demanded a national wildlife protection programme.
3. The Indian Wildlife Act was implemented in 1972 with various provision for protecting habitats.
4. The central government also announced several projects for protecting specific animals which were gravely threatened, including the tiger.
5. We have been given full or partial legal protection against hunting and trade throughout India.

Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act:

1. An act for the conservation of biodiversity of India.
2. Passed in 1972.
3. Contains a list of protected species in the country.

4. The ban on hunting was imposed.
5. Legal protection was provided to the habitats of endangered species.
6. Restriction on trade in wildlife.
7. Established national parks and wildlife sanctuaries throughout the country.
8. Projects such as Project Tiger, Project Elephant etc. that were specific to a particular species were formulated
9. Project Tiger, Initiated in 1973.
10. Tiger population has dwindled to about 1800 from 55000 in the early 20th century.

Project Tiger:

1. It was launched by the government of India in 1973.
2. To save the endangered species of tiger in the country.
3. The major threats to tiger population are poaching for the trade of tiger skins and bones which are traditionally used in medicines in Asian Countries.
4. Others threats are a) shrinking habitat b) depletion of prey base species and growing human population.
5. India and Nepal Became the prime targets for poaching and illegal trading because they provide natural habitat for two-thirds of the surviving tiger populations.

Major tiger reserve of India are:

1. Corbett national park - Uttarakhand
2. Bandhavgarh National Park - Madhya Pradesh
3. Sunderbans National Parks - West Bengal
4. Sariska wildlife sanctuary - Rajasthan
5. Manas tiger reserve - Assam

6. Periyar tiger reserve - Kerala

7. Nagarjuna Sagar Srigailam Andhra Pradesh tiger reserve (largest in India)

Types and Distribution of Forest and Wildlife Resources:

Even if we want to conserve our vast forest and wildlife resources, it is rather difficult to manage, control and regulate them.

1. Reserved Forest: More than half of the total forest land has declared reserved forest are regarded as the most valuable as far as the conservation of forest and wildlife resources are concerned.

2. Protected forest: Almost one – third of the total forest of the total forest area is protected forest, as declared by the Forest Department. This land is protected from any further depletion.

3. Unclassed Forest: These are other forest and waste lands belonging to both government and private individuals and communities.

Community and Conservation:

1. We often ignore that in India forests are also home to the traditional communities.

2. In some areas of India local communities are struggling to conserve these habitats along with government officials recognizing that only this will secure their own long – term livelihood.

3. The Alwar district of Rajasthan has declared 1,200 hectares.

4. The famous Chipko movement in the Himalayas has not only successfully resisted deforestation in several areas.

5. Farmers and citizen's groups like the Beej Bachao Andolan in Tehri and Navdanya have shown that adequate levels of diversified crop production without the use of synthetic.

6. The programme has been in formal existence since 1988 when the state of Orissa passed the first resolution for joint forest management.

Chipko Movement

1. Started in the 1970s in Garhwal in Uttarakhand.
2. Trees were prevented from being cut by forming a human circle around them.
3. It spread across the country.

Beej Bachao Andolan

1. Started in the 1980s in Tehri region of Uttarakhand.
2. Led by the farmer and social activist Vijay Jardhari.
3. Started in 1988 by the Government of India.
4. First launched in Orissa.
5. Involves local communities for conserving wildlife and restoring degraded forests.

Joint Forest Management:

1. It is launched by various states government.
2. In this programme, village communities are entrusted with the protection and management of the nearby forest.
3. Areas concerned are usually degraded or even deforested areas.
4. The first state to start this programme was Odisha in 1988.
5. The communities are required to organise forest protection committees, development societies etc.
6. Each body has an executive committee that manages the day to day affairs.