

Forest & Wildlife Resources

NOTES

Geography
Class-10

I. India's Biodiversity

Biodiversity

Biodiversity refers to:

- Rich variety of wildlife and flora
- Diversity in form and function of life forms
- Interdependence in a network called ecosystem

Ecosystem or ecological system: A biological community, where all the living organisms interact with each other and are interdependent.

Importance of Biodiversity

Biodiversity is important for ecological balance, availability of resources, coexistence of species, economic and ecological development and spiritual and recreational pursuits.

- *Coexistence of life forms:* An ecosystem is a home to many species from lichen to banyan trees to human beings.
- *Interdependence:* All the species are interdependent for their survival.
- *Resource availability:* For example, plants, animals and micro-organisms re-create the quality of the air we breathe, the water we drink and the soil that produces our food, things without which we cannot survive.
- *Forests play a key role* in the ecological system as these are also the primary producers on which all other living beings depend.
- Biodiversity provides wood, rubber, medicines dyes and other products useful to human beings.
- Biodiversity enables recreational, cultural and scientific growth through tourism, spirituality and medicines.

II. Flora and Fauna

Biodiversity in India:

- India is one of the richest countries in the world regarding biological diversity.
- There is a vast array of unique animals and plants, with many species still undiscovered.
- Local areas have unique species of flora and fauna, highlighting regional biodiversity.

Importance of Flora and Fauna:

- These resources are crucial for our daily lives, providing food, medicine, and other essentials.
- They are deeply integrated into our everyday life, often taken for granted.

Threats to Biodiversity:

- India's flora and fauna are under significant stress.
- The primary cause of this stress is the insensitivity and lack of awareness towards the environment.
- Conservation efforts are needed to protect these valuable natural resources from further decline.

III. Conservation Strategies

Q. Hint – What conservation strategies are adopted by the Indian government to protect biodiversity?

Meaning of conservation

- Conservation is the care and protection of valuable natural resources so that these will be available for future generations.
- Conservation prevents excessive exploitation of resources by human beings.
- It also promotes awareness among people of the need for sustainable use of these resources.

Need for conservation

- Increased demand for forest and wildlife products has caused increased destruction and degradation of forest and wildlife resources.
- Conservation helps to preserve the ecological balance of the environment.
- Conservation helps to preserve valuable natural resources such as water, air, and soil.
- It also preserves plant species and fisheries for breeding in the future.
- The country's agricultural and industrial advancement in recent years has been accelerated by proper conservation of forest and wildlife resources.

The Indian Wildlife Protection Act

- In 1972, The Indian Wildlife Protection Act was passed.
- The main aim of the Act was to protect the natural habitats of wild species.
- The wildlife protection program published a list of protected species.
- The Act also aimed at protecting endangered species by prohibiting their hunting and restricting trade in these species.

Role of central government

- To conserve the flora and fauna of the country, the central government established many national parks, sanctuaries, and biosphere reserves.
- Various projects, such as Project Tiger, Project Elephant, and Project Crocodile, were introduced to protect certain species that were threatened and were on the verge of extinction.
- Many wildlife species have been given full or partial legal protection against their hunting and trade within the country.
- For example, Indian elephant, blackbuck (chinkara), the great Indian bustard (*godawan*), and the snow leopard.

Project Tiger

- Due to illegal hunting and poaching of tigers worldwide, the number of tigers dropped drastically from 55,000 to 1,827 in the 1970s.

- These malpractices were found mainly in India and Nepal, as these two countries held about two-thirds of the surviving tiger population.
- Project Tiger was launched in 1973 to conserve the existing tiger population.
- Corbett National Park in Uttarakhand, Sunderbans National Park in West Bengal are among the few tiger reserves in the country.

New approach of conservation

- The meaning of conservation is no longer limited to the preservation of endangered species.
- Conservation programs are now also focusing on biodiversity conservation, conservation of insects, and so on.
- Butterflies, moths, beetles, and one dragonfly species are also included in the protected species under the Wildlife Acts of 1980 and 1986.
- In 1991, six species of plants were also included in the protected list.

IV. Classification of Forests in India

Forests and wildlife resources in India are owned by the Forest Department or other government bodies. Forests in India are classified into three categories — reserved forests, protected forests, and unclassed forests.

Reserved forests

- These forests are protected areas that do not allow hunting and poaching.
- Reserved forests are created to protect the natural habitats of wildlife species.
- More than half of the total forest land in India is declared as reserved forests.

Protected forests

- Habitats and wildlife species in these forests are protected from further depletion.
- One-third of the total forest land in India is declared as protected forests by the Forest Department.
- Reserved and protected forests are called permanent forests.

Unclassed forests

- Forests that are not in the reserved or protected categories are termed unclassified forests.
- These forests and wastelands may be owned by the government or by private individuals and communities.
- These forests are found in parts of the north-eastern states of India and Gujarat.

Permanent Forest Estates:

- Reserved and protected forests are also known as permanent forest estates.
- They are maintained for timber production, forest produce, and protective purposes.

Regional Distribution:

- **Madhya Pradesh:** Has the largest area under permanent forests (75% of its total forest area).
- **Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Maharashtra:** Have large percentages of reserved forests.
- **Bihar, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan:** Have most of their forest area under protected forests.
- **North-Eastern States and parts of Gujarat:** High percentage of forests are unclassified, managed by local communities.

V. Community and Conservation

Traditional Conservation in India:

- Conservation strategies have a long history in India.
- Forests are home to traditional communities who rely on them for their livelihoods.
- Local communities are actively involved in conserving habitats, often working with government officials.

Examples of Community Conservation:

- **Sariska Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan:** Villagers have opposed mining by using the Wildlife Protection Act.

- **Alwar District, Rajasthan:** Inhabitants of five villages declared 1,200 hectares as Bhairodev Dakav 'Sonchuri' to protect wildlife, setting their own rules against hunting and encroachments.
- **Chipko Movement, Himalayas:** Successfully resisted deforestation and promoted community afforestation with indigenous species.

Reviving Traditional Methods:

- There is a resurgence in traditional conservation methods and ecological farming.
- **Beej Bachao Andolan (Save the Seeds Movement) and Navdanya in Tehri:** Advocated for diversified crop production without synthetic chemicals, showing it is economically viable.

Joint Forest Management (JFM) Programme:

- Aimed at involving local communities in managing and restoring degraded forests.
- Started formally in 1988, first initiated in Odisha.
- Local institutions are formed to protect degraded forest lands.
- Communities receive benefits like non-timber forest products and a share in timber from protected forests.

Key Lessons:

- Local communities need to be involved in natural resource management for effective conservation.
- Decision-making should prioritize people-centric, environmentally friendly, and economically sustainable activities.
- While progress is being made, there is still a need for greater involvement of local communities in conservation decisions.

Links to Important Questions[Extra Questions](#)**Terms and Conditions of Usage of Our Study materials**

© ncerttutorials.com

The notes are to be used for study purpose by students and are not meant to be circulated or distributed via any media to others. Commercial use of any of our materials is completely prohibited. In case any infringement is found then legal action can be initiated.
