

# Biodiversity Protection: Steps Taken By Indian Government

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India is a signatory to several major international conventions relating to conservation and management of wildlife. Some of these are Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals etc. Financial and Technical assistance is provided to State/Union Territory Governments for protection and Management of Protected Areas as well as other forests under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

## Biodiversity of India and need for protection

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India is one among the 17 mega-diverse countries of the world. But many plants and animals are facing the threat of extinction. To protect the critically endangered and other threatened animal and plant species, Government of India has adopted many steps, laws and policy initiatives.

## Steps Taken By Government for Biodiversity Protection

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Indian Government has taken various biodiversity protection steps. Important measures include:

1. The Central Government has enacted the **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**. The Act, inter alia, provides for the creation of Protected Areas for the protection of wildlife and also provides for punishment for hunting of specified fauna specified in the schedules I to IV thereof.
2. **Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules 2010** have been framed for the

protection of wetlands, in the States.

3. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of **National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-System** also provides assistance to the States for the management of wetlands including Ramsar sites in the country.
4. **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau** has been established for control of illegal trade in wildlife, including endangered species.
5. Wildlife Institute of India, Bombay Natural History society and Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History are some of the research organisations undertaking research on conservation of wildlife.
6. The Indian Government has banned the veterinary use of diclofenac drug that has caused the rapid population decline of Gyps vulture across the Indian Subcontinent. Conservation Breeding Programmes to conserve these vulture species have been initiated at Pinjore (Haryana), Buxa (West Bengal) and Rani, Guwahati (Assam) by the Bombay Natural History Society.
7. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme '**Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats**' has been modified by including a new component namely '**Recovery of Endangered Species**' and 16 species have been identified for recovery viz. Snow Leopard, Bustard (including Floricans), Dolphin, Hangul, Nilgiri Tahr, Marine Turtles, Dugong, Edible Nest Swiftlet, Asian Wild Buffalo, Nicobar Megapode, Manipur Brow-antlered Deer, Vultures, Malabar Civet, Indian Rhinoceros, Asiatic Lion, Swamp Deer and Jerdon's Courser.
8. Under the 'Recovery of Endangered Species' component of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats' for the recovery of endangered species viz. **Hangul** in Jammu and Kashmir, **Snow Leopard** in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh, **Vulture** in Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat, **Swiftlet** in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, **Nilgiri Tahr** in Tamil Nadu, **Sangai Deer** in Manipur, the government has to spend lakhs of rupees.
9. Protected Areas, viz, National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves all over the country covering the important habitats have been created as per the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to provide better protection to wildlife, including threatened species and their habitat.
10. Financial and technical assistance is extended to the State Governments under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, viz, 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' for providing better protection and conservation to wildlife.
11. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.
12. The State Governments have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around the Protected Areas.

Also read: 7 Major Environmental Movements in India

## Important Indian Acts passed related to Environment and Bio Diversity

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1. Fisheries Act 1897.
2. Indian Forests Act 1927.
3. Mining and Mineral Development Regulation Act 1957.
4. Prevention of cruelty to animals 1960.
5. Wildlife protection act 1972.
6. Water (prevention and control of pollution) act 1974.
7. Forest Conservation Act 1980.
8. Air(prevention and control of pollution) act 1981.
9. Environment Protection Act 1986.
10. Biological Diversity Act 2002.
11. Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers (recognition of rights) act 2006.

## Policies related to Environment and Bio Diversity

1. National Forest Policy.
2. National Conservation Strategy and Policy statement on Environment and Development.
3. National Policy and macro-level action strategy on Biodiversity.
4. National Biodiversity Action Plan (2009).
5. National Agriculture Policy.
6. National Water Policy.
7. National Environment Policy (2006).