

INDIAN FOREST

Soul of the Subcontinent.

INDEX

- Basics of Indian Forest
- Definitions of Conservation Areas
- National Parks
- Wildlife sanctuary
- Biosphere Reserves
- Community Reserve
- Biodiversity Hotspots
- In situ Conservation
- Ex Situ Conservation
- Facts about Protected areas

- First in India
- Marine National Parks
- Indian Forest Laws
- Environmental Movements
- Bird sanctuary
- Animals & Protected Areas
- Biosphere Reserves in India
- Challenges of Biosphere Reserve
- Tiger Reserves in India
- National Parks in India
- Sources Used
- Pyqs
- Practice question



- The forests were moved from the State List to the Concurrent List by the 42nd Amendment in **1976**.
- The father of Indian Forestry is known as - Sir Dietrich Brandis.
- The father of Indian Tropical Forests is known as - Sir Dietrich Brandis.
- Father of Indian Ecology - Ramdeo Mishra.
- India's rank among the world's countries in terms of forest area - **9**.
- India has **2%** of the world's total forest area.
- Forest cover in India is **25.17%** of the total geographical area (As per Forest Survey Report **2023**).
- What percentage of forest cover should India have? - **33%**.
- According to the National Forest Policy of 1988, plains should have **33%** forest cover and hilly areas should have **67%** forest cover.
- State with the largest forest area in India - Madhya Pradesh.
- Second largest - Arunachal Pradesh.
- State with the least forest area in India - Haryana.
- State with the highest percentage of forest cover - Mizoram (**85.34%**).
- State with the lowest percentage of forest cover - Haryana.
- Union Territory with the largest forest area in India - Jammu & Kashmir.
- Union Territory with the least forest area in India - Chandigarh.
- Union Territory with the highest percentage of forest cover - Lakshadweep.
- Union Territory with the lowest percentage of forest cover - Ladakh.
- State with the most National Parks - Madhya Pradesh (**11**).
- Union Territory with the most National Parks - Andaman & Nicobar (**9**).
- State without National Parks - Punjab.
- **19** States/UTs have more than **33%** forest cover.

India:

- National Parks - 107
- Tiger Reserves - 58
- Elephant Reserves - 33
- Wildlife Sanctuaries - 573
- Biosphere Reserves - 18
- Community Reserves - 309
- Biodiversity Hotspots - 4

Definitions of Conservation Areas

National Park:

A National Park is a protected area under the government, established for the conservation of wildlife, biodiversity, historical monuments, and culture. Activities such as hunting, poaching, and deforestation are strictly prohibited. Human activities are strictly prohibited, but tourism is allowed under strict regulations.

Wildlife Sanctuary:

A Wildlife Sanctuary is a protected area that conserves animals, birds, and plants in their natural habitat. Unlike National Parks, certain human activities like cattle grazing and regulated tourism are permitted.

Biosphere Reserve:

A Biosphere Reserve is a large protected area encompassing multiple ecosystems, including National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries.

A Biosphere Reserve is divided into three zones:

- **Core Area:** Strictly protected areas for conserving biodiversity, ecosystems, and endangered species. Human activities here are minimal or restricted.
- **Buffer Zone:** Surrounding the Core Area, this zone allows limited human activities such as research, education, and eco-friendly activities that support conservation.
- **Transition Zone:** The outermost zone of the Biosphere Reserve. Its main objective is connectivity. Human activities like agriculture and tourism are permitted here.

Community Reserve:

A Community Reserve is a biodiversity conservation area protected with the help of local indigenous people residing in the area. It is usually located between National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, or forests, aiding wildlife movement and conservation.

Biodiversity Hotspot:

A Biodiversity Hotspot is an area with rich diversity of endangered species, which is also severely threatened due to habitat loss. To qualify as a hotspot, an area must meet the following criteria:

1. It must be home to at least 1,500 species of endemic vascular plants (endangered species).
2. More than 70% of its habitat must be destroyed due to human activity.

India's Biodiversity Hotspots:

1. Himalayas
2. Indo-Burma Region
3. Sundaland (including Nicobar Islands)
4. Western Ghats

In-situ Conservation:

- The process of conserving species in their natural habitat. This method preserves the ecosystem and natural biodiversity by keeping flora, fauna, and microorganisms in their natural environment.
- Examples: National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries, Biosphere Reserves, Marine Protected Areas, Sacred Groves.

Ex-situ Conservation:

- The process of conserving species outside their natural habitat in a controlled environment. This helps ensure the survival of critically endangered species.
- Examples: Zoos and Botanical Gardens, Seed Banks and Gene Banks, Cryopreservation (Frozen Storage of Genetic Material), Captive Breeding Programs.

Basic Information

India's First National Park: Jim Corbett National Park.

- Established in **1936**.
- Located in Uttarakhand.
- Original name of Jim Corbett National Park - Hailey National Park.
- Renamed Jim Corbett National Park in **1957**.

- River flowing through Jim Corbett - Ram Ganga.
- Project Tiger was first implemented in India in Jim Corbett in **1973**.
- The Bengal Tiger was declared the National Animal of India in **1972**.
- Major habitat for Bengal Tigers in India - Manas (Assam).
- Manas is a National Park sharing a border between India and Bhutan.
- Major habitat for White Tigers in India - Nandankanan (Odisha).
- First Tiger Cell established in India - Dehradun.
- Tiger census is known as Pugmark.
- Tiger State of India is known as - Madhya Pradesh.
- Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of tigers in India.

Firsts in India:

- First Butterfly Park - Bannerghatta, Karnataka.
- Butterfly Safari Park - Thenmala.
- First Biosphere Reserve - Nilgiri (**1986**).
- Biological Park - Agasthyamalai.
- Eco-Town - Panipat (Haryana).
- Planned Eco-tourism center - Thenmala.
- Marine National Park - Gulf of Kutch Marine National Park, Gujarat.
- Marine Biosphere Reserve - Gulf of Mannar Marine Biosphere Reserve, Tamil Nadu.
- Marine Wildlife Sanctuary - Gulf of Kutch Marine Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Marine Eco Sensitive Zone - Gulf of Kutch.

India has 4 Marine National Parks:

- 1. Gulf of Kutch Marine National Park (Gujarat)**
 - 2. Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park (Tamil Nadu)**
 - 3. Rani Jhansi Marine National Park (Andaman & Nicobar)**
 - 4. Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park (Andaman & Nicobar)**
- **Largest National Park in India - Hemis (Ladakh).**
 - **Most important habitat for Snow Leopard in India - Hemis.**
 - **National Park located north of the Himalayas in India - Hemis.**
 - **Smallest National Park in India - South Button Island (Andaman & Nicobar).**
 - **104th National Park in India - Kuno (Madhya Pradesh).**
 - **105th National Park in India - Dihing Patkai (Assam).**
 - **106th - Raimona (Assam).**
 - **107th - Simlipal (Odisha).**
 - **Largest Wildlife Sanctuary in India - Kutch Desert Wildlife Sanctuary, Gujarat.**
 - **Smallest Wildlife Sanctuary in India - Mayureshwar Wildlife Sanctuary (Maharashtra).**
 - **Largest Biosphere Reserve in India - Great Rann of Kutch (Gujarat) (Old name – Gyan Bharati).**
 - **Smallest Biosphere Reserve in India - Dibru-Saikhowa (Assam).**
 - **Largest Tiger Reserve in India - Nagarjuna Sagar Srisailem (Andhra & Telangana).**
 - **Smallest Tiger Reserve in India - Bor (Maharashtra).**

Indian Forest Laws and Policies

- **1730** – Bishnoi Movement.
- **1882** – Madras Forest Act.
- **1887** – Travancore Forest Act.
- **1927** – Indian Forest Act.
- **1950** – Van Mahotsav.
- **1952** – Indian Forest Policy (According to the 1952 National Forest Policy, the minimum forest area required for India is 33%).
- **1961** – Kerala Forest Act.
- **1971** – UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Reserve Programme (12 Biosphere Reserves from India are included in this list).
- **1972** – Indian Wildlife Protection Act (The Indian Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 has 6 schedules).
- **1973** – Project Tiger.
- **1973** – Chipko Movement.
- **1973** – Save Silent Valley Movement.
- **1974** – Indian Water Pollution Control Act.
- **1975** – Crocodile Breeding Project.
- **1980-2004** – Anti Tehri Dam Project.
- **1981** – Air Pollution Control Act.
- **1981** – Forest Survey of India.
- **1981** – Project Kuno (The objective of the project is to establish the second habitat for Asiatic lions in the Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh).

- **1982** – Jungle Bachao Andolan.
- **1983** – Appiko Movement.
- **1985** – Ministry of Environment and Forests established.
- **1985** – Narmada Bachao Andolan.
- **1986** – Environmental Protection Act.
- **1986** – Kerala Tree Protection Act.
- **1988** – Indian Forest Policy (According to the National Forest Policy of 1988, plains should have 33% and hills should have 67% forest cover).
- **1992** – Project Elephant.
- **1998** – Afforestation started in Kerala.
- **2002** – Biodiversity Act.
- **2006** – National Tiger Conservation Authority.
- **October 18, 2010** – National Green Tribunal.
- **2011** – Project Rhino.
- **2011** – UN Forest Year.

Environmental Movements in India

Bishnoi Movement (1730):

- One of the earliest environmental movements in India.
- Started in Khejarli, Rajasthan in **1730**.
- Objective: To protect Khejri trees (*Prosopis cineraria*) from deforestation.
- Led by Amrita Devi of the Bishnoi community in Rajasthan, the movement aimed to stop the Jodhpur Maharaja from cutting trees to build a palace.

- Amrita Devi and 362 other Bishnoi villagers hugged the trees and sacrificed their lives to prevent tree felling.
- Leader and first martyr - Amrita Devi.
- This environmental action led to a royal decree banning tree felling in Bishnoi-dominated areas.
- The Bishnoi Movement is considered a precursor to the Chipko Movement.

Van Mahotsav:

- An annual tree-planting program conducted during the first week of July every year.
- Started in **1950**.
- Led by - K. M. Munshi.
- State where Van Mahotsav was first started - Gujarat.
- Van Mahotsav Week is celebrated as - The first week of July.

Chipko Movement:

- Known as the Mother of Indian Environmental Movements.
- Started in **1973** by Sunderlal Bahuguna in the Chamoli district of Uttarakhand.
- Leader - Sunderlal Bahuguna.
- Sunderlal Bahuguna also led the Anti Tehri Dam Project (**1980-2004**).

Save Silent Valley Movement (1973-1983)

- Started under the leadership of the Kerala Shastra Sahithya Parishad to prevent the construction of a hydroelectric project on the Kuntipuzha river in the Silent Valley (tropical evergreen forest in the Western Ghats) by the Kerala State Electricity Board.
- Following widespread protests and pressure from national and international environmental organizations, the Indian government under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declared Silent Valley a National Park in **1984**.

Jungle Bachao Andolan (1982):

- A movement started in the **1980s** in Singhbhum, Bihar (now Jharkhand), against the decision to convert natural Sal forests into commercial Teak plantations.

Appiko Movement (1983):

- Inspired by the Chipko movement, started by Pandurang Hegde in Karnataka in **1983**.
- Objective: To protect forests from felling and deforestation.

Narmada Bachao Andolan (1985):

- An environmental and social movement started against the construction of large dams on the Narmada river, especially the Sardar Sarovar Dam.
- Leader - Medha Patkar.

Bird Sanctuaries in India

- Vedanthangal - Tamil Nadu
- Vettangudi - Tamil Nadu
- Vellode - Tamil Nadu
- Vaduvur - Tamil Nadu
- Udayamarthandapuram - Tamil Nadu
- Point Calimere - Tamil Nadu
- Ranganathittu - Karnataka
- Melapattu - Andhra Pradesh
- Uppalapadu - Andhra Pradesh
- Kolluru - Andhra Pradesh
- Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary - Andhra Pradesh
- Mayani - Maharashtra
- Salim Ali - Goa
- Bharatpur / Keoladeo - Rajasthan
- Ghana - Rajasthan
- Sariska - Rajasthan
- Nalsarovar - Gujarat

- Sultanpur - Haryana
- Parvati Arga - Uttar Pradesh
- Asan Barrage - Uttarakhand
- Udhwa - Jharkhand
- Chintamani Kar - West Bengal
- Chilika Lake Bird Sanctuary / Nalabana - Odisha
- Kawal - Telangana
- PT - Lakshadweep
- Bird Sanctuary known as the Kashi of Birds - Ranganathittu.
- Place that receives the most migratory birds in India - Nalsarovar.
- The only lake in India included in the UN Destination Flyways list - Chilika.
- Bird sanctuary in Kerala known as the Paradise of Migratory Birds - Kadalundi.

Salim Ali

- Salim Ali National Park - Jammu & Kashmir.
- Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary - Goa.
- Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History Museum - Coimbatore.
- Salim Ali Lake - Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
- Bird sanctuary in Kerala named after Salim Ali - Thattekkad.

National Symbols

- National Animal – Royal Bengal Tiger (1972).
- National Bird - Peacock (1963).
- National River - Ganga (November 4, 2008).
- National Aquatic Animal - Ganges River Dolphin (October 5, 2009).
- National Heritage Animal – Elephant (2010).
- National Mammal of India - Hanuman Langur.
- National Reptile - King Cobra.

Animals and Their Protected Areas

- Tiger - Manas (Assam).
- Snow Leopard - Hemis (Jammu & Kashmir).
- Kashmir Stag - Dachigam (Jammu & Kashmir).
- Wild Ass - Ghudkhar Sanctuary (Little Rann of Kutch).
- Known as the Indian Wild Ass Sanctuary - Ghudkhar Sanctuary.
- Rhino - Kaziranga National Park, Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary (Assam).
- Olive Ridley Sea Turtle - Bhitarkanika Marine National Park, Gahirmatha Marine Wildlife Sanctuary (Odisha).
- The project started in 2017 for the conservation of Olive Ridley Sea Turtles is Operation Olive Ridley.
- Red Panda - Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (West Bengal).

BIOSPHERE RESERVES IN INDIA

Introduction

- Biosphere reserves are designated areas recognized under UNESCO's Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme, aimed at promoting sustainable development through the conservation of biodiversity, research, and community engagement. In India, these reserves play a critical role in preserving ecosystems, protecting endangered species, and fostering sustainable livelihoods for local communities. As of July 2025, India has 18 biosphere reserves, 12 of which are part of UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Objectives of Biosphere Reserves

- Biosphere reserves in India serve three primary functions:
 1. **Conservation:** Protecting genetic diversity, ecosystems, and species.
 2. **Development:** Promoting sustainable economic and human development.
 3. **Logistics Support:** Facilitating research, monitoring, education, and training.

Structure of Biosphere Reserves

Each biosphere reserve is divided into three zones:

- **Core Zone:** A strictly protected area for conserving biodiversity, where human activities are minimal.
- **Buffer Zone:** Surrounds the core zone, allowing limited activities like research, education, and eco-tourism.
- **Transition Zone:** The outermost area where sustainable economic activities, such as agriculture and settlements, are permitted.

List of Biosphere Reserves in India

Below is a detailed overview of India's 18 biosphere reserves, including their location, year of establishment, and key features:

1. Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (1986)

- **Location:** Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka
- **Area:** 5,520 km²
- **Key Features:** Home to the Western Ghats' diverse flora and fauna, including the Nilgiri Tahr and Lion-tailed Macaque. It includes Silent Valley National Park, Mudumalai, and Bandipur. UNESCO MAB site.

2. Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve (1988)

- **Location:** Uttarakhand
- **Area:** 5,860 km²
- **Key Features:** Encompasses Nanda Devi National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Known for Himalayan biodiversity, including snow leopards and musk deer. UNESCO MAB site.

3. Nokrek Biosphere Reserve (1988)

- Location: Meghalaya
- Area: 820 km²
- Key Features: Famous for red panda conservation and citrus gene sanctuary (*Citrus indica*). UNESCO MAB site.

4. Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve (1989)

- Location: Andaman & Nicobar Islands
- Area: 885 km²
- Key Features: Includes Campbell Bay and Galathea National Parks. Known for tropical rainforests and marine biodiversity. UNESCO MAB site.

5. Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve (1989)

- Location: Tamil Nadu
- Area: 10,500 km²
- Key Features: A marine biosphere with coral reefs, seagrass beds, and dugongs. UNESCO MAB site.

6. Manas Biosphere Reserve (1989)

- Location: Assam
- Area: 2,837 km²
- Key Features: A tiger and elephant reserve, known for the endangered Bengal florican and pygmy hog. UNESCO MAB site.

7. Sunderbans Biosphere Reserve (1989)

- Location: West Bengal
- Area: 9,630 km²
- Key Features: World's largest mangrove forest, home to the Royal Bengal Tiger. A UNESCO World Heritage Site and MAB site.

8. Simlipal Biosphere Reserve (1994)

- Location: Odisha
- Area: 4,374 km²
- Key Features: Hosts tigers, elephants, and the unique melanistic tiger. Includes Simlipal National Park. UNESCO MAB site.

9. Dibru-Saikhowa Biosphere Reserve (1997)

- Location: Assam
- Area: 765 km²
- Key Features: Known for feral horses and white-winged wood duck. A critical wetland ecosystem.

10. Dehang-Dibang Biosphere Reserve (1998)

- Location: Arunachal Pradesh
- Area: 5,112 km²
- Key Features: Rich in high-altitude biodiversity, including Mishmi takin and red goral.

11. Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve (1999)

- Location: Madhya Pradesh
- Area: 4,926 km²
- Key Features: Part of Satpura Range, home to tigers, leopards, and unique rock shelters. UNESCO MAB site.

12. Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve (2000)

- Location: Sikkim
- Area: 2,619 km²
- Key Features: Includes the world's third-highest peak, Mount Khangchendzonga. Rich in Himalayan biodiversity. UNESCO MAB site.

13. Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve (2001)

- Location: Kerala, Tamil Nadu
- Area: 3,500 km²
- Key Features: Part of Western Ghats, known for medicinal plants and endemic species. UNESCO MAB site.

14. Achanakmar-Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve (2005)

- Location: Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh
- Area: 3,835 km²
- Key Features: A biodiversity hotspot with sacred groves and the origin of the Narmada River.

15. Great Rann of Kutch Biosphere Reserve (2008)

- Location: Gujarat
- Area: 12,454 km²
- Key Features: World's largest salt desert, home to the Indian wild ass and flamingos.

16. Cold Desert Biosphere Reserve (2009)

- Location: Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir
- Area: 7,770 km²
- Key Features: High-altitude desert with snow leopards and Tibetan antelope.

17. Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve (2010)

- Location: Andhra Pradesh
- Area: 4,755 km²
- Key Features: Eastern Ghats' biodiversity, known for red sandalwood and slender loris.

18. Panna Biosphere Reserve (2011)

- Location: Madhya Pradesh
- Area: 2,998 km²
- Key Features: Tiger reserve with Ken River and unique diamond mines. UNESCO MAB site.

Significance of Biosphere Reserves in India

- **Biodiversity Conservation:** India's biosphere reserves protect over 10% of the country's recorded species, including critically endangered fauna and flora.
- **Sustainable Development:** These reserves involve local communities in conservation efforts, promoting eco-tourism and sustainable livelihoods.
- **Climate Resilience:** Mangrove and forest ecosystems in reserves like Sunderbans and Nilgiri act as carbon sinks and protect against climate change impacts.
- **Research and Education:** They serve as living laboratories for studying ecosystems and training conservationists.

Challenges Faced by Biosphere Reserves

- **Human-Wildlife Conflict:** Encroachment and resource dependency by local communities lead to conflicts.
- **Poaching and Illegal Trade:** Threatens species like tigers and rhinos.
- **Climate Change:** Alters ecosystems, especially in high-altitude and coastal reserves.
- **Funding and Management:** Limited resources and coordination hinder effective management.

Government and UNESCO Involvement

- **Government Initiatives:** India's Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change oversees biosphere reserves, with schemes like Project Tiger and Project Elephant enhancing conservation.
- **UNESCO MAB Programme:** 12 of India's reserves are globally recognized, benefiting from international collaboration and funding.
- **Community Engagement:** Programs like Eco-Development Committees involve locals in conservation and sustainable practices.

Tiger Reserves in India

Kerala

Periyar Tiger Reserve

- India's 10th Tiger Reserve
- Established in **1978**
- Area - 925 square kilometers
- Located in the districts of Idukki and Pathanamthitta
- The Sabarimala Temple and Mangala Devi Temple are located within the Periyar Tiger Reserve
- Mangala Devi Temple is a site of a border dispute between Kerala and Tamil Nadu
- The presiding deity of Mangala Devi Temple is Kannaki Devi

Parambikulam Tiger Reserve

- India's 38th Tiger Reserve
- Inaugurated in **2010** by Jairam Ramesh
- Area - 285 square kilometers
- The world's largest teak tree, "Kannimara," is located within this tiger reserve

Tamil Nadu

- Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve – Habitat for black panthers
- Anamalai Tiger Reserve – Protects the endangered Lion-tailed Macaque
- Mudumalai Tiger Reserve – Part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve
- Kalakkad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve
- Srivilliputhur Megamalai Tiger Reserve – Tamil Nadu's newest tiger reserve, a major habitat for the Nilgiri Tahr

Karnataka

- Bandipur Tiger Reserve – Part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve
- Bhadra Tiger Reserve
- Biligiri Ranganatha Temple (BRT) Tiger Reserve – Located where the Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats meet
- Dandeli-Anshi (Kali) Tiger Reserve – Habitat for black panthers
- Nagarhole (Rajiv Gandhi) Tiger Reserve

Maharashtra

- **Melghat Tiger Reserve – Maharashtra's first tiger reserve, a major habitat for vultures**
- **Tadoba Tiger Reserve**
- **Pench Tiger Reserve**
- **Sahyadri Tiger Reserve**
- **Navegaon-Nagzira Tiger Reserve – An important corridor between the reserves of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra**
- **Bor Tiger Reserve – India's smallest tiger reserve**

Madhya Pradesh (Tiger State of India)

- **Kanha Tiger Reserve – Mentioned in "The Jungle Book," the first tiger reserve in India to have an official logo**
- **Pench Tiger Reserve**
- **Panna Tiger Reserve – Where tigers were successfully reintroduced after local extinction; a major diamond mining area in India; the Ken river flows through Panna National Park**
- **Satpura Tiger Reserve**
- **Sanjay-Dubri Tiger Reserve**
- **Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve – Has the highest tiger density in India**
- **Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve**
- **Ratapani Tiger Reserve - 57th Tiger Reserve of India**
- **Madhav Tiger Reserve - 58th Tiger Reserve of India**

Rajasthan

- Ranthambore Tiger Reserve
- Sariska Tiger Reserve – The first reserve in India where tigers were relocated to re-establish an ecosystem
- Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve
- Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve
- Dholpur-Karauli Tiger Reserve – A protected area that is part of the Aravalli range

Uttar Pradesh

- Dudhwa Tiger Reserve – An India-Nepal corridor
- Pilibhit Tiger Reserve – A conservation area that received a UNESCO award
- Amangarh Tiger Reserve

Bihar

- Valmiki Tiger Reserve – The only tiger reserve in Bihar, shares a border with Chitwan National Park in Nepal

Jharkhand

- Palamu Tiger Reserve – The first tiger reserve in India to use camera traps

Uttarakhand

- Jim Corbett Tiger Reserve – India's first tiger reserve (**1973**), has the highest number of tigers
- Rajaji Tiger Reserve

Chhattisgarh

- Indravati Tiger Reserve – A major habitat for wild buffalo, famous for its dense Sal forests
- Achanakmar Tiger Reserve – Famous for its Sal forests, part of the Kanha-Achanakmar corridor
- Udanti-Sitanadi Tiger Reserve
- Guru Ghasidas-Sanjay Tiger Reserve

West Bengal

- Sundarbans Tiger Reserve – India's only mangrove tiger reserve, famous for its swimming tigers
- Buxa Tiger Reserve – An India-Bhutan corridor

Assam

- Kaziranga Tiger Reserve – Famous for the one-horned rhinoceros, a UNESCO site
- Manas Tiger Reserve – A UNESCO World Heritage Site, a major habitat for Bengal tigers, Pygmy Hogs, and Golden Langurs

- Nameri Tiger Reserve
- Orang Tiger Reserve – Known as "Mini Kaziranga"

Arunachal Pradesh

- Namdapha Tiger Reserve – India's easternmost tiger reserve
- Pakke (Pakhui) Tiger Reserve – Famous for its hornbills
- Kamlang Tiger Reserve

Mizoram

- Dampa Tiger Reserve

Odisha

- Similipal Tiger Reserve – Famous for its melanistic (black) tigers, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve
- Satkosia Tiger Reserve

Andhra Pradesh & Telangana

- Nagarjunasagar-Srisaillam Tiger Reserve – India's largest tiger reserve

Telangana

- Kawal Tiger Reserve
- Amrabad Tiger Reserve

National Parks in India

Kerala (6)

- Periyar National Park
- Eravikulam National Park
- Anamudi Shola National Park
- Mathikettan Shola National Park
- Pampadum Shola National Park
- Silent Valley National Park

Tamil Nadu (5)

- Guindy National Park
- Mudumalai National Park
- Mukurthi National Park
- Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park
- Indira Gandhi (Annamalai) National Park

Karnataka (5)

- Anshi (Kali) National Park
- Bandipur National Park

- Bannerghatta National Park
- Kudremukh National Park
- Nagarhole National Park

Maharashtra (6)

- Chandoli National Park
- Gugamal National Park
- Navegaon National Park
- Sanjay Gandhi National Park
- Tadoba National Park
- Pench (Jawaharlal Nehru) National Park

Goa (1)

- Mollem National Park

Madhya Pradesh (11)

- Bandhavgarh National Park
- Fossil National Park
- Indira Priyadarshini Pench National Park
- Kanha National Park
- Madhav National Park
- Panna National Park
- Sanjay National Park
- Satpura National Park
- Van Vihar National Park
- Kuno National Park
- Dinosaur Fossil National Park

Gujarat (4)

- Blackbuck National Park
- Gir National Park
- Gulf of Kutch Marine National Park
- Vansda National Park

Rajasthan (5)

- Desert National Park
- Keoladeo (Bharatpur) National Park
- Mukundra Hills National Park
- Ranthambore National Park
- Sariska National Park

Haryana (2)

- Sultanpur National Park
- Kalesar National Park

Himachal Pradesh (5)

- Great Himalayan National Park
- Inderkilla National Park
- Khirganga National Park
- Pin Valley National Park
- Simbalbara National Park

Uttarakhand (6)

- Corbett National Park (India's first national park)
- Gangotri National Park
- Govind Pashu Vihar National Park
- Nanda Devi National Park
- Rajaji National Park
- Valley of Flowers National Park

Uttar Pradesh (1)

- Dudhwa National Park

Bihar (1)

- Valmiki National Park

West Bengal (6)

- Buxa National Park
- Gorumara National Park
- Neora Valley National Park
- Singalila National Park
- Sundarbans National Park (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Jaldapara National Park

Jharkhand (1)

- Betla National Park

Chhattisgarh (3)

- **Guru Ghasidas National Park**
- **Indravati National Park**
- **Kanger Valley National Park**

Odisha (2)

- **Bhitarkanika National Park**
- **Similipal National Park**

Sikkim (1)

- **Khangchendzonga National Park (UNESCO World Heritage Site)**

Assam (7)

- **Dibru-Saikhowa National Park**
- **Kaziranga National Park (UNESCO World Heritage Site, famous for one-horned rhinoceros)**
- **Manas National Park**
- **Nameri National Park**
- **Orang National Park**
- **Raimona National Park**
- **Dehing Patkai National Park**

Nagaland (1)

- **Intanki National Park**

Arunachal Pradesh (2)

- Moulung National Park
- Namdapha National Park

Manipur (1)

- Keibul Lamjao National Park (World's only floating national park)

Mizoram (2)

- Murlen National Park
- Phawngpui (Blue Mountain) National Park

Meghalaya (2)

- Balphakram National Park
- Nokrek National Park

Tripura (2)

- Clouded Leopard National Park
- Rajbari National Park

Andhra Pradesh (3)

- Papikonda National Park
- Rajiv Gandhi (Rameswaram) National Park
- Sri Venkateswara National Park

Telangana (3)

- Kasu Brahmananda Reddy National Park
- Mahavir Harina Vanasthali National Park
- Mrugavani National Park

Union Territories (U.T.)

Andaman & Nicobar Islands (9)

- Campbell Bay National Park
- Galathea Bay National Park
- Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park
- North Button Island National Park
- Middle Button Island National Park
- South Button Island National Park
- Mount Harriet National Park
- Rani Jhansi Marine National Park
- Saddle Peak National Park

Jammu & Kashmir (4)

- City Forest (Salim Ali) National Park
- Dachigam National Park (Habitat for the endangered Hangul deer)
- Kishtwar National Park

Ladakh (1)

- Hemis National Park (India's largest national park, shares a border with Jammu & Kashmir)

Total National Parks in India (as of 2024): 106

Madhya Pradesh has the most (11), followed by Andaman & Nicobar (9).

Sources used

- **India State of Forest Report 2023: Mentioned as the source for the latest forest cover percentage of India (25.17%)**
- **10 Social Science -Contemporary India II Chapter 2: Forest and Wildlife Resources**

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

1. With reference to India, Didwana, Kuchaman, Sargol and Khatu are the names of (UPSC 2021)

- a. glaciers
- b. mangrove areas
- c. Ramsar sites
- d. saline lakes

Correct Answer: d. saline lakes

2. Which one of the following is an artificial lake? (UPSC 2018)

- a. Kodaikanal (Tamil Nadu)
- b. Kolleru (Andhra Pradesh)
- c. Nainital (Uttarakhand)
- d. Renuka (Himachal Pradesh)

Correct Answer: a. Kodaikanal (Tamil Nadu)

3: Consider the following statements:

- 1. In India, the Himalayas are spread over five States only.
- 2. Western Ghats are spread over five States only.
- 3. Pulicat Lake is spread over two States only.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct? (UPSC 2017)

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1 and 3 only

Correct Answer: b. 3 only

Practice Questions

1. Which of the following is India's first Biosphere Reserve, established in 1986?

- a) Sunderbans
- b) Nilgiri
- c) Nanda Devi
- d) Nokrek

Answer: b) Nilgiri

2. How many Biosphere Reserves in India are part of UNESCO's Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme as of July 2025?

- a) 10
- b) 12
- c) 15
- d) 18

Answer: b) 12

3. The Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve is located in which state?

- a) Himachal Pradesh
- b) Uttarakhand
- c) Sikkim
- d) Arunachal Pradesh

Answer: b) Uttarakhand

4. Consider the following statements regarding India's forest cover:

1: India accounts for 2% of the total global forest area.

2: Forests cover 25.17% of India's total geographical area (as per Forest Survey Report 2023).

3: According to the National Forest Policy of 1988, 33% forest cover is required in hilly regions.

Which of the above statements are incorrect?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2, and 3

Correct Answer: B. 3 only

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: India holds about 2% of the world's total forest area.

Statement 2 is correct: Forests cover 25.17% of India's total geographical area (FSR 2023).

Statement 3 is incorrect: The National Forest Policy of 1988 mandates 67% forest cover for hilly regions, and 33% for plain regions.

5. Examine the statements regarding India's Biodiversity Hotspots and major Marine National Parks:

1. Among the four biodiversity hotspots in India, Sundaland (including the Nicobar Islands) and the Himalayas are included.

2. Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park (Tamil Nadu) is one of the four Marine National Parks in India.

3. Gulf of Kachchh National Park is also known by the titles Marine Wildlife Sanctuary and Marine Eco-Sensitive Zone.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 2 only
- D. 1, 2, and 3

Correct Answer: D. 1, 2, and 3

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: India has 4 hotspots (Himalayas, Indo-Burma Region, Sundaland, Western Ghats); Sundaland and the Himalayas are among them.

Statement 2 is correct: India has 4 Marine National Parks, including the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park (Tamil Nadu).

Statement 3 is correct: Gulf of Kachchh National Park is also known as a Marine Wildlife Sanctuary and a Marine Eco-Sensitive Zone.

6. Consider the following statements regarding India's first conservation initiatives and key personalities:

- 1. India's first Biosphere Reserve is Nilgiri, established in 1986.**
- 2. Sir Dietrich Brandis is known as the Father of Indian Forestry.**
- 3. Jim Corbett National Park, India's first National Park, is located in Uttarakhand.**

Which of the above statements are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2, and 3

Correct Answer: D. 1, 2, and 3

Explanation:

All three statements are correct based on the provided information:

Statement 1 is correct: Nilgiri is India's first Biosphere Reserve (1986).

Statement 2 is correct: Sir Dietrich Brandis is the Father of Indian Forestry.

Statement 3 is correct: Jim Corbett National Park (established in 1936) is India's first National Park and is located in Uttarakhand.