

World Wildlife Day

The Delhi based ENVIS Resource Partners such as WWF-India, Sulabh & CMS participated the World Wildlife Day function. The function was jointly organized by MoEF&CC, UNDP, WCMC, NMNH, CMC .

The theme is 'Life below water: for people and planet'. The Objectives are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity to celebrate the beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora.
- To raise awareness of the multitude of benefits that conservation provides to people. At the same time.
- To remind the world of the urgent need to step up the fight against wildlife crime and human-induced reduction of species, which have a wide-ranging economic, environmental and social impact.

On 20 December 2013, at its 68th session, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 3 March, the day of signature of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), as UN World Wildlife Day to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild animals and plants.

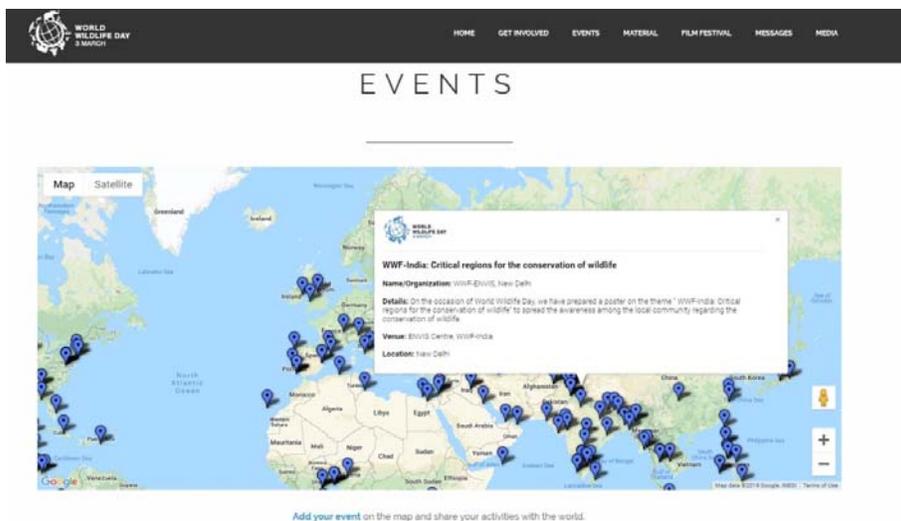
This year, the focus is on marine species and aims to align closely with the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 14, which is 'life below water'. The objective is to raise awareness about the diversity of marine wildlife and its benefits to our everyday lives. The programme also aims to ensure that the biodiversity of marine life is preserved for generations to come.

According to the UN website, the world's oceans and their elements, which include their temperature, chemistry, currents and ways of life, drive the global systems that make the Earth inhabitable for human beings. "How we manage this vital resource is essential for humanity as a whole, and to counterbalance the effects of climate change," the website said. "Over three billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods. However, today we are seeing 30 percent of the world's fish stocks overexploited, reaching below the level at which they can produce sustainable yields," the website further added.

WWF ENVIS RP had its presence felt at the Delhi Zoo on the World Wildlife Day. 10 GSDP students from the 3rd batch of wildlife management using Geospatial techniques with the WWF ENVIS staff attended the function. WWF ENVIS along with GSDP students took the pledge to conserve wildlife. The pledge was as follows:

Pledge

On this day, the 3rd of March, 2019, while we gather here to celebrate the UN World Wildlife Day, 2019, on the theme- “Life below Water for People and Planet”, we solemnly pledge that we shall take all measures to protect and preserve the extraordinary diversity of marine life. We shall create awareness about the crucial importance of marine species for sustainable development. We commit ourselves to the conservation and preservation of all wildlife in general and marine life in particular for posterity, for our planet as well as the future generations.



Glimpses of the world wildlife day - 3rd March 2019:



WWF ENVIS launched its poster on the theme "WWF-India: Critical regions for the conservation of wildlife".



WWF-INDIA: CRITICAL REGIONS FOR THE CONSERVATION OF WILDLIFE

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

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Brahmaputra landscape

- The north eastern state of Assam presents a landscape of lush forests and grasslands that are home to flagship species like the Asian elephants, Indian rhinoceros and the Bengal tigers. WWF-India works in the area between the foothills of the eastern Himalayas in the north to the river Brahmaputra in the south. This area has been known as the North Bank Landscape. Covering the south of the Brahmaputra river in Assam, is an area that has been known as the Kaziranga Karbi Anglong Landscape. Covering the south of the Brahmaputra river in Assam, is an area that has been known as the Kaziranga Karbi Anglong Landscape, which is home to about half of Assam's elephant population, more than 70 per cent of Assam's tigers and close to 90 per cent of the rhino population of India. However, the importance of this region goes far beyond the areas demarcated as the two landscapes.
- The Brahmaputra acts as a vital link for wildlife populations by facilitating the movement of various large mammals between numerous Protected Areas in central Assam. Key tiger habitats in the flood plains of the Brahmaputra include Orang NP, Lakhnow and Bursachoni Wildlife Sanctuaries and Kaziranga NP. Nameri National Park and Pakke Tiger Reserve are located at the Northern end of the Brahmaputra basin, along the border of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. There is sufficient evidence that demonstrates movement of tigers, rhinos, elephants and many other species between the two landscapes, across the Brahmaputra River.

- WWF-India's interventions
 - Research and monitoring
 - Strengthening protection
 - Restoring habitat
 - Engaging with communities
 - Managing human-wildlife conflict
 - Promoting sustainable livelihoods



Western Himalayas Landscape

- The Western Himalayas Landscape covers an area of approximately 66,000 sq km across the states of Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. Situated in the western most part of the Himalayas in India, the landscape traverses across the Shivalik, sub-alpine, alpine and trans-Himalayan zones. The area is also host to a unique assemblage of species and encompasses 20 Protected Areas including the Hemis High Altitude National Park, Dachigam National Park and Kishtwar National Park. The landscape has a very good avian diversity and has 18 important Bird Areas.
- The landscape also boasts of having the only breeding grounds for the Black-necked Crane and Bar-headed Goose within India and has a healthy population of Snow Leopards. Eurasian Otters have also been reported by WWF from this landscape. Other species like the Kashmir Stag (Hangul), Kashmiri Markhor and Western Tragopan are also endemic to this landscape. The western Himalayas is also an important source of freshwater. This region is the melting point of cultures and home to many indigenous local communities who are totally dependent on this landscape for their livelihoods.

- WWF-India's interventions
 - Focussed applied conservation research & monitoring on Black-necked Crane, Eurasian Otters and Snow Leopard.
 - Conservation of high altitude wetlands.
 - Conservation of rangelands in Ladakh and Pir Panjal.
 - Training and Capacity Building programmes for State Forest Department & State Judiciary.
 - Engagement with Indian Armed Forces for conservation.
 - Managing human-wildlife conflict.
 - Community engagement through community based tourism (CBT) activities.
 - Environment education and awareness activities.
 - Policy and advocacy for recognition of landscape as critical wildlife habitat.



The Western Indian Tiger Landscape

- The Western Indian Tiger Landscape (WITL) is spread over an area of 30,000km² across the states of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh at the intersection of the Aravalli and Vindhya mountain ranges, the oldest hill ranges of India. It comprises two tiger reserves, two national parks and nine wildlife sanctuaries, all connected to each other through wildlife corridors in the form of territorial forests, reserve forests and tributaries of the river Chambal.
- This landscape supports the westernmost population of the Bengal tigers in India, and the world. The famous Ranthambore Tiger Reserve holds the source population of tigers, which disperse into adjoining national parks and wildlife sanctuaries through the wildlife corridors, in search of new territory, food and mate.
- The landscape is a mix of dense forests comprising mostly dhak trees, a species known to withstand long periods of drought and heat, and grasslands on plateaus. Old ruins, palaces and forts form the backdrop of these forests, which were once the private hunting grounds of the Maharajas of Jaipur. While the tiger is the top predator here, other endangered wildlife include the leopard, striped hyena, caracal, jungle cat and the black buck. The forests and wildlife here are threatened by habitat degradation, habitat fragmentation, encroachment, poaching of tigers and prey species and human-wildlife conflict.

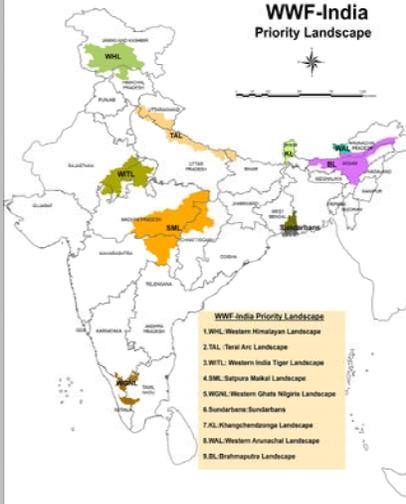


The Terai Arc Landscape (TAL)

- The Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) is an 810km stretch between the river Yamuna in the west and the river Bhagmati in the east, comprising the Shivalik hills, the adjoining bhabar areas and the Terai flood plains. It is spread across the Indian states of Uttarakhnad, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and the low lying hills of Nepal. The landscape boasts of some of India's most well-known Tiger Reserves and Protected Areas such as Corbett Tiger Reserve, Rajaji National Park, Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, Valmiki Tiger Reserve and Nepal's Bardia Wildlife Sanctuary, Chitwan National Park, and Sukhiya Phanta Wildlife Sanctuary. In total, the landscape has 13 Protected Areas, nine in India and four in Nepal, covering a total area of 49,500km², of which 30,000km² lies in India.
- These forests are home to three flagship species, the Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris*), the greater one horned rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) and the Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*). Apart from these, there are several other species of cats such as the rusty spotted cat, fishing cat, jungle cat, leopard and leopard cat, as well as antelopes and deer such as the four horned antelope, sambar, chital, hog deer and barking deer. Other wildlife includes the sloth and Himalayan black bear, yellow-throated marten, Indian pangolin, Himalayan goral, Gangetic dolphin, gharial and crocodile. The Protected Areas in this landscape are connected with one another through wildlife corridors, which are mostly part of the interconnected Reserve Forests. These corridors are used by wildlife, especially large mammals, to move from one forest to another, in an attempt to find new territory, mate and prey.



WWF-India Priority Landscape



1. WHL, Western Himalayan Landscape
2. TAL, Terai Arc Landscape
3. WITL, Western India Tiger Landscape
4. SML, Satpura Maikal Landscape
5. WGNL, Western Ghats Nilgiris Landscape
6. Sunderbans, Sunderbans
7. AL, Khangchendzonga Landscape
8. WAL, Western Arunachal Landscape
9. NEG, Brahmaputra Landscape

Satpura Maikal Landscape

- WWF-India's Central Indian Satpura Maikal Landscape (SML) sprawls across 19 districts in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh covering a total area of 1,43,551km². Of this, roughly 40,837km² is under forest cover, with some of the country's most famous tiger reserves and Protected Areas. This landscape supports 30 per cent of the world's tiger population and 17 per cent of India's tiger population with some of the largest contiguous forested tracks connected through wildlife corridors. Some of the tiger reserves critical from a conservation standpoint in this landscape are Kanha, Satpura, Pench, Melghat, Tadoba and Achanakmar.
- This landscape is amongst WWF's global priority regions for conservation, especially for tigers. It is also recognized as a region with one of the best potentials for long-term tiger conservation by the National Tiger Conservation Authority, Government of India. Other than the tiger (*Panthera tigris*), the faunal diversity includes some of the most charismatic and endangered species such as the leopard (*Panthera pardus*), sloth bear (*Ursus ursinus*), gaur (*Bos gaurus*), hard ground swamp deer (*Cervus duvaucii*) as well as more than 300 species of birds.



The Western Arunachal Landscape

- The Western Arunachal Landscape (WAL) is spread over an area of 7,000 sq km in the West Kameng and Tawang districts of Arunachal Pradesh. Located in the north eastern part of India, the expanse comprises mountains from 50 meters above sea level in the foothills to high elevations of over 7,000 meters. It has a diverse climate from dry regions with less than 1,000 mm annual rainfall to regions with over 5,700mm rainfall. The third highest mountain peak in northeast India, Mt. Gotchen, from which the major river Kameng originates, and flows across the hills to join the Brahmaputra River, is also present in the landscape. The landscape is best known for the presence of a wide variety of rhododendron species, estimated at 32 species and five subspecies. It is also home of the elusive red panda and the snow leopard, apart from 15 other threatened and vulnerable species of vertebrates.



Khangchendzonga landscape

- WWF-India's Khangchendzonga Landscape lies at the heart of the eastern Himalayas. It includes the state of Sikkim as well as northern West Bengal. The area lies in the shadow of the towering 8,585-metre Khangchendzonga peak – the third highest mountain in the world. 'Khangchendzonga' literally means five repositories of God's treasure, namely gold, silver, gems, grains and Holy Scriptures.
- The total area of this landscape is less than 10,000 km². A great variety of wild animals found in this area include the Bengal tiger, Asian elephant, clouded leopard and gaur in the lowland areas and the red panda – Sikkim's state animal, Asiatic black bear, goral, serow, snow leopard, Himalayan tahr, Tibetan gazelle, Tibetan argali and musk deer are found in the higher reaches.

- WWF-India's interventions
 - Enumeration of the present status of red panda
 - Participatory conservation of high altitude lakes in Sikkim
 - Ensuring rural water security in drought prone areas of Sikkim
 - Natural resource management with communities
 - Promotion of responsible tourism in Sikkim
 - Capacity-building
 - Human-wildlife conflict
 - Project SERVE



Western Ghats-Nilgiris

- The Nilgiris Eastern Ghats Landscape (NEG) is the foremost elephant country of the subcontinent. It has the single largest contiguous population of Asiatic elephants in its range and holds the key to the long term survival of the species. Over 6,000 elephants live in the Nilgiri and Eastern Ghats Landscape which spreads over an area of about 12,000km². Other large mammals found in the area are the gaur, sambar and tiger.
- The terrain of the landscape is mostly undulating with low hills. The area extends from the south of the Brahmaputra hills in Karnataka through the Wayned plateau into the northern Nilgiri hill slopes and the Mysore plateau which links up to the Sigur plateau and the Moyar river valley.
- The Southern Western Ghats (SWG) cover an area of 7000km² through the states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu and harbours a very rich floral and faunal biodiversity. This region harbours high levels of endemism and over 15 per cent is under the Protected Area network.
- Some of the important and unique habitat types found here include wet evergreen forests and sholas in the higher elevations. The Southern Western Ghats is also a priority terrestrial and freshwater ecoregion of the WWF global programme with the entire Western Ghats complex identified as a Global Ecoregion 200.

- WWF-India's work in Western Ghats-Nilgiris includes:-
 - Species survey and monitoring
 - Community engagement
 - Supporting anti-poaching infrastructure
 - Enhancing communication systems
 - Developing informer networks
 - Training and capacity-building
 - Improving legal processes
 - Inter-state collaboration
 - Advocacy and public support



Sunderbans

- The Sunderbans is a cluster of low-lying islands in the Bay of Bengal, spread across India and Bangladesh, famous for its unique mangrove forests. This active delta region is among the largest in the world, measuring about 40,000 sq km.
- The Sunderbans forest is about 10,000 sq km across India and Bangladesh, of which 40% lies in India. It is home to many rare and globally threatened wildlife species such as:-
 - Estuarine crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*).
 - Royal Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris*).
 - Water monitor lizard (*Varanus salvator*).
 - Gangetic dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*), and Olive Ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*).
- WWF-India's work in Sunderbans includes:-
 - Tiger conservation- Research and Monitoring, Human-wildlife conflict mitigation, Promoting climate resilient sustainable livelihoods, Support to Forest Department, Disaster rescue and relief
 - The Climate Witness Project
 - The Climate Adaptation Programme

