



# National Wildlife Health Policy

[Source: PIB](#)

## Why in News?

Recently, the Indian government proposed a **National Wildlife Health Policy** aimed at addressing health threats faced by wildlife.

## What is the Proposed National Wildlife Health Policy?

### ▪ About:

- The [Central Zoo Authority](#), under the [Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change \(MoEF&CC\)](#), organized a consultative workshop involving government departments, [NGOs](#), academic institutions, [zoological parks](#), and veterinary universities.
  - The policy development is being supported by institutions such as the GISE Hub at **IIT Bombay** and the **Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser** to the Government of India.

### ▪ Aim:

- The policy will complement India's [National Wildlife Action Plan \(2017-31\)](#) and the [One Health policy](#), which aims to optimize the **health of people, animals, and the environment** by recognizing their interdependence.
- The **National Wildlife Action Plan (2017-31)** outlines **103 conservation actions** and **250 projects**.
  - These include creating a **standard protocol for disease surveillance** in tiger reserves, protected areas, and forests, as well as **establishing a legally binding protocol** for mercy killing and euthanasia of wild animals.
- The policy will also cover areas such as **managing wildlife pathogen risk, disease outbreak preparedness and response, and biosecurity**.
- **The policy aimed to promote R&D initiatives** focused on wildlife diseases and health management strategies.
  - Enhance the **skills and knowledge of stakeholders** involved in wildlife conservation and management.

### ▪ Current Wildlife Health Challenges:

- Indian wildlife is facing **various health issues**, including **infectious diseases (Canine Distemper Virus)**, habitat loss, climate change impacts, and illegal activities.
  - The policy is required as **India is home to over 91,000 species of wildlife**, with **more than 1,000 protected areas**, including national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and biosphere reserves.

## Central Zoo Authority

- The [Central Zoo Authority \(CZA\)](#) is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, established in 1992 under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- It is chaired by the Environment Minister and has 10 members and a member-secretary.
- Its objective is to complement and strengthen the national effort in conservation of rich biodiversity.

# WILDLIFE CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

## Constitutional Provisions for Wildlife

### 42nd Amendment

**Act, 1976:** Forests & Protection of Wild Animals and Birds (moved from State to Concurrent List)

### Article

**48 A:** State shall endeavor to protect & improve environment and safeguard forests and wildlife of country

### Article

**51 A (g):** Fundamental duty to protect & improve natural environment including forests and Wildlife

## Legal Frameworks

Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

Biological Diversity Act, 2002

## Major Conservation Initiatives

### Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH):

- Financial assistance provided to State/UT Governments for protection and conservation of wildlife
- A Centrally Sponsored Scheme

### National Wildlife Action Plan (2017-2031)

### Guidelines for Eco-tourism in Protected Areas

### Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation

**Wildlife Crime Control Bureau:** To combat wildlife-related crimes

### Wildlife Division (MoEFCC):

- Policy and law for conservation of biodiversity and Protected Area network
- Technical and financial support to the State/ UTs under IDHW, Central Zoo Authority and Wildlife Institute of India

### Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB):

Collection, collation of intelligence & its dissemination, establishment of centralized Wild Life crime databank, coordination etc.

### Wildlife Crime Control:

- Operation Save Kurma
- Operation Thunderbird

## Species-Specific Initiatives

- Protection and conservation of Greater Adjutant in Gangetic riverine tract
- Dolphin Conservation in Non-Protected Area Segment of Ganga River
- Conservation Breeding Centre for Wild water buffalo (2020)
- Recovery programme for Snow leopard (2009)
- Recovery programme for Vultures (2006)
- Project Elephant (1992)
- Project Tiger/National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) (1973)

## India's Collaboration with Global Wildlife Conservation Efforts

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- World Heritage Convention
- Ramsar Convention
- The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network (TRAFFIC)
- United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)
- International Whaling Commission (IWC)
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Global Tiger Forum (GTF)



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## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

**Q. If a particular plant species is placed under Schedule VI of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, what is the implication? (2020)**

- (a) A licence is required to cultivate that plant.
- (b) Such a plant cannot be cultivated under any circumstances.
- (c) It is a Genetically Modified crop plant.
- (d) Such a plant is invasive and harmful to the ecosystem.

**Ans: (a)**

**Q. Which of the following can be threats to the biodiversity of a geographical area? (2012)**

1. Global warming
2. Fragmentation of habitat
3. Invasion of alien species
4. Promotion of vegetarianism

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

**Ans: (a)**