



IUCN's First Global Tree Assessment

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Why in News?

Recently, the **first Global Tree Assessment** was published as part of an update to the [IUCN Red List](#) of Threatened Species, with its findings announced at the [Convention on Biological Diversity \(CBD COP16\)](#) in Cali, Colombia.

COP16

- The **2024 UN Biodiversity Conference of the Parties (COP)** to the **UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** was held recently in Cali, Colombia with an objective to assess how countries are advancing towards the [2022 Montreal commitment](#) to **protect 30% of the planet's land and marine areas by 2030**.

What is the Global Tree Assessment Report?

- **About:**
 - **Purpose:** It aims to **evaluate all tree species globally** for inclusion in the IUCN Red List, improving conservation information for decision-making.
 - **Launch:** Started in 2015, the **GTA helps prioritise conservation action**, research, and funding for species most at risk of extinction.
 - **Partnerships and Collaboration:** It collaborates with over 60 botanical organisations, 25 IUCN groups, and numerous tree experts worldwide.
- **Key Findings of the Report:**
 - **Species at Risk:**
 - Of the 47,282 tree species analysed, 16,425 are threatened with extinction. Iconic species, such as **magnolias, oaks, maples, and ebonies**, are among those most endangered.
 - Threatened tree species exceed the combined total of **threatened birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians**, with trees at risk in 192 countries.
 - The **South Western Ghats of Kerala** host **Buchanania barberi**, a small tree classified as **Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List since 2018**.
 - **Urgent conservation initiatives**, including **germination** trials that revealed [high seed viability](#), have been undertaken to save this species.
 - **Main Threats:**
 - **Deforestation:** Land clearing for crops and [livestock](#) production is a leading driver of tree extinction, especially in tropical and forest-rich regions like South America.
 - **Logging:** Many tree species are exploited for timber and other forest products, putting additional pressure on natural populations.
 - Over **5,000 tree species are used for timber**, and more than 2,000 for

food, medicine, and fuel.

- **Invasive Species, Pests, and Diseases:** [Non-native species](#) and pathogens are increasingly affecting tree health, particularly in temperate zones.
- **Climate Change:** Warming temperatures, [rising sea levels](#), and more frequent and intense storms pose significant risks, especially in tropical and island ecosystems.
- **Ongoing Conservation Efforts:**
 - Initiatives in regions such as the Juan Fernández Islands, Cuba, Madagascar, and Fiji have **successfully protected endangered tree species**.
 - Countries like Ghana, Colombia, Chile, and Kenya have developed national strategies focused on tree conservation.
 - Gabon has **designated key conservation areas** specifically for trees, demonstrating a proactive approach to biodiversity preservation.

What is the IUCN Red List?

- The IUCN Red List is the foremost global resource for **assessing the risk of extinction among animals, fungi, and plant species**.
- The list Categories define the extinction risk of species assessed. Nine categories extend from **NE (Not Evaluated) to EX (Extinct)**. **Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN) and Vulnerable (VU)** species are considered to be threatened with extinction.
 - It is also a key indicator for the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and [Aichi Targets](#).
- The List includes the **IUCN Green Status of Species**, which **assesses the recovery of species' populations** and measures their conservation success.
 - **There are eight Green Status Categories:** Extinct in the Wild, Critically Depleted, Largely Depleted, Moderately Depleted, Slightly Depleted, Fully Recovered, Non-Depleted and Indeterminate.
- A Green Status assessment examines **how conservation actions have affected** the current Red List status.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. Consider the following pairs (2019)

Wildlife : Naturally found in

1. Blue-finned Mahseer : Cauvery River
2. Irrawaddy Dolphin : Chambal River
3. Rusty-spotted Cat : Eastern Ghats

Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

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

Ans: (c)

Q. Which one of the following is not a site for in-situ method of conservation of flora? (2011)

- (a) Biosphere Reserve

(b) Botanical Garden

(c) National Park

(d) Wildlife Sanctuary

Ans: (b)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/iucn-first-global-tree-assessment>

