



NBWL and Wildlife Conservation

For Prelims: [National Board for Wildlife \(NBWL\)](#), [Gir National Park](#), [Great Indian Bustard](#), [Gharial](#), [Geospatial Mapping](#), [Project Cheetah](#), [Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary](#), [Banni Grasslands](#), [Project Lion](#), [Maldhari Community](#), [Wild Life \(Protection\) Act, 1972](#), [National Tiger Conservation Authority \(NTCA\)](#).

For Mains: Recent initiatives and role of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) in wildlife conservation.

[Source: IE](#)

Why in News?

The **Prime Minister** chaired the **7th meeting** of the [National Board for Wildlife \(NBWL\)](#) at the [Gir National Park](#) (Junagadh, Gujarat) on the occasion of the World Wildlife Day (3rd March) and announced several **initiatives** for wildlife conservation.

What is World Wildlife Day?

- **About:** It is observed annually on 3rd **March** (adopted [CITES](#) in **1973**) to highlight the urgent need to protect biodiversity amid the **triple planetary crisis** of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.
- **Origin:** It was established by the **UN General Assembly (UNGA)** in **December 2013**.
- **Theme 2025: Wildlife Conservation Finance: Investing in People and Planet.**
 - It emphasizes the importance of **financial investment in wildlife conservation** to ensure a sustainable future.

What are the Key Announcements During the 7th meeting of NBWL?

- **New Initiatives:**
 - **Great Indian Bustard Conservation:** A National [Great Indian Bustard Conservation Plan](#) was announced to address the declining population of this **critically endangered** species.
 - **Gharial Conservation:** A new [Gharial](#) conservation initiative was launched to arrest the **dwindling population of gharials**.
 - **Centre for Human-Wildlife Conflict:** The Centre for Excellence in [Human-Wildlife Conflict](#) Management was announced and it will be located at the Wildlife Institute of India's **Coimbatore campus**.
 - It will equip **rapid response teams** with advanced **tracking and surveillance**, deploy detection systems in conflict zones, and train field staff and communities in mitigation.
 - PM emphasized using [AI, ML](#), [remote sensing](#), and [geospatial mapping](#) to tackle forest fires and human-animal conflicts.

- WII and [Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geoinformatics \(BISAG-N\)](#) will collaborate to tackle human-wildlife conflict.
- **National Referral Centre for Wildlife:** PM laid the foundation stone for the **National Referral Centre for Wildlife in Junagadh**, a hub for **wildlife health and disease management**.
- **New Task Forces:** New task forces were formed for the conservation of Indian [Sloth Bear](#), **Gharials**, and **Great Indian Bustard**.
- **Expansion of Project Cheetah:** The government announced [Project Cheetah](#)'s expansion to [Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary](#) (Madhya Pradesh) and [Banni Grasslands](#) (Gujarat).
- **Strengthening Project Lion:** The government extended the [Project Lion](#) for 10 years to expand Asiatic Lions' range across **Gujarat's Saurashtra region**.
 - The **16th Asiatic Lion population** estimation will be conducted in **May 2024** that is conducted every **five years** (last done in 2020).
- **Riverine Dolphin Estimation:** India's **1st Riverine Dolphin Estimation Report** was released that revealed **6,327 dolphins** in the Ganga, Brahmaputra, and Indus river basins.
- **Traditional Knowledge in Wildlife Conservation:** Modi urged NBWL and the ministry to collect **traditional knowledge and manuscripts** on forest and wildlife conservation for research and development.
- **Community Participation:** He emphasized **community involvement** in wildlife conservation, forest fire management, and sustainable coexistence
 - E.g., Role of [Maldhari community](#) in lion conservation.

Click Here to Read: [Who are Maldharis?](#)

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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)



Drishti IAS

What is NBWL?

- **About:** NBWL is a **statutory body** constituted under the [Wild Life \(Protection\) Act, 1972](#)

(WPA, 1972). It is the **apex body** on wildlife conservation and development.

- **Composition:** The **NBWL** is a **47-member committee** headed by the **Prime Minister**, who serves as the **ex-officio Chairperson**, while the **Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change** serves as the **Vice-Chairperson**.
 - Its members include:
 - **Officials involved in wildlife conservation**
 - The **Chief of Army Staff, Defence Secretary, and Expenditure Secretary.**
 - **Ten eminent conservationists, ecologists, and environmentalists** nominated by the central government.
- **Functions:** It is **mandated** to promote **conservation and development of wildlife and forest.**
- **Role in Tiger Reserves:** It ensures that **no tiger reserve is diverted to unsustainable use** without its approval, with advice from the [National Tiger Conservation Authority \(NTCA\)](#)

Drishti Mains Question:

Discuss the significance of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) in India's wildlife conservation efforts.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. Consider the following protected areas:

1. Bandipur
2. Manas
3. Bhitarkanika
4. Sunderbans

Which of the above are declared Tiger Reserves?

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

Ans: (b)

Mains

Q. How does biodiversity vary in India? How is the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 helpful in the conservation of flora and fauna? (2018)