

G2. Forest and Wildlife Resources

Intext Questions

Activity on page 15

- 1 *What are the negative factors that cause such fearful depletion of the flora and fauna?

Ans. Different human activities are the negative factors that cause such fearful depletion of flora and fauna. *These are*

- Mining activities done by humans are responsible for deforestation. Mining disturbs the natural habitat and also blocks the migration route of many species.
- Practice of shifting cultivation is also responsible for large scale deforestation which also render species homeless.
- Large scale developmental projects for e.g. Multi-purpose river projects are also responsible for deforestation and habitat destruction of wildlife.
- Hunting and Poaching are the major causes which are responsible for the extinction of animals.

Exercise

- 1 Multiple Choice Questions.

- (i) *Which of these statements is not a valid reason for the depletion of flora and fauna?
- (a) Agricultural expansion
 - (b) Large-scale developmental projects
 - (c) Grazing and fuel-wood collection
 - (d) Rapid industrialisation and urbanisation

Ans. (c) Grazing and fuel-wood collection

- (ii) Which of the following conservation strategies do not directly involve community participation?

- (a) Joint Forest Management
- (b) Beej Bachao Andolan
- (c) Chipko Movement
- (d) Demarcation of Wildlife Sanctuaries

Ans. (d) Demarcation of Wildlife Sanctuaries

- 2 *Match the following.

Animals/Plants	Categories of Existence
(i) Black buck	(a) Extinct
(ii) Asiatic elephant	(b) Rare
(iii) Andaman wild pig	(c) Endangered
(iv) Himalayan brown bear	(d) Vulnerable
(v) Pink headed duck	(e) Endemic

Ans. (i) (c) (ii) (d) (iii) (e) (iv) (b) (v) (a)

- 3 Match the following.

Column A	Column B
(i) Reserved forests	(a) Other forests and wastelands belonging to both government and private individuals and communities.
(ii) Protected forests	(b) Forests are regarded as most valuable as far as the conservation of forests and wildlife resources.
(iii) Unclassed forests	(c) Forest lands are protected from any further depletion.

Ans. (i) (b), (ii) (c), (iii) (a)

- 4 Answer the following questions in about 30 words.

- (i) *What is biodiversity ? Why is biodiversity important for human lives?

Ans. **Biodiversity** Biodiversity refers to rich flora and wildlife. In this diversity, species with diverse forms and functions live together.

Importance of Biodiversity for Human

Biodiversity is important for human lives because the human being, alongwith the biodiversity, form a complete ecological system in which we are a part and are dependent on this system for our own existence.

(ii) *How have human activities affected the depletion of flora and fauna? Explain.

Ans. *The human activities that have been major causes for the depletion of flora and fauna, are*

- (i) Agricultural expansion.
- (ii) Shifting cultivation (Jhum), a type of slash and burn agriculture.
- (iii) Large-scale development projects.
- (iv) Mining activities.

5 Answer the following questions in about 120 words.

(i) Describe how communities have conserved and protected forests and wildlife in India?

Ans. Communities have conserved and protected forests and wildlife in India. *This can be seen through the following points*

- (i) The Chipko Movement which was conducted in the Himalayas, has successfully resisted deforestation in several areas. It showed community afforestation with indigenous species to be successful.
- (ii) The Beej Bachao Andolan in Tehri district of Uttarakhand conserved local seed diversity and

forests, while defending small farmers and promoting traditional agriculture and knowledge systems.

(iii) In the Sariska wildlife sanctuary in Rajasthan, villagers have fought against mining activities taking place nearby by citing the Wildlife Protection Act.

(ii) Write a note on good practices towards conserving forest and wildlife.

Ans. Conservation of forest and wildlife was prevalent as nature worship is common among tribal communities and in villages e.g. tulsi plants and banana leaves. Such cultural beliefs helped preserve the plant and animal species. Large-scale people's movement like the Chipko Movement in Uttarakhand and the Narmada Bachao Andolan in Madhya Pradesh indicate involvement of local communities in conserving forests and wildlife.

Thus, all conservation practices and programmes should be eco-friendly, people friendly and economically acceptable.

Developmental projects undertaken by the government should not be at the cost of destruction of forests and loss of people's livelihoods.

Exam Practice

Objective Type Questions

Multiple Choice Questions

1 In which year was Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act introduced?

- (a) 1980 (b) 1982
(c) 1972 (d) 1992

Ans. (c) 1972

2 Which is the first project for Wildlife Conservation in India?

- (a) Project Elephant (b) Project Tiger
(c) Project Crocodile (d) None of these

Ans. (b) Project Tiger

3 Which of the following National Park is the site dedicated to preservation of one-horned rhinoceros?

- (a) Bandhavgarh National Park
(b) Buxa Wildlife Reserve
(c) Kaziranga National Park
(d) All of the above

Ans. (c) Kaziranga National Park

4 Consider the following statements about unclassified forests

- I. Unclassed forests are mostly managed by both private communities and the government.
II. All human activities are allowed in these forests.
III. Northern-Eastern states and parts of Gujarat have mostly unclassified forests.

Which of the following is correct?

- (a) I and II (b) II and III
(c) I and III (d) All of these

Ans. (d) All of these

5 Consider the following statements about reserved forests?

- I. Reserved forests are owned by the government and all the human activities are not allowed in these forests.
II. These forests are regarded as the most valuable forests in terms of conservation of forests and wildlife.
III. These forests constitute about more than half of the total forest land in India.

Which of the following is correct?

- (a) I and II (b) II and III
(c) I and III (d) All of these

Ans. (d) All of these

6 Find the incorrect option regarding Joint Forest Management Programme.

- (a) Odisha passed the first resolution for Joint Forest Management.
(b) This Program was initiated in the year 1988.
(c) It is a combined effort of local community with local committees.
(d) Members are entitled to cash benefits from the forests.

Ans. (d) Members are entitled to cash benefits from the forests.

7 Arrange in Sequence.

1. Cheetahs declared extinct from India
2. Project tiger started
3. Indian Wildlife Protection Act implemented
4. Initiation of JFM

Codes

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

Ans. (c)

Fill in the Blanks

8 Adequate levels of diversified crop production without the use of synthetic chemicals are possible and economically viable; these are shown by the movements and

Ans. a Beej Bachao Andolan, Navdanya

Correct/Rewrite

9 The Mundas and the Santhals of Chota Nagpur region worship Tamarind and Mango while the tribals of Odisha worship Mahua and Kadamba.

Ans. The Mundas and Santhals of Chota Nagpur region worship Mahua and Kadamba trees, while the tribals of Odisha worship Tamarind and Mango.

10 In 1991, for the first time animal species were added to the all India list of protected species and only included 6 animal species in this list.

Ans. In 1991, for the first time plant species were added to the all India list of protected species and only included 6 plant species.

Assertion/Reason

11 **Assertion (A)** Tiger population has reduced rapidly in India from 55,000 to just 1827 in 1973.

Reason (R) Increase in demand of traditional medicines in Asian countries led to large scale poaching of tigers.

Codes

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true but R is not the correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true but R is false
- (d) A is false but R is true

Ans. (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A

Very Short Answer Questions

12 What is lopping of forest?

Ans. Lopping is the trimming of trees, cutting its branches, trunk and leaves for use while the tree is alive.

13 Briefly write about the India State of Forest Report.

Ans. The India State of Forest Report is published twice a year by the Ministry of Forestry, analysing the status of forests and tree cover in India.

14 Write the major drawback of the India State of Forest Reports published in India biennially.

Ans. The major drawback of the report is that it does not differentiate between natural forests and plantations. So, it fails to deliver accurate information about actual loss of natural forests.

15 Briefly differentiate National park and Wildlife sanctuary.

Ans. National park has well defined boundary and human interference is restricted and regulations are stringent. But wildlife sanctuary have no defined boundary and limited human activities are permitted in it.

16 Tiger preservation in West Bengal also affected by anthropogenic development activities. Give your view with strong evidence.

Ans. Yes, now it is observed that Buxa Tiger Reserve in West Bengal is threatened by the dolomite mining in the surrounding areas of that reserve.

17 In which year a few plants were added to the protected species list in India?

Ans. In the year 1991, six plants were added to the list.

18 A famous site in Madhya Pradesh was dedicated to protection of tigers through project tiger. Which site was it?

Ans. Bandhavgarh National Park in Madhya Pradesh.

19 Name some wild animals who are given legal protection in India.

Ans. Tiger, one-horned rhinoceros, Kashmir stag, some crocodiles, Asiatic lion, Indian elephant, black buck, the great Indian bustard and snow leopard etc are some wildlife who are given legal protection in India.

20 What is the impact of Beej Bachao Andolan?

Ans. Beej Bachao Andolan has shown that adequate levels of diversified crop production without the use of synthetic chemicals are possible and economically viable.

21 State the main effect of Chipko Movement in India.

Ans. This movement has successfully resisted deforestation in several areas of the Himalayas.

22 Do you think, Indian society lacks knowledge of conservation of nature?

Ans. No, Indian society has traditional methods of conservation of nature and culturally adopted with suitability. Indian method of nature conservation rely on prevention rather than modern methods of remedy.

23 Compare the eco-sensitiveness of tribes and modern urbanised man.

Ans. Tribes are much eco-sensitive. The tribes worship and protect forest and ecology whereas modern people exploit the forests and ecology insensitively for their commercial purposes.

Additional Questions

Short Answer (SA) Type Questions

1 How humans are dependent on the ecological system for their existence?

Ans. Humans are dependent on the ecological system because they are part of this system.

This can be understood through the following points

(i) Humans breathe air, drink water and grow crops in soil which are the non-living components of the ecological system.

(ii) The living components like plants, animals and micro-organisms recreate the quality of the air humans breathe, the water humans drink and the soil that produces humans food. Without these elements human beings cannot survive.

(iii) Human beings are dependent on both living and non-living components of the ecological existence.

2 What factors make forest a very useful resource for humans?

Ans. The following factors make forest a very helpful resource for humans

- (i) Forest provides raw materials like raisins, gums, wood, etc for many industries like paper industry, match making and so on.
- (ii) It provides timber that is useful for construction and for furniture making.
- (iii) Forests hold the soil firmly and prevent soil erosion. They also help in bringing rainfall and cool the environment

3 Discuss about the trend of depletion of forest after independence. Give at least four reasons for it.

or Explain any three reasons why forest resources are depleting after independence in India?

Ans. There is a trend of depletion of forest after independence. The major reasons for the depletion of forest resources in India are

- (i) The greatest damage inflicted on Indian forests was during the Colonial period. This damage was done due to the expansion of the railways, agriculture, commercial and scientific forestry.
- (ii) Rapid expansion of urbanisation caused major deforestation.
- (iii) Different developmental projects like multi-purpose river valley projects, construction activities, mining activities contribute to deforestation and degradation of forest land.
- (iv) Increase in agricultural practices like intensive agriculture and commercial agriculture led to transfer of forest land to agriculture land.
- (v) Substantial parts of the tribal belts, especially in the North-Eastern and Central India, have been deforested or degraded by shifting cultivation (Jhum), shifting cultivation is a type of 'slash and burn' agriculture.

4 Explain how culture is affected by loss of forest and wildlife.

or How is biological loss of forest and wildlife correlated with loss of cultural diversity?

Ans. It is true that culture is affected by loss of forest and wildlife. It is because biological loss of forest and wildlife is correlated with loss of cultural diversity.

This can be seen through the following points

- By the destruction of forest and wildlife, the tribal communities and other groups that depend on the forest have been greatly affected.

- Their cultures, festivals, religions and other celebrations is centered around forests and wildlife.
- For instance, the Mundas and Santhals of Chota Nagpur region worship Mahua (*bassia latifolia*) and Kadamba (*Anthocephalus cadamba*) trees. The tribals of Odisha and Bihar worship the tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*) and mango (*Mangifera indica*) trees during weddings.
- The depletion of forest leads to destruction of habitat of these communities and with it the culture is also deeply affected.

5 What are the different conservation methods adopted in India?

or Explain any three methods of forest conservation adopted by the Government of India after independence.

or What efforts are made to protect forest and wildlife in India?

Ans. Methods of forest conservation adopted by the Government of India are

- (i) The Government of India has implemented the Indian Wildlife (protection) Act in 1972 for conservation of wildlife and forests.
- (ii) The government has classified forests into three categories such as reserved forests, protected forests and unclassed forests. Out of these forests two categories, the 'Reserved' and the 'Protected' forests have been restricted for use.
- (iii) The government has started Joint Forest Management (JFM) programmes involving local communities in management and restoration of degraded forests.
- (iv) The Central and many State Governments established national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and biosphere reserves to protect forest and wildlife of India.

6 Write the important features of Joint Forests Management (JFM) Programme.

or Describe any three features of Joint Forest Management.

Ans. Joint Forest Management (JFM) programmes have been launched by various State Governments. The first state to start this programme was Odisha in 1988.

The important features of JFM are

- (i) In India, Joint Forest Management (JFM) programme has been proved to be a good example for involving local communities in the management and restoration of degraded forests.

(ii) The major purpose of the JFM is to protect the forests from encroachments, grazing, theft and fire and also to improve the forests in accordance with an approved Joint Forest Management Plan.

(iii) JFM depends on the formation of local (village) institutions that undertake protection activities mostly on degraded forest land managed by the forest department.

7 Distinguish between endangered and extinct species.

Ans. The differences between endangered and extinct species are

Endangered species	Extinct species
These are species which are facing danger of extinction.	These are species which are not found after searches of known or likely areas where they may occur.
The survival of such species is difficult if the negative factors that have led to a decline in their population continue to operate.	They are already missing and their survival is suspicious.
Example of these species are black buck, wild ass, Indian rhino, crocodile, lion-tailed macaque and so on.	Examples of these species are Asiatic cheetah, pink-headed duck and so on.

8 Discuss the reasons for extinction of Asiatic cheetah in India.

Ans. Asiatic cheetahs are the fastest mammals on land and can move about 112 km/hr. For this much agility they need a vast stretch of dense forest to move freely.

The reasons for extinction of Asiatic Cheetah in India are as follows

- Deforestation, especially depletion of dense forest made much damage to the natural habitat of Asiatic cheetah.
- Construction activities like mining and expansion of human habitat also destroy habitat for other smaller creatures on whom these big cats prey on. Lack of prey and habitat are now major reasons.
- Poaching and low rate of fertility also led to extinction of the unique Asiatic cheetah in India.

9 What has been the contribution of the Indian Wildlife Protection Act in protecting animal habitats in India?

Ans. The Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, incorporated various provisions for protecting habitats.

The contribution of India Wildlife Protection Act can be seen through the following points

- An all India list of protected species was published. The act banned hunting of certain endangered species.
- It also gave legal protection to their habitats and restricting trade in wildlife.
- Many national parks and wildlife sanctuaries were established in which commercial activities were forbidden.
- Central Government also announced several projects for protecting specific animals, which were gravely threatened. These include the tiger, the one-horned rhinoceros, the Kashmir stag or hangul, three types of crocodiles-fresh water crocodile, saltwater crocodile and the Gharial, the Asiatic lion and others.
- Most recently, the Indian elephant, black buck (chinkara) the great Indian bastard (godawan) and the snow leopard, etc, have been given full or partial legal protection against hunting and trade throughout India.

10 "Forest and wildlife are vital to the quality of life and environment." Justify this statement by giving three reasons.

Ans. Forest and wildlife are vital components of environment. These contribute a lot to the quality of life in the ecological system. The three reasons are

- (i) Forests regulate the rainfall pattern on which agricultural practice depends. The depletion of forests brings natural hazards like flood, landslides etc.
- (ii) Depletion of forests and wildlife affects the food chain and food web. As a result, this depletion would collapse the eco-system in long-term.
- (iii) Forests and wildlife are the part of our culture. So, their depletion not only affects the biological aspects, but also the cultural aspects. Women who collect forests products and tribals are affected the most.

11 How would you differentiate reserved forest and protected forest?

Ans. The differences between reserved forests and protected forests are

- (i) In reserved forests, right to all activities like hunting, grazing etc are banned unless specific orders are issued by the government. But in protected areas, right to do activities like hunting and grazing etc are sometimes given to communities living on the fringes of the forests and depend on forests for their livelihood.

- (ii) Reserve forests enjoy a higher degree of protection and may be upgraded to the status of wildlife sanctuary and national parks. The protected forests do not face such possibility.
- (iii) More than half of the total forest land has been declared as reserved forests. On the other hand, only one-third of the total forest area is under protected forests.
- (iv) Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Maharashtra have large percentages of reserved forests of their total forest area. On the other hand, Bihar, Odisha, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan have their large area under protected forests.

12 Generally there are news of threat perception to wildlife, some are gharials, migratory birds etc. What do you feel would be the result if any of such single species is extinct in future?

Ans. Every species is the part of a particular eco-system. Human beings due to their diversified adaptability and abundance in nature have become part of almost all eco-systems on the Earth.

When any species is lost or extinct, it affects the eco-system in the following ways

- Food chain and food web are two important aspects of any eco-system. When any species is lost, the link fails and energy and material could not transfer/ flow properly in the trophic levels.
- All species including human being are affected resulting in catastrophic events in long-term.

13 Read the sources given below and answer the questions

Source A Are Colonial Forest Polices to be Blamed

Some of our environmental activists say that the promotion of a few favoured species, in many parts of India, has been carried through the

ironically termed 'enrichment plantation', in which a single commercially valuable species was extensively planted and other species eliminated.

- (i) For what sense the Colonial Forest Policy is being blamed for?

Source B Sacred Groves a Wealth of Diverse and Rare Species

Indian society comprises several cultures, each with its own set of traditional methods of conserving nature and its creations. Sacred qualities are often ascribed to springs, mountain peaks, plants and animals which are closely protected you.

- (ii) What does the extract tell us about environment conservation in Indian society?

Section C Gautama Buddha (487 BC)

The tree is a peculiar organism of unlimited kindness and benevolence and makes no demand for its sustenance and extends generously the products of its life activity. It affords protection to all beings, offering shade even to the axemen who destroy it.

- (iii) To what extent do you agree that conservation of trees is necessary. Give one reason.

Ans. (i) Colonial Forest Policy is being blamed for promoting 'enrichment plantation' which in the course of time eliminates native precious species.

(ii) The extract tells us that environment conservation was a traditional practice in India society. It is mixed in our cultural norms and beliefs.

(iii) It is essential to conserve the trees as human beings receive many products from trees and their conservation is a way to return that kindness.

Long Answer (LA) Type Questions

1 Write any five reasons for the depletion of forest resource in India.

or How have human activities catalyst the depletion of flora and fauna? Explain.

or Explain any five reasons responsible for depletion of flora and fauna in India.

Ans. Five major reasons which are responsible for depletion of flora and fauna in India are as follows

- (i) **Agricultural expansion** Between 1951 and 1980, according to the Forest Survey of India over 26,200 sq km of forest area was converted into agricultural land all over the India which led to depletion of forests.

- (ii) **Mining** It is another major factor behind deforestation. e.g. dolomite mining has seriously threatened the Buxa Tiger Reserve in West Bengal. This ongoing mining has disturbed the natural habitat and blocked the migration route of great Indian elephant.
- (iii) **Large-scale development projects** Since 1951, over 5000 sq km of forest cleared for River Valley Projects. Narmada Sagar Projects in Madhya Pradesh has inundated 40,000 hectare of forests.
- (iv) **Rapidly expanding industrial-urban economy** Increasing consumption of forest based products such as rubber, medicines, dyes, fuel wood has increased the depletion of forest resources.
- (v) **Over population** In the third world countries it is often regarded as the cause of environmental degradation. However, an average American Consumed 40 times more resources than an average Somalian. Similarly, 5 per cent richest Indians cause more ecological damage than poorest 25 per cent.

2 Why is conservation of forests and wildlife necessary? In what way have conservation projects changed in recent years?

Ans. Conservation of forests and wildlife is necessary for maintenance of the ecological balance. If this is disturbed, it can cause long-term damage to the environment and ecology, thus threatening even human existence. We should implement biodiversity conservation practices to maintain biodiversity and to prevent future generations from suffering due to our negligence at present.

Earlier the conservation projects were concentrating on particular components of biodiversity.

For instance, Project tiger was started to conserve the tiger population in India. But in recent years more intensive search for different conservation measures focussing on preservation of biodiversity as a whole have started. Revisions in the list of protected species of the Wildlife Act in recent years have included insects, moths, butterflies and even plants for preservation.

3 "The conservation projects are now focussing on biodiversity rather than on a few of its components." Justify with proper examples.

Ans. The conservation projects are now focusing on biodiversity rather than on a few of its components. Thus it can be understood through the following examples

- In the 1960s and 1970s conservation approach was species specific. On the basis of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, various projects were implemented.

- These projects were implemented to protect tigers, rhinoceros, crocodile, etc.
- But now conservation projects are focussing on biodiversity i.e. whole gamut of species alongwith their habitat in a specific climatic region. Also the conservation measures are now intensified.
- Wildlife Act was revised in 1980s and 1986 to include various insects like butterflies and plants in the conservation planning.
- Alongwith national parks, wildlife sanctuary, biosphere reserves are now designed and promoted to protect not only species; but its natural habitat and whole complex of ecological webs.
- Participation of community as well as local people now gave a new dimension to conservation of planning.

4 Some environmentalist allege tribes for destroying forest for their use and some say that they are more eco-sensitive and protect nature better. Then what do you infer from both the references?

Ans. Tribal people rely on forest products for their survival i.e. food, wood, fuel wood, medicines, etc but they use them in sustainable manner. They practice lopping rather than felling of trees so they are not destroying forest completely. Only incidence of deforestation is slash and burn agriculture practiced by many tribals which deplete forests.

But these are not permanent destruction as when they abandon the land, after some years trees again grow. The tribals are naturally nature lovers, they worship trees, wildlife as God or other sacred elements and protect the nature with traditional methods. Tribals do not destroy the ecology knowingly and not exploit the nature for commercial purpose extensively as the modern men do. So, the recent Forest Act, 2006 give tribals right on forest and include them legally with nature conservation process.

5 Why are different traditional communities involved in conserving their own natural habitats in India?

Ans. It is true, that different traditional communities are involved in conserving their own natural habitats in India.

This can be analysed through the following points

- Nature worship is an age old tribal belief based on the assumption that all creations of nature have to be protected. Certain societies reserve a particular tree which they have preserved from time immemorial.
- The Mundas and the Santhals of Chota Nagpur region worship and protect Mahua (*Bassia latifolia*) and Kadamba (*Anthocephalus cadamba*) trees.
- Tribals of Odisha and Bihar worship the Tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*) and Mango (*Mangifera indica*) trees during wedding and protect them.
- In and around Bishnoi villages in Rajasthan, herds of black buck (*chinkara*), nilgai and peacocks are protected. Monkeys and langoor are fed in many temples.

This way different communities are involved in conserving their own natural habits in India.

- 6 New development projects are blamed for ecological destruction but to offer a better life and opportunity to such a huge population in India it is obviously to rely on development projects like mining, construction, urbanisation, better agricultural practices, etc. Give your opinion regarding this contrast.

Ans. Population of India is now around 120 crore among which more than 50 per cent are poor and near about 70 per cent are rural who deserve a better life and opportunity. For this purpose Government of India relies on development projects as immediate solution.

But the development projects destroy ecological balance and bring global ecological crisis. Many species are extinct, many are threatened to different degree and at the verge of extinction, including both wildlife and plant species.

Ecological balance is quite necessary for long-term sustenance of life on the Earth which should not be compromised for short-term benefits. New concepts of sustainable development is promoted throughout the world and international organisations are involved in this project.

So, development projects should be eco-sensitive and care for the nature. Every ecological region has a carrying capacity that should not be infringed, otherwise, it will collapse and will bring immense loss to human life also.

- 7 '33 per cent of area should be under forests.' Justify the statement highlighting the advantages of forests.

Ans. The following advantages justify the fact that 33 per cent of area should be under forests

- (i) Forests reduce flooding and improve water quality by slowing the rate at which rainfall runoff and flows into rivers.
- (ii) Forests provide fallen leaves to feed the soil and aquatic organisms.
- (iii) Forests reduce soil erosion by holding the soil firmly to the ground.
- (iv) Forests increase the level of groundwater by slowing the amount of rainfall runoff that percolates into the soil and replenishes our main source of drinking water.
- (v) Forests improve air quality, especially in summer, by lowering temperatures and filtering dust. These also absorb various gases like ozone, carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, airborne ammonia and heavy metals and release oxygen.
- (vi) Forests help counteract the Greenhouse effect and global climate change by taking carbon out of the atmosphere and storing it in the form of wood.

- 8 Read the extract and answer the questions

The trade of tiger skins and the use of their bones in traditional medicines, especially in the Asian countries left the tiger population on the verge of extinction.

Since India and Nepal provide habitat to about two-thirds of the surviving tiger population in the world, these two nations became prime targets for poaching and illegal trading.

'Project Tiger', one of the well publicised wildlife campaigns in the world, was launched in 1973. Tiger conservation has been viewed not only as an effort to save an endangered species, but with equal importance as a means of preserving biotypes of sizeable magnitude.

Corbett National Park in Uttarakhand, Sunderbans National Park in West Bengal, Bandhavgarh National Park in Madhya Pradesh, Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary in Rajasthan, Manas Tiger Reserve in Assam and Periyar Tiger Reserve in Kerala are some of the tiger reserves of India.

- (i) Why India and Nepal became prime targets for poaching?
- (ii) In your views why tiger was chosen to be protected under a project?
- (iii) Instead of conservation of one species, why the focus has shifted to preservation of biodiversity?

- Ans.** (i) India and Nepal were prime targets of poaching since these countries provide habitat to about two-thirds of the surviving population of tigers.
- (ii) The population of tigers was on the verge of extinction. There was a trend of hunting and poaching of tigers for trade. Hunters traded tiger skins and used their bones in traditional medicines. These activities minimised the population of this species.

Besides, it is the national animal of India and is considered India's pride. Therefore, it was chosen as an animal to be protected under a project.

- (iii) The focus has shifted from one species to preservation of biodiversity as that will conserve all the species along with valuable flora that is specific to that region. This way plants, insects, birds, reptiles, animals, etc can be protected in their natural habitat.