

What are the objectives of Convention on International Trade in Endangered species of wild Fauna and Flora? (CITES). Discuss its impact on protection of species in India.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered species is an international agreement between the governments to regulate or ban of flora and fauna which are facing the threat from being extinct. IUCN was instrumental in setting up a regulatory body to check illegal trade. CITES came into effect in 1965, popularly called WASHINGTON CONVENTION.

OBJECTIVES OF CITES

- 1) Regulate international trade in plant and animal species.
- 2) Legally binding framework for conducting such trades.
- 3) Aid the countries national laws for sanctions in trade.
- 4) Monitor the status of vulnerable species in red list of IUCN
- 5) Track the illegal poaching activities
- 6) Stare towards conservation of biodiversity.

CITES meeting is held once in 3 years to review the list of species in

Appendix - 1 $\Rightarrow$ Trade ban, critically endangered

Appendix - 2 $\Rightarrow$ Species regulated trade that might become endangered.

Appendix - 3 $\Rightarrow$ Regulation of trade requested by party to CITES in its geographical area.

CITES AND INDIA

- 1) India has always adhered to CITES convention in its national laws for protecting biodiversity.
- 2) Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), Chief Wildlife Warden, are responsible for checking illegal trade.
- 3) WCCB is regulated by Customs Act 1962. It has set up detention centres in various entry ports around 70 in India.

- 4) India has enacted Wildlife Protection Act 1972 [WPA], where the I schedule plants for protection have been accorded protection in CITES
- 5) Regional collaboration SAWEN [South Asian Wildlife Enforcement Network] was started to check transboundary trade in subcontinent.
As a result, joint Elephant task force, Project Ganges Dolphin was envisaged
- 6) According to recent Tiger Census report 2019, India has seen large population of Tiger growth, due to curbs on illegal poaching between 2001-2017.
- 7) On the flipside, the highest level of protection accorded to Rosuvird species has affected handicraft industry. India is pushing for downgrading its protection status.
- 8) The trade ban on Pashmina shawl to protect Chiru goats, affects the livelihood of Kashmiri people.
- 9) In COP 18 session, India pushed for protecting all species of otter which is sold at exorbitant price in Japan and Tokay Gecko which is exploited by for traditional medicinal preparations.
- 10) Biopiracy is checked through Biological Diversity Act 2002, restricting foreigners to conduct research on threatened species, outside origin country