

Vultures being a key stone species, provide eco-system services in various ways. Discuss, suggest various measures needed to conserve them.

Introduction:

India is home to nine species of Vultures, but most of them face the danger of extinction. Vultures, being scavengers provides various eco-system services to the people and hence need to be conserved. Various measures should be formulated to bring up the critically endangered species of vultures to a stable population.

Eco system Services by Vultures:

- They play a significant role as carrion feeders and disposers of disease-causing carcasses.
- Vultures formerly disposed of 10 million tonnes of rotting meat every year in India.
- Due to decrease in vulture population, there has been ^{is} 30% rise in feral dogs, which are the main vectors of rabies, that kills an estimated 7000 people in India.
- Being an obligate scavenger, they help in nutrient recycling, removal of soil and water contaminants, Regulate the development & spread of diseases, and helps in controlling the facultative scavengers such as foxes.
- They provide us with cost effective, environment friendly carcass disposal service.

Measures needed to conserve the vulture population

- Action plan for Vulture Conservation, which was approved in 2020, has laid out various strategies and actions for Vulture Conservation.

It has announced a ban on Diclofenac, in cattle, which would pose a threat to vultures, which feed on them.

2) Upscaling Conservation

We have to establish conservation breeding Centres to further enhance the population.

3) Vulture Safe Zone

Establishment of atleast one vulture safe zone in each state for the conservation of Remnants.

4) Rescue Centres.

5) Vulture Census.

Coordinated approach involving forest departments, Research Institutes, Nonprofit organizations in formulating the Census of Vulture population, This helps in estimating the size of Vulture population.

6) Vulture Restaurants.

Vulture Restaurants in various countries have played a key role in feeding of Diclofenac free ^{carcasses} ~~vultures~~ to the Vultures.

Creating Awareness to the public regarding the crisis.

Measures formulated in vulture conservation, should be strictly monitored, regulated & implemented. This would help in bringing up vulture population & preventing us from various environmental & health disasters.