



Ghodahada Reservoir

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Why in News?

The population of Mugger Crocodile is on the rise in Odisha's Ghodahada reservoir.

Key Points

- As per the annual crocodile census conducted in the Ghodahada reservoir, the number of mature **mugger crocodiles** in Ghodahada reservoir and its adjoining area has increased.
- The reservoir is located close to the **Lakhari Valley Sanctuary** and is a **part of the Eastern Ghats**.
- The reservoir is fed by **Ghodahada river** which is a **tributary** of the **Rushikulya**.

Mugger Crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*)

- It is one of the **three crocodile species** found in Odisha, the others being **gharial** in **Satkosia** and **Saltwater crocodile** in **Bhitarkanika**.
- The mugger is an **egg-laying** and **hole-nesting species**.
- It is mainly restricted to the Indian subcontinent where it may be found in a number of **freshwater habitat** types including rivers, lakes and marshes.
- However, it can even be found in coastal **saltwater lagoons** and **estuaries**.
- It is already **extinct** in Bhutan and Myanmar.
- **Principal threats:** Habitat destruction, fragmentation, and transformation, fishing activities and use of crocodile parts for medicinal purposes.
- IUCN status: **Vulnerable**
- It is protected under **Schedule I** of the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**. **Schedule I** and **part II** of **Schedule II** of the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972** provide the highest degrees of protection to listed species.
- It is also listed under **CITES Appendix I**.

Lakhari Valley Sanctuary

- It was established in the year 1985. It is marked by the **tropical climate** and receives a huge amount of rainfall every year due to its proximity to the Bay of Bengal.
- The sanctuary is full of rich **tropical forest**, valleys, hills, water sources etc.
- It is one of the elephant populated sanctuaries in India.

Source: TH