



Extension of Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary

Recently, the Forest Department identified around 300 hectares of revenue **land for inclusion** in the **Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary** (KWS),

- The land is being diverted as compensation, for setting up a [new Missile Test Launch Facility](#) by the [Defence Research and Development Organisation \(DRDO\)](#)
- The move has also been recommended by the [National Board for Wildlife](#).

Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary

- Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Andhra Pradesh, India.
- The sanctuary is a part of the mangrove wetland in Andhra Pradesh and is located in the coastal plain of Krishna delta, spread across **Krishna and Guntur districts** of Andhra Pradesh.
- The **estuary of the Krishna River** passes through the sanctuary.
- It is believed that this region potentially holds one of the **most significant populations of fishing cats** in the world.

Fishing Cats

- The fishing cat (*Prionailurus viverrinus*) is a medium-sized wild cat of South and Southeast Asia. The population has declined severely over the last decade due to the destruction of wetlands and have declined severely.
- The fishing cat is listed as **Endangered** on the [IUCN Red List](#).
- The [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species \(CITES\)](#) lists the fishing cat on **Appendix II part of Article IV of CITES**.
- In India, the fishing cat is included in Schedule I of the [Indian Wildlife \(Protection\) Act, 1972](#) and thereby protected from hunting.

Protected Areas

- Broadly, there are **three types** of protected areas: **Wildlife Sanctuary, National Park, and Biosphere reserve**.
 - **Wildlife sanctuaries** refer to an area which provides protection and favourable living conditions to the wild animals.
 - **National Park** implies an area that is exclusively designated by the government for the conservation of wildlife and biodiversity due to its **natural, cultural and historical** significance

National Parks & Wildlife Sanctuaries

- National parks are **highly restricted** areas, which are not open to all the people, whereas wildlife sanctuaries have **lesser restrictions** than national parks.
- Fishing cat populations are threatened by the des

- For example: To visit national parks, official permission is to be taken from the requisite authorities. In contrast, no official permission is to be taken to visit a wildlife sanctuary.
- Human activities are allowed to a limited extent in the wildlife sanctuaries, but in the case of national parks, they are strictly prohibited.
- Boundaries of wildlife sanctuaries are not sacrosanct. However, the national parks have clearly marked boundaries (**fixed by legislation**).
- The International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has declared **National Parks** in **Category II** of the protected areas. whereas **wildlife sanctuaries** are grouped in **Category IV** of protected areas.
- However, most of the national parks were initially wildlife sanctuaries, which were then upgraded to national parks. Also, **tourism is allowed** in both of them.

Biosphere Reserves

- **Biosphere reserves** are protected areas, which tend to conserve the **genetic diversity** of the plants, animals, birds, etc.
 - It comprising terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems.
 - Each reserve promotes solutions reconciling the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use.
 - Biosphere reserves are nominated by national governments and remain under the sovereign jurisdiction of the states where they are located. Their status is internationally recognized.
 - There are 701 biosphere reserves in 124 countries.
- **A biosphere reserve is divided into three zones: Core zone, Buffer zone, Transition zone.**
 - This categorization gained international prominence through UNESCO's **Man and the Biosphere Programme** in 1971.
 - The **core area(s)** comprises a strictly protected ecosystem that contributes to the conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic variation.
 - The **buffer zone** surrounds or adjoins the core areas, and is used for activities compatible with sound ecological practices that can reinforce scientific research, monitoring, training and education.
 - The **transition area** is the part of the reserve where the greatest activity is allowed, fostering economic and human development that is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable.

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