



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 of fishing cats has declined severely over the last decade due to the destruction of wetlands and have declined severely over the last decade.
- 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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