



Mains Practice Question

Q.What do you understand by man animal conflict? Examine the conflict in light of environmental ethics and sustainability. (150 words)

14 Nov, 2019 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

Approach

- Introduce the answer by underlying the reason for the problem.
- Explain man-animal conflict.
- Give ethical issues involved.
- Conclude the answer by suggesting an optimistic way forward.

Introduction

The **law of nature** provide freedom and rights to every living being to live in their natural habitat. However, **expanding human needs** on land, sea and freshwater has threatened the sustainability of this natural balance.

Body

Man-animal conflict is commonly described as conflict that occurs when both humans and animals compete with each other for food and other resources.

It also refers to the threats posed by humans to wildlife or vice-versa. Man-animal conflict basically arises due to the territorial encroachment of each others territory.

Ethical Issues Involved

- **Need vs Animal Rights:** Human population has expanded at an alarming rate which has led to the increased encroachment of animal territory. Developmental needs to satisfy the increasing population has led to violation of animal rights.
 - **For Example:** Expansion of highways and physical infrastructure in forest is a ready invitation for more man-animal conflict and threatens the environmental sustainability.
- **Utilitarian Perspective:** It refers to the greatest good for the greatest number. In respect of man-animal conflict, this concept should aim to minimize the adverse impact of conflict.
 - **For Example:** Hunting of animals for amusement cannot be justified on any grounds, however killing of animals when they threaten humans can somewhat be taken into consideration.
- **Respect for Nature:** In order to fulfil its materialist greed, humans have excessively destroyed the natural resources and ecosystem. Even the ideas of sustainable development and polluter pays principles are heavily biased towards the interests of human beings rather than environmental concerns. When choosing between development and environment, the tilt should always be towards saving the environment.

Way Forward

Humans have peacefully shared the space with animals since time immemorial, but the recent issues arise due to increasing materialist and consumerist tendencies of humans. In order to have a peaceful co-existence, there is a need to differentiate between human needs from greed as nature provides equal rights to both humans and animals.

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