



Mains Practice Question

Q. Examine the reasons for rising incidents of human-wildlife conflict. Suggest some possible measures to tackle this problem of modern age. (250 words)

23 Jan, 2019 GS Paper 3 Bio-diversity & Environment

Introduction

- India is a mega-diverse country owing to its large climatic and topographic variations. With only 2.4% of the world's land area, it harbors around 8% of all recorded species and around 17% of the world's human population. This makes the country a hotspot of man-wild conflicts.
- According to data from the Union environment ministry, more than 1,608 humans were killed in conflict cases involving tigers, leopards, bears, and elephants between 2013 and 2017.

Body

Reasons for the rise in conflict

- **Road Kills:** Some of the road network is being expanded through protected areas. Apart from fragmentation, roads are becoming a serious threat to wildlife as several wild animals are killed on a daily basis by speeding vehicles.
- **Increase in Human population:** The settlements have started expanding in urban and rural parts to meet the pace of growing populations. Many settlements have come up near the peripheries of protected areas, encroaching the forest areas.
- **Land use transformations:** Man has cleared the areas, for monoculture plantations of Areca nut, Teak, etc. Developmental activities - the construction of hydroelectric projects results in submergence of nearby forest lands and fragmentation of habitats, clearance of lands for mining and industries also leads to breaking of large natural habitats into small patches
- **Habitat fragmentation and shrinkage:** This makes that landscape unviable for wild animals as their needs are not fulfilled. As a result of which they wander in nearby areas searching for resources. Growing human dependency on natural resources and **the degradation of wildlife habitats** have resulted in human-wildlife conflict.

Steps to be taken to reduce the human-animal conflict

- **Improvement and preservation of Habitat:** Government should provide assistance to State Governments for improvement of habitat to augment food and water availability and to minimize the animal movement from the forests to the habitations
- **Training programmes:** it is essential to train the police offices and local people. Forest departments should frame the guidelines for management of human-animal conflict & publicize the same in the local community.
- **Awareness programmes:** Local people should be sensitized through awareness programmes to minimize the conflicts.
- **Technical & financial support:** Providing technical and financial support for the development of necessary infrastructure and support facilities for immobilization of problematic animals through tranquilization, their translocation to the rescue centers or release back to the natural habitats.
- **Land-use policies,** which frequently take no account of such conflicts, need to provide for the

prevention and mitigation of human wildlife conflicts.

- Encouraging and supporting involvement of the **research and academic institutions** and leading voluntary organizations having expertise in managing human-wildlife conflict situations.

Way Forward

- Appropriate laws and policies should be framed on hunting, tourism, human settlement and other activities that will serve to prevent and mitigate Human-Wildlife conflicts, rather than exacerbate it.

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