



Human-Animal Conflict

For Prelims: Human-Animal Conflict, [Wildlife Protection Act, 1972](#), [State Disaster Management Authority \(SDMA\)](#), [The Biological Diversity Act, 2002](#).

For Mains: Human-Animal Conflict, Issues of Human-Wildlife Conflict and Solutions.

Source: IE

Why in News?

Amid repeated deaths from animal attacks and rising anger over them, Kerala has declared the [Human-Animal Conflict](#) as a **state-specific disaster**.

- This declaration signals a significant shift in how the government addresses this pressing issue, altering the responsibilities and authorities involved.

How State Handle Human-Animal Conflict as a State-Specific Disaster?

Aspect	Current Management	Proposed Change (State Specific Disaster)
Responsibility	Forest department under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 .	State disaster management authority under the Disaster Management Act
Decision Making Authority	Chief Wildlife Warden	State Disaster Management Authority (Chief Minister at State Level)
District Level Authority	District Collector as the executive magistrate	District Collector as a Chairperson of District Disaster Management Authority
Intervention Capability	Limited by Wildlife Protection Act	Enhanced powers to take decisive actions under Disaster Management Act 2005
Judicial Oversight	Decisions may be questioned in court under wildlife laws	Limited judicial interference due to provisions of Disaster Management Act
Jurisdiction of Courts	Courts can entertain suits under relevant wildlife laws	Only the Supreme Court or High Court can entertain suits related to actions under Disaster Management Act, 2025

		(Section 71).
Norms Override Capability	Limited under Wildlife Protection Act	Authority to override other norms, including wildlife laws, during the declared disaster period (Under Section 72)

- As per **section 71 of the Disaster Management Act, no court** (except the Supreme Court or a High Court) **shall have jurisdiction to entertain any suit** or proceeding in respect of anything done by relevant authorities in pursuance of any power conferred by this Act.
 - Section 72 of the Act says that the provisions of **this Act will have an overriding effect on any other law during the specific period** that a disaster has been declared.
- **Other State-Specific Disasters:**
 - In 2015, Odisha declared **snakebite a state-specific disaster**.
 - In 2020, Kerala declared [Covid-19](#) as a state specific disaster.
 - Besides, **heat waves, sunburn and sunstroke** have been declared so in 2019, the phenomenon of **soil piping** in 2017, and [lightning](#) and [coastal erosion](#) in 2015.

What is Human-Animal Conflict?

- **About:**
 - Human-animal conflict refers to situations where human activities, such as agriculture, infrastructure development, or resource extraction, come into conflict with wild animals, leading to negative outcomes for both humans and animals.
- **Implications:**
 - **Economic Losses:** Human-animal conflict can result in **significant economic losses for people**, especially farmers and livestock herders. Wild animals can destroy crops, damage infrastructure, and kill livestock, leading to financial hardship.
 - **Threats to Human Safety:** Wild animals can pose **a threat to human safety**, especially in areas where people and wildlife coexist. Attacks by large predators such as lions, tigers, and bears can result in serious injury or death.
 - **Ecological Damage:** Human-animal conflict can have a negative impact on the environment. For example, when humans kill predators, it can lead to an **increase in prey populations**, which can then cause ecological imbalances.
 - **Conservation Challenges:** Human-animal conflict can also pose a challenge to conservation efforts, as it can lead to negative perceptions of wildlife and make it difficult to implement conservation measures.
 - **Psychological Impacts:** Human-animal conflict can also have psychological impacts on people, **especially those who have experienced attacks or property damage**. It can lead to fear, anxiety, and trauma.

What Strategies Can be Implemented to Mitigate Human-Animal Conflict?

- **Habitat Management:**
 - Protecting and **restoring natural habitats for wildlife** can reduce their need to encroach on human settlements in search of food and shelter.
 - This can **involve creating wildlife** corridors, establishing protected areas, and implementing sustainable land-use practices.
- **Crop Protection Measures:**
 - Implementing techniques such as **fencing, scare devices, and crop diversification** can help protect **crops from wildlife damage**, reducing economic losses for farmers.
- **Early Warning Systems:**
 - Developing and **deploying early warning systems**, such as alerting communities about the presence of wildlife nearby, can help prevent human-wildlife conflicts and mitigate threats to human safety.
- **Community Engagement and Education:**
 - Educating local communities about **coexisting with wildlife**, raising awareness about the **importance of conservation**, and providing training in conflict resolution techniques

can foster greater understanding and tolerance toward wild animals.

▪ **Conflict Resolution Mechanisms:**

- Setting up conflict resolution mechanisms, such as **wildlife conflict response teams or hotlines**, can facilitate timely interventions and minimise conflicts between humans and animals.

What are the Government Measures to Tackle Human-Animal Conflict?

- **The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** The act provides the legal framework for the activities, Prohibition of hunting, Protection and management of wildlife habitats, and establishment of protected areas etc.
- **The Biological Diversity Act, 2002:** India is a part of the **United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity**. It ensures that the Biological Diversity Act **complements rather than contradicts** existing laws concerning forests and wildlife.
- **National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016):** It focuses on strengthening and enhancing the protected area network, on the conservation of Endangered wildlife and their habitats, on controlling trade in wildlife products and on research, education, and training.
- **Project Tiger:** Project Tiger is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**, launched in 1973. It provides havens for tigers in the country's national parks.
- **Project Elephant:** It is a centrally sponsored scheme and was launched in February 1992 for the protection of elephants, their habitats and corridors.
- **National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA):** It lays down guidelines to be followed by different Ministries or Departments of Central Government for the purpose of integrating **measures for disaster prevention or mitigation of its effects** in their development plans and projects



HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT



When encounters between humans and wildlife lead to negative results, such as loss of property, livelihoods, and even life

Causes of HWC

- Agricultural Expansion
- Urbanization
- Infrastructure Development
- Climate Change
- Wildlife Populations Growth and Range Expansion

Impacts of HWC

- Grave injuries, Loss of life
- Damage to farms and crops
- ↑ violence against animals

WWF India during 2003-2004 developed the Sonitpur Model by which community members were connected with Assam Forest Dept and given training on how to drive elephants away from crop fields and human habitations safely.

In 2020, the SC upheld Madras HC's decision on the Nilgiris elephant corridor, affirming the right of passage of the animals and closure of resorts in the area.

Data on HWC

- Tigers killed 125 humans between 2019 and 2021
- Death of 329 tigers due to poaching, natural and unnatural causes.
- Elephants killed 1,579 humans in three years
- Death of 307 elephants due to poaching, electrocution, poisoning and train accidents

Advisory for HWC Management (Standing Committee of the National Board of Wildlife)

- Gram Panchayats empowered to deal with problematic wild animals (WPA 1972)
- Compensation against crop damage due to HWC (PM Fasal Bima Yojna)
- Local/State depts. to adopt early warning systems and create barriers
- Paying a part of ex-gratia as interim relief within 24 hours of the incident to the victim/family

State – Specific Initiatives

- **UP** - Man-animal conflict under **listed disasters** (in State Disaster Response Fund)
- **Uttarakhand** - **Bio-fencing** carried out by growing various species of plants in areas
- **Odisha** - Casting **seed balls** inside different forests to **enrich food stock for wild elephants**



UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. Consider the following statements in respect of Trade Related Analysis of Fauna and Flora in Commerce (TRAFFIC): (2017)

1. TRAFFIC is a bureau under United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
2. The mission of TRAFFIC is to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (b)

Exp:

- Trade Related Analysis of Fauna and Flora in Commerce (TRAFFIC), the wildlife trade monitoring network, is a joint program of World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and IUCN – the International Union for Conservation of Nature. It was founded in 1976. It is not a bureau under UNEP. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- TRAFFIC works to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- TRAFFIC focuses on leveraging resources, expertise and awareness of the latest globally urgent species trade issues such as tiger parts, elephant ivory and rhino horn. Large scale commercial trade in commodities like timber and fisheries products is also addressed and linked to work on developing rapid results and policy improvements. Therefore, option (b) is the correct answer.

Mains:

Q.1 Discuss the recent measures initiated in disaster management by the Government of India departing from the earlier reactive approach. **(2020)**

Q.2 With reference to National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) guidelines, discuss the measures to be adopted to mitigate the impact of the recent incidents of cloudbursts in many places of Uttarakhand. **(2016)**

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