

## **Udanti Sitanadi Tiger Reserve (USTR)**

#### Why in News?

Chhattisgarh's **Udanti Sitanadi Tiger Reserve (USTR)** has recorded a remarkable resurgence in wildlife activity, highlighting the **reserve's transformation into a thriving ecological sanctuary**.

### **Key Points**

- Udanti Sitanadi Tiger Reserve (USTR):
  - About:
    - It is located in the Gariaband and Dhamtari districts of Chhattisgarh. It was formed by combining the Udanti and Sitanadi Wildlife Sanctuaries.
    - It is the source of three major rivers—Mahanadi, Sitanadi, and Udanti—which sustain both Chhattisgarh and Odisha.
    - The reserve's dense forests act like natural sponges, storing rainwater and supporting biodiversity as well as agriculture.
  - Ecological Diversity:
    - It contains various types of forest crops mixed with Sal forest.
    - The **Asiatic Wild Buffalo** is a key endangered species found in the reserve.
    - Apart from the tiger, other endangered and rare species include the Indian Wolf, <u>Leopard</u>, <u>Sloth Bear</u>, and Mouse Deer.
  - Strategic Wildlife Corridor:
    - USTR functions as a key <u>tiger corridor</u>, connecting Maharashtra's <u>Gadchiroli</u> forests and <u>Chhattisgarh's Indravati Tiger Reserve</u> with Odisha's Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary.
    - This linkage supports genetic diversity and long-range animal movement across state borders.
- Protection Measures by the State Government:
  - Community-Centric Conservation Model:
    - Local communities are playing a crucial role through participatory initiatives such as Charwaha Sammelans and the recognition of Community Forest Resource (CFR) rights.
    - These measures have fostered trust, leading to active local involvement in curbing poaching, illegal logging, and forest fires.
  - Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation:
    - The 'Elephant Alert App' has become an effective tool for early warning and tracking elephant movement, thereby reducing human-wildlife conflict.

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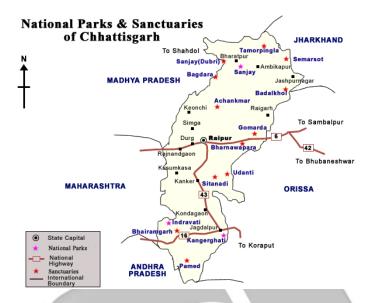
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**Note:** In 2022, **Chhattisgarh became the second** state after Odisha to have recognised CFR rights inside a national park i.e., **Kanger Ghati National Park**.





#### **Indravati National Park**

- About:
  - It is situated in the Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh.
  - It was established in 1981 and declared a tiger reserve in 1983 under India's Project
    Tiger.
  - It is **named after the <u>Indravati River</u>**, which flows from east to west and forms the reserve's northern boundary with Maharashtra.
- Vegetation:
  - Comprises three major forest types:
    - Moist Mixed Deciduous Forest with Teak
    - Moist Mixed Deciduous Forest without Teak
    - Southern Dry Mixed Deciduous Forest.
- Flora:
  - Common tree species include teak, achar, karra, kullu, shisham, semal, haldu, arjun, bel, and jamun.
- Fauna:
  - Hosts one of the last populations of rare wild buffalo.
  - Other species include <u>Nilgai</u>, <u>Black Buck</u>, Sambar, Gaur, <u>Tiger</u>, <u>Leopard</u>, Chital,
    Sloth Bears, etc.

#### **Community Forest Resource (CFR)**

#### About CFR:

- CFR area is **common forest land** that has been traditionally protected and conserved for sustainable use by a particular community.
- The community uses it to access resources available within the traditional and customary boundary of the village and for seasonal use of landscape in the case of pastoralist communities.
- **Each CFR area has a customary boundary** with identifiable landmarks recognised by the community and its neighbouring villages.

#### Community Forest Resource (CFR) Rights:

CFR rights under Section 3(1)(i) of the <u>Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006</u> (commonly referred to as the Forest Rights Act) provides for recognition of the right to "protect, regenerate or conserve or manage" the community forest resource.

