Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)

- **Normal Species:** If the population level of species is within normal range for their survival, it is called normal species, e.g. cattle, pine, sal, rodents, etc.
- **Endangered Species:** Species which are in danger of extinction are called endangered species, e.g. black buck, crocodile, Indian wild ass, Indian rhino, lion tailed macaque, sangai (brow anter deer in Manipur), etc.
- **Vulnerable Species:** If the population of a species has declined to such a level that it is likely to become endangered; it is called vulnerable species, e.g. blue sheep, Asiatic elephant, Gangetic dolphin, etc.
- **Rare Species:** If the population of a species so small that it can become vulnerable or endangered, it is called rare species, e.g. Himalayan brown bear, wild Asiatic buffalo, desert, fox, hornbill, etc.
- **Endemic Species:** A species which found only in a particular geographical area is called an endemic species, e.g. Andaman teal, Nicobar pigeon, Andaman wild pig, mithun in Arunachal Pradesh, etc.
- **Extinct Species:** A species which no longer exists is called an extinct species. A species may be extinct from a local area, region, country, continent or the entire earth. Examples: Asiatic cheetah, pink head duck, etc.

Vanishing Forests	
Forest cover	637,293 sq km (19.39% of total geographic area)
Dense forest	11.48%
Opne forest	7.76%
Mangrove	0.15%

Causes of Depletion of Flora and Fauna

- Agricultural
- Enrichment Plantation
- Development Projects
- Mining
- Unequal Access to Resources

Social Effect of Resource Depletion

- **Serious health problems for women** : in some places women have to walk around 10 kms to fetch water for family.
- **Economic misery for the poor** : as a result of flood and drought.
- **Loss of cultural diversity :** marginalized people looking for sources of living.

The Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972

In the 1960s and 1970s, the conservationists demanded some rules to protect the wildlife. Conceding to their demand, the government enacted the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972. Under this act, an all India list of protected species was published. Hunting was banned to protect the remaining population of some endangered species. Trade in wildlife was restricted and the habitats of wildlife were given legal protection many national parks and wildlife sanctuaries were established by various state governments and the central government. Several projects were announced for protecting specific animals, e.g. Project Tiger.

Benefits of Conservation

- Helps in preserving ecological diversity and our life support systems; water, air and soil.
- It preserves the genetic diversity of plants and animals.

Government's Categorization of Forests

- Reserved Forests
- Protected Forests
- Unclassed Forests

New Trends In Conservation Policy

Increase Biodiversity: The new trend in conservation policy is the focus on biodiversity rather than on a few of its components. So, instead of just focusing on bigger mammals; like tiger and lion, even insects are finding a place in conservation planning. New notifications were issued under Wildlife Act of 1980 and 1986. As per them; several hundred butterflies, moths, beetles and one dragonfly have been added to the list of protected species. Six species of plants were added to the list in 1991.

Community and Conservation

- Communities are coordinating with government officials in conservation efforts.
- Sariska Tiger Reserve (Rajasthan) : villagers have fought against mining by citing the Wildlife Protection Act.
- People are protecting habitats and are explicitly rejecting government involvement.
- Nature worship is an age old custom in the Hindu religion and in many tribes. Such spots in forests are untouched by human intervention.
- The Chipko Movement is a good example of community participation in conservation programme.
- The Joint Forest Management (JFM) programme is another example of involvement of local communities in forest management.

PROJECT TIGER

- Project Tiger was launched in 1973; to protect tigers from becoming extinct.
- At the turn of the 20th century, the tiger population was around 55,000 which dwindled to 1,827 by 1973.
- Threats for Tiger Population: Poaching for trade, shrinking habitat, depletion of base prey species, growing human population, etc.

Success Rate	
Year	Tiger Population
1985	4,002
1989	4,334
1993	3,600

Current Status: 27 tiger reserves covering 37,761 sq km.

Important Tiger Reserves

- Corbett National Park (Uttarakhand)
- Sunderband National Park (West Bengal)
- Bandhavgarh National Park (Madhya Pradesh)
- Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary (Rajasthan)
- Manas Tiger Reserve (Assam)
- Periyar Tiger Reserve (Kerala)