

Chapter: 2

Forest and Wildlife Resources

EXERCISES

Q.1 A Which of the following conservation strategies do not directly involve community participation?

- A. Joint forest management
- B. Beej Bachao Andolan
- C. Chipko Movement
- D. Demarcation of wildlife sanctuaries.

Ans.: D. Demarcation of wildlife sanctuaries.

Because this initiative can be carried out by government. They do not involve community participation.

Q.2 Match the following

Reserved forests	Other forests and wastelands belonging to both government and private individuals and communities.
Protected forests	Forests are regarded as most valuable as far as the conservation of forest and wildlife resources.
Unclassed forests	Forests are protected from any further depletion.

Ans.:

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Q.3A Answer the following questions in about 30 words.

What is biodiversity? Why is biodiversity important for human lives?

Ans.: Biodiversity means the inherited variation within species, the variety of species and the variety of habitat within a landscape. In other words, it refers to the variety of living organisms.

It is important because every organism has a defined role in the chain. There are organisms which are consumers, producers, and decomposers. They are interdependent for their existence.

For example, if there are no decomposers, then there will be a lot of waste which does not decompose. This, in turn, will make the topsoil lose its fertility. These decomposers also give a lot of nutrients to the soil. In the absence of these organisms, there will be a loss of fertility. Thus, every single member of the biodiversity is important.

Q.3B Answer the following questions in about 30 words.

How have human activities affected the depletion of flora and fauna? Explain.

Ans.: Human activities have greatly affected the depletion of flora and fauna in such a way as:

(a) Expansion of the commercial and scientific forestry and mining activities: Expansion of the industry causes a lot of trees to be cut and the soil is dug out during mining. This has caused depletion of resources.

(b) Agricultural Expansion: Today, even after independence, agricultural expansion is one of the major causes of depletion of forest resources. Between 1951 and 1980, over 26,200 sq. km. forest area was converted into agricultural land, especially, in the north-eastern and central region

of the country. This was used for shifting cultivation (Jhum) also known as 'slash and burn' agriculture.

(c) Enrichment Plantation: Enriched plantation is plantation of only a few kinds of species. This affects the nutrient content as it has been commercialized.

(d) Development Projects: Large-scale development projects cause a lot of damage as they destroy forests and land. There are projects which are in continuation such as the Narmada sagar project in Madhya Pradesh which has caused a loss of about 40,000 hectare of forest land.

(e) Mining: Mining is yet another example. Mining leads to destruction of forests and the heap of soil which is dumped, destroys the top soil. Even after the open cast mines are filled up, the nutrient content of the soil is damaged and this damage is not repairable.

(f) Unequal Access to Resources: The 5% of the wealthiest people in the Indian society causes more ecological damage, because of the amount they consume, than the poorest 25%. They also share minimum responsibility for environmental well-being.

(g) Habitat destruction: Factors like habitat destruction, hunting, poaching, over-exploitation, environmental pollution, poisoning and forest fires have led to the decline in the country's biodiversity.

Q.4A Answer the following questions in about 120 words.

Describe how communities have conserved and protected forests and wildlife in India.

Ans.: The forests in India are home to a number of communities. These communities share a complex relationship with the flora and fauna around them. In certain areas, local communities are struggling to conserve these habitats along with govt. officials.

(a) In Sariska Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan, the villagers have been fighting against mining citing Wildlife Conservation Act.

(b) In many areas, villagers have taken the step to protect habitats and openly have rejected governments' involvement. They have done this all by themselves. The residents of Alwar district in Rajasthan have declared 1,200 hectares of forest land as "Bhairo dev Dakav Sonchuri". They have their own set of rules and regulations which do not allow hunting, and protect the wildlife against any outside dangers.

(c) Nature worship is an old tradition in India. It states that all the creations of nature have to be protected. These beliefs have led to the conservation of several forests in their pristine form called Sacred Groves (forests of Gods and Goddesses). These patches have been left untouched by the local people and any sort of interference is banned.

(d) Trees are protected in the name of worship. The Mundas and Santhals of the Chota Nagpur region worship Mahua and Kadamba trees. The tribal of Odisha and Bihar worship the Tamarind and Mango trees during weddings. To many people, Banyan and Peepal are considered sacred.

(e) There are a lot of Monkeys and Langurs found around temples. They are fed daily and treated as a part of temple devotees. In and around the Bishnoi villages in Rajasthan, herds of Blackbuck (Chinkara), Nilgai and Peacocks can be seen as an important part of the community and they are not harmed.

(f) Chipko Movement in the Himalayas and the Joint Forest Management (JFM) programme offer good examples to create the involvement of local communities in the management and restoration of degraded forests.

Q.4B Answer the following questions in about 120 words.

Write a note on good practices towards conserving forest and wildlife.

Ans.: (a) Chipko Movement in the Himalayas has successfully kept a check on deforestation in several areas. It has also sent a message to the community that afforestation is step to be taken to preserve indigenous species.

(b) There have been attempts made to revive the traditional conservation methods. Parallely, new methods of ecological farming have also been introduced. The groups like "Beej Bachao Andolan" in Tehri and Navdanya have shown that appropriate production of diversified crops can be done without the use of synthetic chemicals and are also economically viable.

(c) The Joint Forest Management (JFM) provides the platform to involve local communities to help restore the degraded forests. The fundamentals of JFM depend on creating village institutions which undertake the protection activities on degraded forest land, managed by the forest deptt. In return, these local communities are provided the right to intermediary benefits as non-timber produces and share in the timber by successful protection.