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## Biodiversity & Conservation:

### Global and National Initiatives

**Vulture Conservation:** India's post-2025 strategy for vulture conservation is being developed with a focus on linking conservation to public health. By acting as nature's waste managers, vultures help prevent the spread of diseases, and their conservation is now being recognized as a cost-effective tool for pandemic prevention. This initiative is especially critical in India, where vulture populations have plummeted by over 95% since the 1990s, mainly due to the veterinary drug diclofenac.

**Koala Vaccine:** In a major conservation breakthrough, Australia has approved the world's first vaccine to protect koalas from chlamydia. The single-dose vaccine, developed after over a decade of research, is expected to significantly reduce mortality and infertility caused by the disease, which affects a large portion of the wild koala population. This marks a critical step in preserving the endangered species.

**New Microbial Conservation Commission:** The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has established a species survival commission for microbiology and microbes. This new body aims to address the conservation gap for microscopic organisms like bacteria and fungi, which are vital for ecosystem health but are often overlooked. The commission will develop a microbe-specific Red List to classify species at risk of extinction.

**Project Cheetah Award:** India's Project Cheetah has received the 'Innovative Initiative Award' at the 3rd Eco Warrior Awards. The project was recognized for successfully reintroducing an extinct species and for its strong community involvement. A special newsletter was also released to document the project's progress, including successful cheetah births in the wild.

**Protecting Forests:** A new study published in Science magazine revealed that more than half of the world's forests became more fragmented between 2000 and 2020. However, the study also found that protected areas in tropical forests experienced 82% less fragmentation than similar unprotected areas, highlighting the effectiveness of conservation efforts.

**High Seas Treaty:** Countries are being urged to finalize the rules for the High Seas Treaty, a landmark UN agreement aimed at conserving marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. The first Conference of the Parties (COP) for this treaty is expected to be scheduled as early as August 2026.

**Funding for Conservation:** Several organizations have launched grant programs to support biodiversity research and conservation. The National Geographic Society is inviting proposals to protect coastal ecosystems, while Biodiversa+ has launched a joint call for transnational research proposals to fund nature restoration projects with a total budget of over €40 million.





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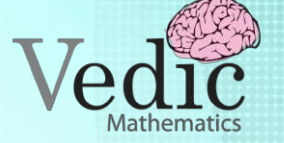
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## MCQS

**1: Why is India's vulture conservation strategy being linked to public health?**

- A) Because vultures are a key component of India's medical research.
- B) Because vultures help prevent the spread of diseases by acting as nature's waste managers.
- C) Because vulture populations have increased significantly in recent years.
- D) Because vultures are being used in a new medical therapy.

**Answer:** B) Because vultures help prevent the spread of diseases by acting as nature's waste managers.

The news report states that India's vulture conservation strategy links conservation to public health because vultures "act as nature's waste managers" and "help prevent the spread of diseases."

**2: What is the key conservation breakthrough approved in Australia?**

- A) A new conservation policy to protect koala habitats.
- B) The world's first vaccine to protect koalas from chlamydia.
- C) A new law to prevent the use of diclofenac.
- D) A breeding program to increase the koala population.

**Answer:** B) The world's first vaccine to protect koalas from chlamydia.

The report highlights a major conservation breakthrough in Australia with the approval of "the world's first vaccine to protect koalas from chlamydia."

**3: What new commission has the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) established?**

- A) A commission for high seas conservation.

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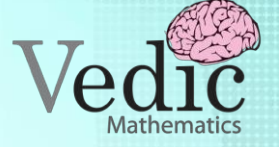
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- B) A species survival commission for microbiology and microbes.  
C) A commission for forest fragmentation.  
D) A commission for the protection of coastal ecosystems.

**Answer:** B) A species survival commission for microbiology and microbes.

According to the provided text, the IUCN has established a "species survival commission for microbiology and microbes" to address the conservation of these often-overlooked organisms.

**4: Which Indian conservation project received the 'Innovative Initiative Award' at the 3rd Eco Warrior Awards?**

- A) The Bengal Tiger Conservation Project  
B) The Great Indian Bustard Project  
C) The Project Elephant Initiative  
D) India's Project Cheetah

**Answer:** D) India's Project Cheetah

The news report states that "India's Project Cheetah has received the 'Innovative Initiative Award' at the 3rd Eco Warrior Awards," recognizing its successful reintroduction of a once-extinct species.

**5: What was a key finding of the study on global forest fragmentation published in Science magazine?**

- A) Forest fragmentation has decreased significantly in recent years.  
B) Protected areas in tropical forests experienced 82% less fragmentation than unprotected areas.  
C) Protected areas are not effective in preventing forest fragmentation.  
D) The majority of forest fragmentation occurred in temperate forests.

**Answer:** B) Protected areas in tropical forests experienced 82% less fragmentation than unprotected areas.

The report notes a key finding from the Science magazine study, which is that "protected areas in tropical forests experienced 82% less fragmentation than similar unprotected areas."

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