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Biodiversity & Conservation:

Key Developments in India IN

Bengaluru's New Biodiversity Heritage Site: The Karnataka Biodiversity Board has declared an 8.61-acre railway colony area in Bengaluru a Biodiversity Heritage Site. This was a significant win for local environmental activists who had protested against a plan to fell its 371 trees for a commercial project. The site, which holds historical significance as a meeting place for Mahatma Gandhi in 1920, is now legally protected under the Biological Diversity Act of 2002. This decision highlights the importance of preserving urban green spaces for both their ecological value and cultural heritage.

New Invasive Species Threat: Researchers in Tamil Nadu have issued a warning about the potential for exotic pet species, like the Green Iguana, to become invasive and threaten local biodiversity. The study was prompted by a recent incident involving an escaped Siamang gibbon in Chennai and sheds light on the booming exotic pet trade in India.

Supreme Court to Review Vantara Case: On this day, the Supreme Court of India is set to review a case and hear a report from a Special Investigation Team (SIT) regarding a private wildlife rehabilitation facility called Vantara. The SIT will investigate the facility's acquisition of animals, particularly elephants, and its compliance with the Wildlife Protection Act and other conservation laws.

Global & International News

New Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) in Australia: The Australian Government is

expanding its Indigenous Protected Area program with a new round of funding. This initiative empowers First Nations people to manage their land and sea for biodiversity conservation. The program supports the national goal of protecting 30% of Australia's land by 2030.

Global Biodiversity Framework: A report from the EU notes that while progress has been made under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which aims to halt biodiversity loss by 2030, human actions are still destroying ecosystems at an unprecedented rate. The report emphasizes the need for decisive action to meet the ambitious global targets.

Conservation in Africa: A commentary published on Mongabay argues that traditional "fortress conservation" models in Africa, which militarize protected areas and alienate local communities, are failing. The author advocates for a new approach that invests in reconciliation and is anchored in the diversity and knowledge of African peoples.

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MCQS

1: The new Biodiversity Heritage Site in Bengaluru is legally protected under which act?

- a) The Wildlife Protection Act of 1972
- b) The Forest (Conservation) Act of 1980
- c) The Biological Diversity Act of 2002
- d) The Environment (Protection) Act of 1986

Answer: c) The Biological Diversity Act of 2002
The news report states that the site is now legally protected under the Biological Diversity Act of 2002. This act was enacted to provide for the conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

2: According to the news from Tamil Nadu, which exotic pet species has been identified as a potential invasive threat to local biodiversity?

- a) The Green Iguana
- b) The Red-eared slider turtle
- c) The Ball Python
- d) The Macaw parrot

Answer: a) The Green Iguana

The report from Tamil Nadu specifically warns about the potential for exotic pet species, "like the Green Iguana, to become invasive and threaten local biodiversity."

3: What is the primary focus of the Supreme Court's Special Investigation Team (SIT) review of the Vantara facility?

- a) Its financial management and tax compliance.
- b) Its collaboration with international conservation groups.
- c) Its acquisition of animals, particularly elephants, and compliance with wildlife laws.
- d) Its public relations and marketing strategies.

Answer: c) Its acquisition of animals, particularly elephants, and compliance with wildlife laws.

The news report states that the SIT "will investigate the facility's acquisition of animals, particularly elephants, and its compliance with the Wildlife Protection Act and other conservation laws."

4: What is the "fortress conservation" model in Africa being criticized for?

- a) Being too expensive and difficult to implement.
- b) Alienating local communities by militarizing protected areas.
- c) Not being effective at protecting against poachers.
- d) Focusing too much on a few charismatic species.





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Answer: b) Alienating local communities by militarizing protected areas.

The commentary on Mongabay criticizes "fortress conservation" models for "alienating local communities" and militarizing protected areas, advocating instead for an approach that involves local African peoples.

5: What is one of the main goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework?

- a) To increase international travel for conservation purposes.
- b) To halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.
- c) To establish a single global authority for conservation.
- d) To ban all wildlife trade by 2025.

Answer: b) To halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.

The report from the EU notes that the framework's aim is to "halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030."



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