

Addition of 3 Endangered Indian Species to the Global Conservation List

August 3, 2020

- India's proposal to **include Great Indian Bustard, Asian Elephant, and Bengal Florican in Appendix I of the UN Convention on migratory species** was unanimously accepted at the ongoing thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) in Gandhinagar.

Asian Elephant

- The Government of India has declared an Indian elephant as National Heritage Animal. The Indian elephant is also provided the highest degree of legal protection by listing it in Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Significance of its inclusion in Schedule I

- Placing Indian elephant in Schedule I of the CMS Convention, will fulfill the natural urge of migration of Indian elephant across India's borders and back safely and thereby promote conservation of this endangered species for our future generations.
- Intermixing of smaller subpopulations in Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Myanmar and widen the gene base of these populations.
- It will also help to reduce human-elephant conflicts in many parts of its migratory routes.

Great Indian Bustard

- The Great Indian Bustard, an iconic, **critically endangered and conservation dependent species**, exhibits

transboundary movements, and its migration exposes it to threats such as hunting in the boundary area of **Pakistan-India and power-line collisions in India.**

Its habitation

- The Great Indian Bustard is a Critically Endangered species with a small population of about 100–150 individuals that are largely restricted to the Thar desert in Rajasthan, India.

Significance of its inclusion in Schedule/Appendix I

- Inclusion of the species in Appendix I of CMS will **aid in transboundary conservation efforts facilitated by International conservation bodies** and existing international laws and agreement.
- **Bengal Florican**
- The Bengal Florican an iconic, critically endangered species of topmost conservation priority, exhibits transboundary movements, and its migration exposes it to threats such as land-use changes, collision with power transmission lines at the boundary area of India-Nepal and probable power-line collisions.

Significance of its inclusion in Schedule/Appendix I

- Inclusion of the species in Appendix I of CMS **will aid in transboundary conservation efforts facilitated by International conservation bodies** and existing international laws and agreements.

Reasons for the decline in its population

- Populations have declined as a result of habitat loss, hunting and the species no longer breeds outside Protected Areas in the Indian subcontinent, except in a few areas of Assam.

