

# Elephant Corridors

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In news

Recently, National Green Tribunal directed the Odisha government to submit an action plan on strengthening 14 elephant corridors

What are the elephant corridors?

Elephant corridors are linear, narrow, natural habitat linkages that allow elephants to move between secure habitats without being disturbed by humans. Elephant corridors are secured through voluntary relocation of settlements and/or acquisition of land

Elephant corridors in India

- After much research, the Wildlife Trust of India has published a comprehensive list of 101 corridors throughout India that are critical to the long term survival of the Asian Elephant.
- Corridors comprise the unprotected lands between fragments of protected areas
- 101 elephant corridors in the country have been documented by the Wildlife Trust of India with assistance from the State Forest Department of elephant range states.
- The United Kingdom based organization, Elephant Family, has partly funded ground truthing of these corridors

Why are Elephant corridors important?

- A large chunk of the country's elephant habitat is unprotected, susceptible to encroachment or already in use by humans.
- And while elephant populations are largely concentrated in protected forests these animals require free movement

between these areas to maintain genetic flow and offset seasonal variations in the availability of forage and water.

- As forest lands continue to be lost, these relatively narrow, linear patches of vegetation form vital natural habitat linkages between larger forest patches.
- **corridors allow elephants to move between secure habitats freely, without being disturbed by humans.**
- Elephants are a keystone species. **Their nomadic behaviour** – the daily and seasonal migrations they make through their home ranges – is immensely important to the environment
- In many cases, **elephant corridors are also critical for other wildlife** including India's endangered National Animal, the Royal Bengal tiger

### Project Elephant

- It was launched in 1992 by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate change to provide financial and technical support to wildlife management efforts by states for their free-ranging populations of wild Asian Elephants.
- The project aims to ensure the long-term survival to the populations of elephants in their natural habitats by protecting the elephants, their habitats and migration corridors.
- Other goals of Project Elephant are supporting the research of the ecology and management of elephants, creating awareness of conservation among local people, providing improved veterinary care for captive elephants