

Lion @ 47: Vision for Amrutkal

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In news—The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has prepared the document "Lion @ 47: Vision for Amrutkal" to secure and restore lions' habitats.

About the document-

- Project Lion envisages landscape ecology based conservation of the Asiatic Lion in Gujarat by integrating conservation and eco-development.
- The Project is being implemented in the Gir landscape in Gujarat which is the last home of the Asiatic lion.

Objectives-

Following are the objectives of the document:

- To secure & restore lions' habitats for managing its growing population.
- Scale up livelihood generation and participation of local communities.
- Become a global hub of knowledge on big cat disease diagnostics and treatment.
- Create inclusive biodiversity conservation through project lion initiative.

About Asiatic Lion –

- The **Asiatic lion** is a population of *Panthera leo leo* that today survives in the wild only in India.
- Since the turn of the 20th century, its range has been restricted to Gir National Park and the surrounding areas in the Indian state of Gujarat.
- Historically, it inhabited much of southwest Asia to northern India.

- The lion is a large cat of the genus *Panthera* native to Africa and India.
- The lions were once found throughout Africa, Asia and Europe but their numbers have dwindled over the years in these continents.
- These majestic cats that symbolise courage, ferocity, and power are threatened by extensive habitat loss.
- The lion is an apex and keystone predator. It inhabits grasslands, savannas and shrublands.
- The lion is one of five pantherine cats native to India, along with the Bengal tiger (*P. tigris tigris*), Indian leopard (*P. pardus fusca*), snow leopard (*P. uncia*) and clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*).
- It is sexually dimorphic; adult male lions are larger than females and have a prominent mane.
- It is a social species, forming groups called prides. A lion's pride consists of a few adult males, related females, and cubs.
- In the 19th and 20th centuries, several lion type specimens were described and proposed as subspecies, with about a dozen recognised as valid taxa until 2017.
- Between 2008 and 2016, IUCN Red List assessors used only two subspecific names: *P. l. leo* for African lion populations, and *P. l. persica* for the Asiatic lion population.
- IUCN list: Asiatic lion(*Panthera leo leo*)- Endangered & *Panthera leo*- Vulnerable.