

Lion-tailed Macaque

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In News: Recently, the Lion-tailed Macaque has been categorised as an Endangered (EN) species under the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

About Lion-tailed Macaque (*Macaca silenus*)

- Endemic to rainforests of the Western Ghats, the Lion-tailed Macaque (*Macaca Silenus*) is an Endangered species, according to the IUCN assessment.
- It is a primate endemic to small and severely fragmented rainforests of the Western Ghats in Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- Lion-tailed macaques are listed on Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).
- It is a Schedule 1 species under WPA, 1972 and thereby, accorded the highest protection under the Indian law.
- Lion-tailed macaques play an important role in the ecosystem they live, as they disperse seeds of fruits and plants they consume.
- The Lion-tailed Macaque is considered to be omnivorous, eating mainly fruit, insects, eggs as well as small animals on occasion.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

- It is also known as Washington Convention
- It is legally binding on the Parties, but it does not take the place of national laws.
- **Aim:** To ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species in the wild, and it accords varying degrees of protection to more than 35,000 species of animals and plants.

- It classifies plants and animals according to three categories
 - **Appendix I:** It lists species that are in danger of extinction. It prohibits commercial trade of these plants and animals except in extraordinary situations for scientific or educational reasons.
 - **Appendix II:** They are those that are not threatened with extinction but that might suffer a serious decline in number if trade is not restricted. Their trade is regulated by permit.
 - **Appendix III:** They are protected in at least one country that is a CITES member state and that has petitioned others for help in controlling international trade in that species.

NOTE: In addition CITES also restricts trade in items made from such plants and animals, such as food, clothing, medicine, and souvenirs