

World Wildlife Day

March 4, 2021

Why is World Wildlife Day celebrated?

- The day is observed every year on March 3, to celebrate the world's flora and fauna, and to raise awareness about animals going extinct.
- For instance this year, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar has tweeted that the government is "working on reintroduction of Cheetah, which went extinct in 1952", and that "this Big Cat will be a reality soon".

About World Wildlife Day

- In 2013, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 3 March – the day of signature of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1973 – as UN World Wildlife Day to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild animals and plants.
- According to the UN, "between 200 and 350 million people live within or adjacent to forested areas around the world, relying on the various ecosystem services provided by forest and forest species for their livelihoods and to cover their most basic needs, including food, shelter, energy and medicines"

This year theme 'Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet',

CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)

- Is an international agreement between governments.
- Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten

their survival.

Convention text

- CITES was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of IUCN (The World Conservation Union).
- The text of the Convention was finally agreed at a meeting of representatives of 80 countries in Washington, D.C., United States of America, on 3 March 1973, and on 1 July 1975 CITES entered in force.
- The original of the Convention was deposited with the Depositary Government in the English, French and Spanish languages, each version being equally authentic. The Convention is also available in Chinese and Russian.

Parties of the Convention

- CITES is an international agreement to which States and regional economic integration organizations adhere voluntarily. States that have agreed to be bound by the Convention ('joined' CITES) are known as Parties.
- Although CITES is legally binding on the Parties – in other words they have to implement the Convention – it does not take the place of national laws.
- Rather it provides a framework to be respected by each Party, which has to adopt its own domestic legislation to ensure that CITES is implemented at the national level.
- For many years CITES has been among the conservation agreements with the largest membership, with now 183 Parties.