

Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats

India is home to a rich variety of flora and fauna, which makes it one of the 17 “Megadiverse countries” in the world, as classified by Conservation International (1998). To conserve this biodiversity, it is important to preserve the natural habitats in which most of these species thrive. These habitats are today threatened by a combination of natural and man-made factors.

The Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme launched during the 11th Plan period to provide technical and financial assistance to States/UTs for protection of wildlife habitat. The activities covered under the scheme include the staff development and capacity building, wildlife research and evaluation, anti-poaching activities, wildlife veterinary care, addressing man-animal conflicts and promoting eco-tourism. Financial assistance is also provided to States for relocation of communities from within protected areas to other areas.

The Scheme includes 3 components for which assistance is provided to States. These are summarized below:

Component	Funding structure
<p>Support to Protected Areas (National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves & Community Reserves)</p> <p>All Protected Areas (PAs) in different states are eligible for assistance, except those areas which receive assistance under Project Tiger</p>	<p>100% Central Assistance for all non-recurring items, and 50% assistance for recurring items</p>
<p>Protection of Wildlife outside Protected Areas</p> <p>Many wildlife habitats fall outside the network of protected areas. Under this component, funds are granted against Biodiversity Plans prepared by the Chief Wildlife Wardens of the respective States. Priority is given to regions contiguous to the Protected Areas</p>	<p>100% Central Assistance for all non-recurring items, and 50% assistance for recurring items</p>
<p>Recovery Program for critically endangered habitats and species</p> <p>16 species have been identified for recovery under this component. These are <i>snow leopard, bustard, dolphin, hangul, Nilgiri Tahr, marine turtles, dugongs, edible nest swiftlet, Asian wild buffalo, Nicobar Megapode, vultures, Malabar Civet, Indian rhino, Asiatic lion, Swamp deer, Jerdon’s Courser and Brown-antlered deer</i>.</p> <p>A scientific Recovery Plan has to be prepared by the Chief Wildlife Warden in each state</p>	<p>100% Central Assistance for non-recurring and recurring items. During the 11th Plan, financial assistance was provided for 9 out of the 16 identified species.</p>

During the 11th Plan period, a total of Rs **360 cr** were released by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) under this scheme. During the 12th Plan, a total outlay of **Rs 800 cr** has been approved for this scheme. Further, under the new framework of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) in the 12th Plan, Project Elephant has also been clubbed with the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH) scheme. Under Project Elephant, Central assistance is provided to 13 states for conservation of elephants in India.

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