

6. India, Nepal, Bhutan to Count Tigers in High Altitudes

Prelims: Environment- Biodiversity

Mains: GS-III- Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment

Context:

- ▶▶ With recent studies this year having reported the presence of tigers in high altitude regions in India, experts from India, Nepal and Bhutan under the aegis of their governments are about to take up a detailed assessment on how entrenched tigers are, in these regions.

Key Stats of The Early Study:

- ▶▶ The report by the experts has established that out of 52,671 sq.km of tiger habitat in high altitudes, about 75 percent lies in India.
- ▶▶ As part of the “high altitude tiger master plan” gathering background information on land attributes, ascertaining status of protection and engaging local communities in tiger conservation is also to be ascertained. Tigers in high altitude has been reported from the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. The tiger survey earlier this year also has estimated that about 2967 tigers exists in India.
- ▶▶ The report does not contain numbers of other predators like leopards. But better tiger numbers are generally seen as indicating good prey bases and habitat.

Tiger Bearing Habitats (Tiger Landscapes) in India:

- ▶▶ The tiger bearing habitats were divided into five landscape regions—
 1. Shivalik-Gangetic plains
 2. Central India and the Eastern Ghats
 3. Western Ghats
 4. North Eastern Hills and Brahmaputra Flood Plains and
 5. The Sundarbans.

About Global Tiger Forum:

- ▶▶ The GTF was formed in 1993 on recommendations from an international symposium on Tiger Conservation at New Delhi, India. The Global Tiger Forum (GTF) is the only **inter-governmental international body** established with members from willing countries to embark on a global campaign to protect the Tiger.
- ▶▶ The first meeting of the Tiger Range countries to setup the forum was held in 1994, in which India was elected to the Chair and was asked to form an interim secretariat.

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- ▶▶ In 1997, the GTF became an independent organization.
 - ▶▶ GTF was set up to highlight the rationale for tiger preservation and provide leadership and common approach throughout the world in order to safeguard the survival of the tiger, its prey, and its habitat.

Tiger Range Countries:

- ▶▶ There are 13 Tiger Range Countries (TRCs) viz., Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand and Vietnam.

