

**UPSC Syllabus Topic : GS paper 3- ecology and environment- Conservation.**

**Conservation efforts at India's Corbett Tiger Reserve – Revival of the tiger: A joint effort, a cultural renaissance**

The Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) has seen a remarkable increase in tiger density due to several proactive conservation measures:

1. **Digital and Intensive Patrolling:** Embracing technology like project E-eye and increasing ground patrols have curbed poaching and monitored wildlife movement effectively.
2. **Habitat Management:** Careful maintenance of grasslands and water sources, including nurturing prey species, ensures a thriving environment for tigers.
3. **Strategic Corridors:** Establishing wildlife corridors facilitates tiger movement, reducing inbreeding and maintaining healthy tiger populations.
4. **Community Initiatives:** Programs like "Living with Tigers" and the "Corbee Honey" project engage locals in mitigating human-wildlife conflicts, fostering conservation efforts.
5. **Cultural Significance:** Tigers' symbolic importance in Indian culture has rallied public and political support for conservation, aiding conservation initiatives.

**Despite these successes, managing CTR faces several challenges:**

1. **Human-Wildlife Conflict:** As tiger numbers grow, managing conflicts and securing adequate territory for each tiger becomes increasingly complex.
2. **Risks to Protection Work:** Field staff face dangers from wildlife, requiring sufficient numbers and safety measures for effective patrolling.
3. **Preserving Diverse Ecosystems:** Maintaining various grasslands and water sources is essential for a robust prey base, posing a management challenge.
4. **Habitat Fragmentation:** Infrastructure development like roads disrupts animal movement, complicating gene pool exchange among tigers and other species.
5. **Balancing Conservation and Ecotourism:** Ensuring tiger conservation while supporting local communities and managing ecotourism requires continuous innovation and effort.

**To address these challenges:**

1. **Strengthen Staffing and Safety Measures:** Increasing field staff numbers and ensuring their safety is crucial for effective patrolling and incident management.
2. **Conservation of Corridors:** Continuously developing and preserving wildlife corridors aids gene flow and reduces conflicts between tigers, elephants, and humans.
3. **Community Involvement:** Encouraging grassroots participation and "willing cooperation" from villagers is vital, as emphasized by conservationist Salim Ali, to foster conservation efforts and mitigate conflicts.

By focusing on these measures, CTR can sustainably manage tiger populations while addressing human-wildlife conflicts and ensuring the safety of both wildlife and local communities.