

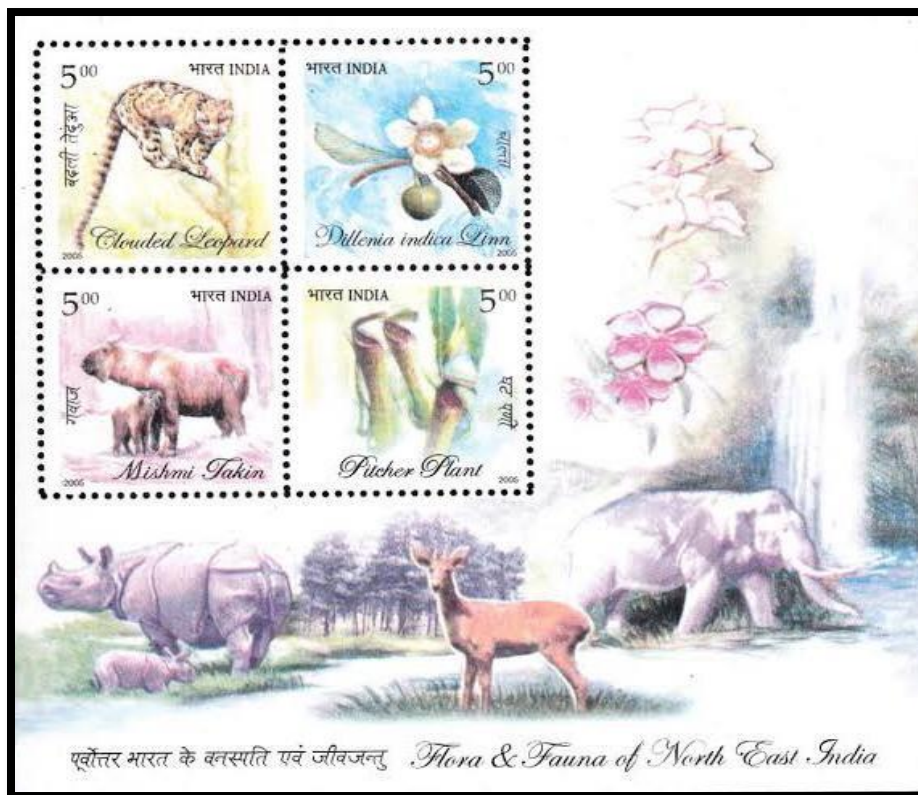
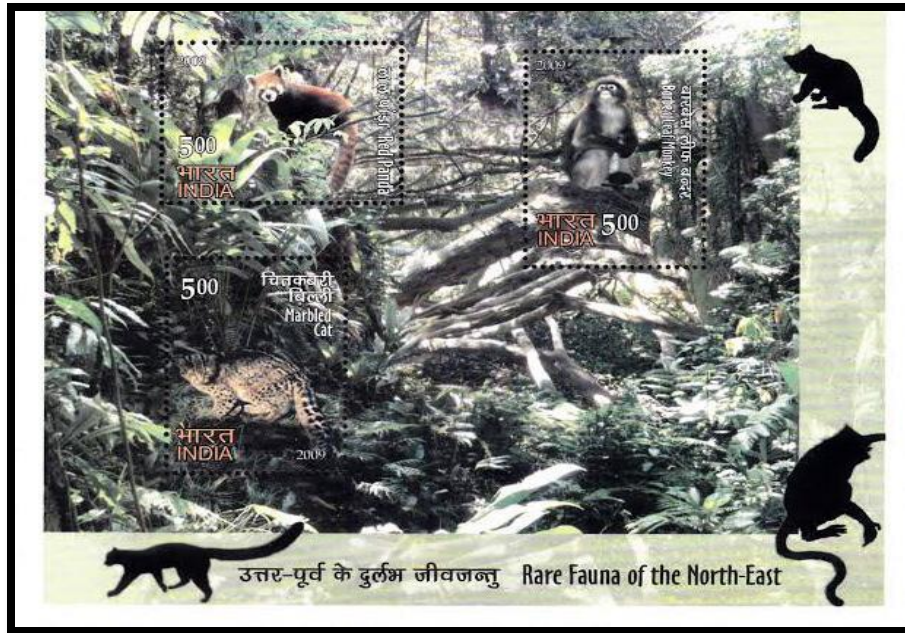


On 20 December 2013, at its 68th session, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 3 March – the day of signature of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (**CITES**) in 1973 – as UN World Wildlife Day to celebrate and raise awareness of the world’s wild animals and plants. The **UNGA resolution** also designated the CITES Secretariat as the facilitator for the global observance of this special day for wildlife on the UN calendar. World Wildlife Day has now become the most important global annual event dedicated to wildlife.

is celebrated under the theme "Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet", as a way to highlight the central role of forests, forest species and ecosystems services in sustaining the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people globally, and particularly of Indigenous and local communities with historic ties to forested and forest-adjacent areas. This aligns with UN Sustainable Development Goals 1, 12, 13 and 15, and their wide-ranging commitments to alleviating poverty, ensuring sustainable use of resources, and on conserving life land.

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. Indigenous peoples and local communities are at the forefront of the symbiotic relationship between humans and forest, forest-dwelling wildlife species and the ecosystem services they provide. Roughly 28% of the world’s land surface is currently managed by indigenous peoples, including some of the most ecologically intact forests on the planet. These spaces are not only central to their economic and personal well-being, but also to their cultural identities. Forests, forests species and the livelihoods that depend on them currently find themselves at the crossroads of the multiple planetary crises we currently face, from climate change, to biodiversity loss and the health, social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 3 2021, World Wildlife Day will celebrate forest-based livelihoods and seek to promote forest and forest wildlife management models and practices that accommodate both human well-being and the long-term conservation of forests, forest-dwelling species of wild fauna and flora and the ecosystems they sustain, and promote the value of traditional practices and knowledge that contribute to establishing a more sustainable relationship with these crucial natural systems.



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