

50th Anniversary of CITES

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Environment | International Organisation

Why in news?

Recently, the CITES marked its 50th anniversary at CoP20 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

- **CITES** - The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international agreement between governments.
- **Aim** - To ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species.
- **Origins** - In 1963, the idea was proposed at an IUCN (World Conservation Union) meeting, it entered into force on **1 July 1975**.
- **Membership** - As of 2025, CITES has **185 Parties**, including India, making it one of the largest conservation agreements (most recent to join - Turkmenistan).

Key Aspects of CITES

- **Scope** - It covers over 40,000 species, including live specimens, parts, and derivatives (like skins, tusks, timber).
- **Secretariat** - It is administered by **UNEP**, located in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- **COP** - The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the supreme consensus-based **decision-making body**, comprises all its parties.
- **Appendices** -
 - **Appendix I** - Species threatened with extinction (trade strictly controlled).
 - **Appendix II** - Species not immediately threatened but could become so (trade monitored).
 - **Appendix III** - Species listed by specific countries to regulate trade.
- **Permits** - It requires CITES **permits or certificates** for legal,

sustainable trade, issued by national authorities.

- **Governing Body** - The CITES Secretariat manages the convention, with policy guidance from the Standing Committee (SC).
- **CITES in India** - Both the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (statutory body under the Ministry) are meant to combat wildlife crime.
- It assists and advises the customs authorities in the inspection of the consignments of flora and fauna as per the provisions of the **Wild Life Protection Act of 1972**.

Quick Fact

COP 20 of CITES Summit

- **Hosted by** - Uzbekistan (Samarkand), 1st CoP in Central Asia.
- **Theme** - "Bridging Nature and People"
- **Anniversary** - Celebrated 50 years of CITES, reflecting on past successes and setting direction for the next 50 years.
- **Decisions adopted** - Delegates adopted 353 decisions across 114 agenda items,
 - Granting new protections to dozens of species (including sharks, rays, hornbills, vultures, and songbirds),
 - Strengthening rules on elephants and caviar trade, and
 - Debating equity and livelihoods in wildlife governance.

References

1. [SDG Knowledge Hub | %0th Anniversary of CITES](#)
2. [CITES | CITES](#)
3. [CITES | COP 20 of CITES](#)