

Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan (CAP)

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Environment

Why in News?

Recently, On the event of International Clouded Leopard Day, India officially launched its first-ever national Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan (CAP).

- The CAP was prepared under a joint Government of India-GEF-UNDP initiative alongside the Wildlife Institute of India (WII).
- **Strategy** - The plan maps out 14 key conservation zones spanning Northeast India to restore fractured forest patches.
- Mandates advanced population surveys using camera traps, occupancy modelling, genetic analysis, and environmental DNA (eDNA) to build India's first reliable population estimate.
- Equips forest rangers with smart monitoring tech, utilizing the M-STripES app to track anti-poaching activities and patrol routes.
- Integrates adaptive management strategies to safeguard high-altitude habitats.
- Reduce human-animal conflicts.

Clouded leopard

- **Scientific Names** - *Neofelis nebulosa* (Mainland) and *Neofelis diardi* (Sunda).
- **Conservation status** - Vulnerable (IUCN Red List)
- **Population estimate** - less than 10,000 mature individuals.
- **Native habitat** - Dense forests and high-canopy rainforests across South and Southeast Asia
- **Distinctive traits** - Exceptionally long canine teeth relative to skull size.
- Specialized ankle joints capable of rotating backward for headfirst tree descents.
- Long tail matching body length for balance.

International Clouded Leopard Day

- **Observed annually on** - August 4.
- **Objective** - To raise global awareness for the conservation, unique traits, and protection of the elusive clouded leopard.
- **Established in** - 2018 by the Aspinall Foundation, UK.
- The day highlights threats like deforestation and the illegal wildlife trade facing fewer than 10,000 remaining mature cats.

Reference

[News on AIR | CAP](#)

