

Emperor Penguin

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Conservation

Why in News?

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has listed the Emperor Penguin as an Endangered Species.

- **Common Name** - Emperor Penguin
- **Scientific Name** - *Aptenodytes forsteri*
- **Genus** - *Aptenodytes*
- **Kingdom** - Animalia
- **Family** - Spheniscidae
- **Habitat** - Native to *Antarctica*.
- They are dependent on *sea ice platforms* for breeding, moulting, and chick rearing.
- **Distribution** - Closely tied to the extent and stability of Antarctic Sea ice.
- **Morphology** - Largest and heaviest of all penguin species.
 - **Height** - up to 120 cm.
 - **Weight** - 20-40 kg.
 - Distinctive **golden-orange streak** on neck and chest.



- **Diet** - Primarily fish, squid, and krill.
- **Sentinel Species** - Emperor penguins are considered sentinel species, their decline signals broader ecological impacts of climate change on Antarctic ecosystems.
- Their survival is directly linked to *greenhouse gas emissions and global warming trends*.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN Red List** - Endangered
 - **CITES** - Appendix I (trade strictly regulated).
- **Threats**
 - Climate change - Shrinking and unstable sea ice.
 - Early break-up of breeding platforms.
 - Decline in food availability (krill moving deeper).

Quick Facts

- **Antarctic Fur Seal** - Also moved to Endangered due to food scarcity (krill decline).
- **Southern Elephant Seal** - Status changed from Least Concern to Vulnerable (pathogen-related decline).

Reference

[The Hindu | Emperor Penguins](#)

