Survey by Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards

Why in news?

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The Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS) recently published a report titled 'Safe Havens for Wild Tigers'.

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What is the report on?

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- *CA|TS* report was on the results of a survey of site-based tiger conservation across Asia.
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- The survey assessed the current management methodologies at 112 sites located in 11 tiger-range countries, including India.
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- The survey is the first and largest rapid assessment of site-based tiger conservation across Asia.
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- It has been driven by 11 conservation organisations and tiger-range governments that are part of the CA|TS coalition.
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- The results show whether or not governments are investing sufficient funds into tiger conservation.
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- This study also shows the reality of the progress made under the *St Petersburg Declaration*.
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What are the key findings?

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- Only 13% of the tiger conservation areas met the global standards of an accreditation system.

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- Of the 112 global sites surveyed, only 12.5% was currently able to meet the full CA|TS criteria.
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- Nearly half of the assessed sites reported fairly strong management, although improvements are needed.
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- South Asian and East Asian countries like Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal and Russia had management plans.
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- The remaining 35% did not have management plans and showed relatively weak management.
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- Notably, a majority of these are in Southeast Asia, including Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand.
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- Three of the 13 tiger range countries, Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia have lost all their tigers.
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What are the concerns?

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- **Basic needs** remain weak for all tiger conservation areas surveyed.
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- These include enforcement of laws against **poaching**, engaging local **communities** and managing **conflicts** between people and wildlife.
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- **Staff capacity** to patrol the sites effectively and **anti-poaching** enforcement remain weak, despite the serious threat of poaching.
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- Only 16 of 112 sites had intelligence-driven anti-poaching processes in place.
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- Ineffective management of tiger conservation areas had led to the **extinction** of tigers from certain key areas.
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What are the accredited sites?

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- To date, only three sites have been awarded CA|TS Approved status.
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- These are
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i. **Lansdowne Forest Division in Uttarakhand, India**
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ii. Chitwan National Park in Nepal
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iii. Sikhote-Alin Nature Reserve in Russia
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- Lansdowne Forest Division, Uttarakhand, accredited in May 2017, is the third CA|TS accredited site globally and the first in India.
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- It is significant since it is a crucial link between the Rajaji and Corbett tiger reserves.
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What does it call for?

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- Low investment from governments in Southeast Asia was one of the reasons for the lack of management.
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- Thus, long-term investment in tiger conservation areas is called for.
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- This is absolutely essential to halt and reverse the decline of wild tigers.
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- The tiger-range governments should thus take the lead responsibility.
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Source: Business Line, Indian Express

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Quick Facts

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Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS)

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- CA|TS is an important tool in the achievement of the Convention on Biological Diversity - CBD’s Global Aichi Targets.
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- CA|TS is a management tool which sets basic criteria such as the minimum standards for effective management of tiger conservation reserves.
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- It also applies to other conservation reserves and protected areas which have tiger populations.
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- It contributes to the implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas.
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- The CA|TS team has been working closely with the IUCN.
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St Petersburg Declaration

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- In November 2010, the first “Tiger Summit” in St Petersburg, Russia, endorsed a Global Tiger Recovery Programme.
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- The programme aimed at reversing the rapid decline of tigers, and doubling their numbers by 2022.
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- India was one of the 13 tiger range countries that participated in the gathering.
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- The leaders committed to drawing up action plans to -

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i. strengthen the tiger reserves
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ii. crack down on poachers
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iii. provide financial assistance to maintain a thriving tiger population
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Tiger Range Countries

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- The Tiger Range Countries (TRC) are the countries where tigers still roam free i.e. in the wild.
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- The 13 tiger range countries are Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand and Vietnam.
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- Sometimes North Korea is also included.
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- While there have been no recent tigers sightings in North-Korea, it is the only country listed which has not ratified CITES.
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