

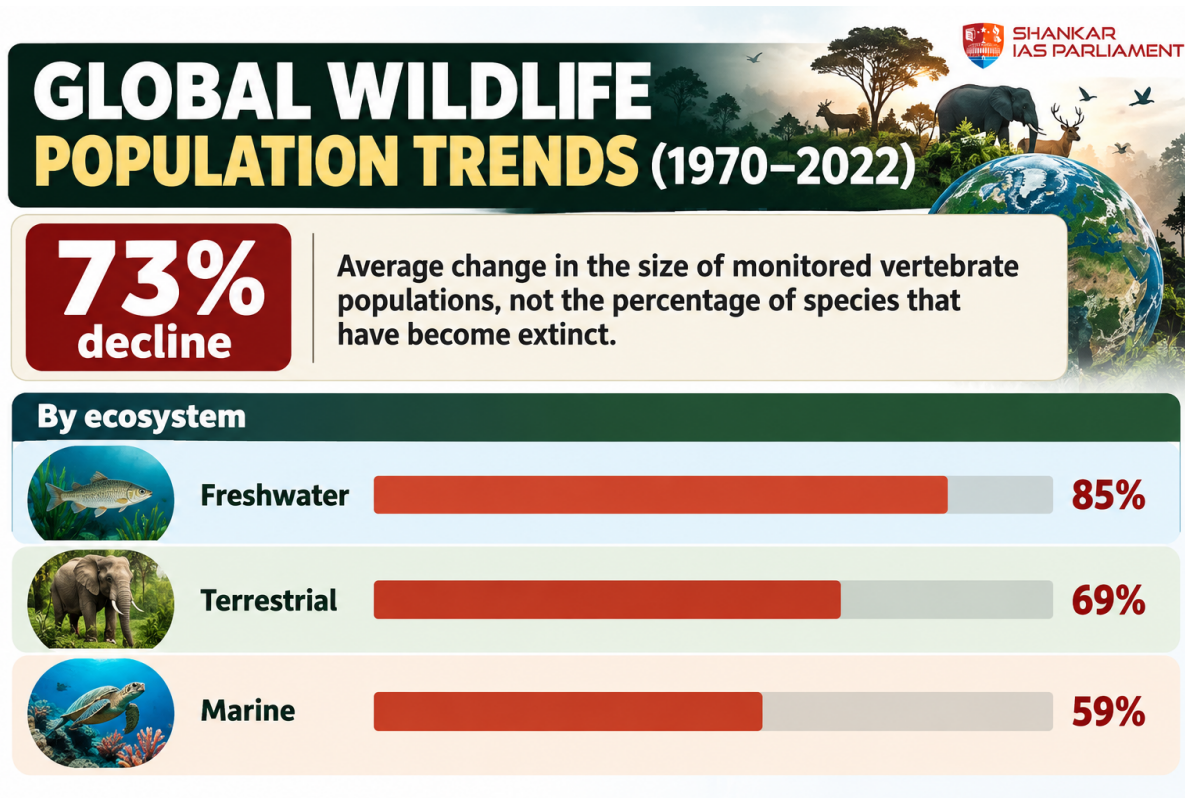
WWF Living Planet Report 2026

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Environment

Why in News?

Recently, the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) released the Living Planet Report 2026.

- **Living Planet Index** - It is a biodiversity indicator used to track changes in the relative abundance of monitored vertebrate populations over time.
- This report was produced in collaboration with the Zoological Society of London (ZSL).



• Key Findings

- The report identified a 73% decline in the average size of monitored wildlife populations worldwide between 1970 and 2022.
- Conversely, India has documented population increases in several key wildlife species, such as tigers, Asiatic lions, and greater one-horned rhinoceroses.
- The report underscores the severity of the global biodiversity crisis and emphasizes the critical role of sustained conservation initiatives.

• Major threats to wildlife

- Habitat loss and ecosystem degradation.

- Overexploitation of wildlife populations and natural resources.
 - Anthropogenic climate change.
 - Environmental pollution.
 - Introduction and spread of invasive alien species.
 - Emergence and transmission of wildlife diseases.
 - These pressures are interconnected with broader challenges in food production, energy infrastructure, and financial systems.
- **Assessment of River Dolphins**
 - The survey encompassed 8,507 kilometers across 28 rivers between 2021 and 2023.
 - A science-based estimate identified 6,324 Ganges river dolphins within the surveyed range.
 - These findings underscore the significance of monitoring freshwater biodiversity.
 - **Asia-Pacific regional findings**
 - The Living Planet Report 2026 documented an average 49% decline in monitored vertebrate populations in Asia and the Pacific from 1970 to 2022.
 - The regional index comprised 4,664 monitored populations representing 787 species.

India's Wildlife Conservation Achievements  SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT		
Species	Population / estimate	Important fact
 Tiger	3,682 (2022 estimate)	Based on the All India Tiger Estimation
 Greater one-horned rhinoceros	Over 3,300	Conservation success, particularly in Assam and other parts of its range
 Asiatic lion	891 (2025)	Increased from 674 in 2020
 Common leopard	13,874	National estimate cited in the report
 Snow leopard	718	India's first nationwide population assessment
 Ganges river dolphin	6,324	Estimate from the first range-wide assessment, conducted during 2021–2023

Reference

[Down to Earth | WWF Living Planet Report 2026](#)