



Union Environment Minister inaugurates Centre of Excellence on Human-Wildlife Conflict at WII-SACON, Coimbatore; launches National Human-Wildlife Conflict Portal

Coexistence and Harmony, instead of Conflict, should be the Mantra of the Ecological Sustainability: Shri Bhupender Yadav

National Workshop held to deliberate on Challenges, Innovation and Collaborative Solutions for Human-Wildlife Conflict Management

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Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav today inaugurated the Centre of Excellence (CoE) on Human–Wildlife Conflict at Coimbatore. The inauguration was followed by a National Workshop on Human–Wildlife Conflict, bringing together senior policymakers, forest managers, scientists, researchers, technology experts and conservation practitioners from across the country to deliberate on effective strategies for mitigating human–wildlife conflict. The ceremony was graced by the Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh.



Delivering the keynote address on the occasion, Shri Yadav observed that human–wildlife conflict has emerged as one of India's foremost conservation and development challenges due to increasing interactions between people and wildlife resulting from habitat fragmentation, changing land-use patterns and expanding human activities. He observed, "Our approach should be solution-oriented, instead of being problem-oriented, utilising modern technological advances."

As announced by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during the 7th Meeting of the National Board for Wildlife, the newly established Centre of Excellence will serve as a national hub for research, innovation, policy support, capacity building and dissemination of best practices to strengthen scientific and evidence-based management of human–wildlife conflict, Shri Yadav informed.



The Minister also desired that the institute must focus on a strategy to form a policy to manage conflicts of tigers outside tiger reserves, leopards and elephants with humans. He stated that awareness generation needs to be carried out in mission mode, in urban as well as rural areas on how to deal with human-

wildlife encounters. The approach needs to involve area-specific as well as species-specific measures to address human-wildlife conflict. This would go a long way in addressing panic in the society, he stated.

Shri Yadav also urged the forest departments across the country to take proactive preventive measures in managing the conflicts and damage caused to human establishments and crops. This, he said, must be done by addressing the issues in coordinated manner with the respective communities, through multi-stakeholders consultations. Innovative best practices must be evolved and implemented widely on ground, by using the latest technologies in wildlife conservation. “Coexistence and harmony, instead of conflict, should be the mantra of ecological sustainability”, the Minister said while concluding his address.



Addressing the gathering, Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh highlighted that the success of effective wildlife conservation has increasingly led to human-wildlife interaction. This has resulted in a much larger socio-economic issue, besides being a conservation issue, affecting livelihoods in the long term. There is a need to find long term solutions by balancing wildlife conservation and socio-economic progress of the country, he said. The Minister expressed hope that the Centre of Excellence would have an important role to play here by capacity building of the officials as well as the community. It would go a long way in using advanced technologies in documenting data, while preserving traditional knowledge in wildlife conservation and peaceful human-wildlife coexistence, he stated.

During the inaugural session, the Minister also launched the National Human–Wildlife Conflict Portal, a digital platform designed to facilitate data management, knowledge sharing and decision support for conflict mitigation across the country. The first edition of a series of publications titled ‘Current Status of Human–Wildlife Conflict in India: An Overview’ was also released, providing a comprehensive assessment of the current status, trends and emerging challenges related to human–wildlife conflict in India.



The technical sessions of the workshop included a live demonstration of the Human–Wildlife Conflict Portal, followed by expert presentations and panel discussions focusing on:

- Human–Elephant Conflict;
- Human–Big Cat Conflict; and
- Technology and Innovation for Human–Wildlife Conflict Mitigation.

The deliberations would help to generate actionable recommendations for strengthening national strategies on human–wildlife conflict management, promoting technological innovation, improving coordination among stakeholders and enhancing coexistence between people and wildlife.

The establishment of the Centre of Excellence reflects the Government of India's continued commitment to balancing biodiversity conservation with the protection of human lives and livelihoods through science-based, technology-enabled and community-oriented approaches.

Dignitaries present on the occasion included Secretary, MoEFCC, Director General of Forests and Special Secretary, ADG (Wildlife), Director of the Wildlife Institute of India, senior officials of the Ministry, State Forest Departments, academic institutions and partner organisations.

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