

Greater Kashmir

Conserving big cats, habitats can secure most important natural ecosystems: Bhupendra Yadav

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New Delhi: Union Minister Bhupender Yadav on Monday said conserving big cats and their habitats can secure some of the most important natural ecosystems on Earth leading to natural climate change adaptation, water, and food security for millions of people, and provide livelihood and sustenance to forest communities.

In the mega international event held at Mysuru, Karnataka, to commemorate 50 years of Project Tiger, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) for the conservation of seven big cats namely Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma. India has a long-standing experience on the tiger agenda and conservation of other big cats like lions, snow leopards, and leopards, now the translocation of the Cheetah to bring an extinct big cat back to its natural habitat. As per the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, "The alliance aims to reach out to 97 range countries covering the natural habitats of Tiger, Lion, Snow Leopard, Puma, Jaguar, and Cheetah. IBCA would further strengthen global cooperation and efforts to conserve the wild denizens, especially the big cats."

Chairing the Ministerial session on the global status of big cat conservation Bhupender Yadav said, "Conserving big cats and their habitats can secure some of the most important natural ecosystems on Earth leading to natural climate change adaptation, water, and food security for millions of people, and provide livelihood and sustenance to forest communities."

"The Alliance will strengthen global efforts and partnerships on big cat conservation, while evolving a platform for convergence of knowledge and best practices, supporting existing species-specific inter-governmental platforms, while also providing direct support to recovery efforts in potential range habitats," the minister added.

Yadav said, "With big cats as mascots for sustainable development and livelihood security, India and the big cat range countries can usher in major efforts on environmental resilience and climate change mitigation, while paving a future where natural ecosystems continue to thrive, and gain centrality in economic and development policies in the Amrit Kaal."

The Ministers of Big Cat Range countries acknowledged and appreciated the leadership of India in big cat conservation and praised the efforts of the Prime Minister, the Union Minister and senior forest officials of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

The Ministers of Big Cat Range Countries made the remarks on the momentous event of the launch of the International Big Cat Alliance by PM Modi.

Forest Minister of Bhutan in his eloquent speech accepted the leadership of India in guiding them. His passing remarks like may Goddess Chamundi shower her blessings on all of the forest fraternity and his words Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, aur Sabka Prayas in Hindi reverberated in the hall.

The Forest Minister of Bangladesh praised India for helping in their conservation efforts to save their pride which is Sundermani and Chittagong tigers.

Cambodia was enthusiastic about getting tigers from India and rehabilitating them in their Cardamom Hills and their Sripok Wildlife Sanctuary. He also spoke about the re-introduction plan prepared by them. Minister, of Wildlife, Tourism and Culture Government of Kenya, through her video message, lauded the help rendered by the Government of India and the Indian Forest Service, in formulating the protocols, and good managerial practices, in the conduct and evaluating of Census results of wild animals especially Lions in her country.

Minister, Nepal, accepted the leadership of India in the field of wildlife conservation and offered all support to the alliance.

Ethiopian Forest Minister without mincing words expressed his greatest satisfaction in being a part of an endeavour to save big cats all around the world.

Royal Highness the Regent of Pahang was all praise for India's efforts and wanted assistance in the recovery of the tiger population in Malaysia. Besides this Ministers and heads of delegations of Suriname, Armenia, Tanzania, Nigeria, Vietnam, Thailand and Lao also expressed their appreciation for the said initiative.

Bhupender Yadav acknowledging the overwhelming support promised to work on modalities to take the launch of IBCA forward and thanked everyone for their participation.

Source: <https://www.greaterkashmir.com/national-2/conserving-big-cats-habitats-can-secure-most-important-natural-ecosystems-bhupendra-yadav>