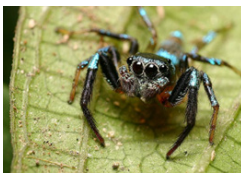


# Current Affairs (2023): Environment and Geography At a Glance

\* India lost **2 out of 5 wetlands** in last 3 decades, as per **Wetland International (WI)**. Approx 40% of Water Bodies have lost quality for aquatic animals.

\* Around 3,700 dams in India will lose 26% of their total storage by 2050 due to accumulation of sediments. The study by the United Nations University Institute on Water, Environment and Health (**UNU-INWEH**), also known as the **UN's think tank on water**.

\* A group of researchers led by from **Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, Chennai**, have discovered a **new species of jumping spider, Thianiaindica**. The spider was discovered during an expedition to Kulathupuzha in the Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary in December 2021.



\* Recently, some Environmental Activists have raised concerns over the **10,000-acre Aravali safari park Project** proposed in **Haryana**. **The Aravali safari park Project** will be the largest such project in the world. The Aravali safari project is being conceived and designed as a zoo safari and not a Natural Jungle Safari to see native Aravali wildlife in their natural habitat.

\* State of **India's Environment report 2023** was launched by Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) and DTE (Down to Earth) magazine, covering an extensive gamut of subject assessments, ranging from Climate Change, Agriculture and Industry to Water, Plastics, Forests and Biodiversity.

\* **Bandipur Tiger Reserve**, located in Karnataka, **completed 50 years** as a Project Tiger Reserve on April 1, 2023. The reserve was launched in 1973 by the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, with the aim to stop the decline in population of Tigers.

\* Researchers have uncovered two genetically unique species of spiny clam shrimps, also known as **Spinicaudatans**, in Karnataka and Goa.



\* The **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** has issued a stay on the Great Nicobar Island project worth Rs.72,000 Crore and created a committee to review the Environmental clearance granted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

\* Indian Government proposed the creation of a New Tiger Reserve in the Dibang Wildlife Sanctuary. **The Idu Mishmi tribe** fears that it will cut off access to their lands, affecting their livelihoods and traditional practices.

\* India is set to **ban the use of diesel-powered four-wheelers** in cities with over 10 Lakh population **by 2027**. According to the report commissioned by the Oil Ministry, it recommended a gradual elimination of motorcycles, scooters, and three-wheelers that are powered by internal combustion engines by the year 2035.

\* Scientists **Bitupan Boruah, V Deepak and Abhijit Das** have identified a new species of '**music frog**' in the lush landscapes of Arunachal Pradesh.



\* The **mobile Air Pollution monitoring framework** developed by IIT Madras researchers represents a significant advancement in addressing the limitations of traditional monitoring methods.

\* Recently, a report by the **Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)-India** titled '**Illegal Trade of Red Sand Boa in India 2016-2021**' has exposed the alarming extent of illegal trade of Red Sand Boa.

\* The Mizoram Assembly has passed a resolution opposing the **Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act (FCA), 2023**, highlighting the ongoing challenges in Forest Conservation and Tribal Rights in Northeast India.

\* India has proposed the creation of a New Global Alliance called the **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** to protect 7 major big cats, namely- Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Puma, Jaguar and Cheetah. Nepal has become a founding member of the International Big Cats Alliance.

\* A study published in **Nature** has revealed that rapidly melting Antarctic ice is dramatically slowing down the flow of water through the World's oceans, and could have a disastrous impact on global climate, marine food chain and on the stability of ice shelves.

\* The Petersburg Dialogue on Climate Change was held in Berlin, Germany from May 2-3, 2023, by Germany and the United Arab Emirates, which

is hosting the 28th Conference of Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

\* New Zealand becomes **first country to ban plastic produce bags** at supermarkets including Recyclable, Biodegradable or Plant-Based Plastic Bag.

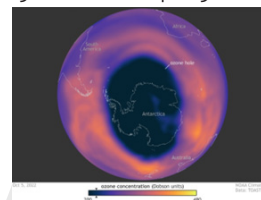
\* Antarctica's sea ice has been recorded low level of about 14.2 million sq. km, significantly below the normal extent of 16.7 million sq. km for this time of year.

\* The Madhya Pradesh Government has unveiled the **Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve**, becoming the **7th Tiger Reserve** in the state and India's **54th**. **Madhya Pradesh retained "Tiger State"** status in the 2022 census, with the number of tigers in the state increasing from 526 in 2018 to 785.

\* A new High Throughput Quantum Backed **Green Hydrogen Production** Technology that could promote **Green Hydrogen Production** in bulk has been developed by Green Keplerate Team from Banaras Hindu University, which will help achieve the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

\* An under-construction **Silkyara-Barkot tunnel** along the Yamunotri National Highway in Uttarkashi district, Uttarakhand, collapsed trapping a significant number of workers inside. 41 laborers got trapped as portions of the Silkyara-Dandalgaon tunnel collapsed following a landslide.

\* A new study reveals alarming changes in the **Antarctic ozone hole**, indicating not only a significant increase in size but also a concerning thinning trend during most of the spring.



\* **Indian Oil Corporation (IOC)** achieved a significant milestone in India's transition to clean energy by unveiling the country's **First Green Hydrogen Powered Bus**.

\* In Dubai, UAE, the **28th Conference of Parties (COP-28)** recently transpired, featuring representatives from 197 nations showcasing their endeavors to address global warming. The event resulted in a blend of favorable achievements and setbacks, representing a significant progression from the Paris Agreement.



\* **Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** has released the interim report titled-**Towards Eliminating Plastic Pollution by 2040**. In 2022, 21 million tones (MT) of plastics leaked into the Environment globally.

\* **Wild Life Licensing Rules 2024-** Central Government recently introduced Wild Life (Protection) Licensing (Additional Matters for Consideration) Rules, 2024, amending the wildlife trade rules, 1983 resulting in significant changes in the licensing process and exclusions of certain species.

\* **Green Hydrogen-** World Economic Forum and Bain & Company has released a report titled- '**Green Hydrogen: Enabling Measures Roadmap for Adoption in India**', highlighting that Green Hydrogen production cost needs to be reduced to less than or equal to USD 2 per kg.

\* **Gentoo Penguins-** Over 200 Gentoo penguins have been found dead in the Falkland Islands, Antarctica due to the spread of the H5N1 Avian Influenza Virus. (IUCN Red List status is least concern).