

Endangered mega fauna of India

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PLENARY LECTURE

India is one of the world's biodiversity-rich countries. The varied climatic zones of the Indian subcontinent have given rise to a wonderful variety of plant and animal forms during the course of evolutionary history. India is home to a big proportion of endemic flora and fauna. India ranks next to Africa in terms of the diversity of mega fauna. Important large mammals endemic to the Indian sub continent include the Asiatic lion, the royal Bengal tiger, one horned Rhinoceros, Asiatic elephant, gaur, water buffalo, wild ass, several species of deer, antelopes and primates. Most of the mega fauna have restricted distribution and face serious threat of extinction due to multiple factors such as habitat fragmentation and shrinkage, and poaching. The conservation efforts to save these denizens of India lack commitment and resources. Involvement of people and the awareness of our natural heritage is vital in order to save our wildlife for the future generations.