

List of Biosphere Reserves in India

What is the Biosphere Reserve?

- 'Biosphere Reserves' are designated natural sites, comprising terrestrial or marine or coastal or combined ecosystems, which promote the conservation of biodiversity and minimizes the conflict between the development and nature conservation.
- 'Biosphere Reserve' is originally an international concept. It was introduced by International Co-ordinating Council (ICC) of UNESCO in Nov.1971 for the first time.

Criteria of the Biosphere Reserve

- A site must contain protected and minimally disturbed core area of value of nature conservation
- Core zone should be large enough to sustain viable populations representing all Tropic levels in the ecosystem.
- Management authorities to ensure local community involvement to bring a variety of knowledge and experiences to link biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development while managing and containing the conflicts.
- Areas potential for preservation of traditional tribal or rural modes of living for harmonious use of the environment.

Structure of the Biosphere Reserve

Biosphere reserves are demarcated into following three zones.

1. Core Zone

- This zone is the heart and soul of the Biosphere Reserve.
- The core contains the maximum diversity of numerous plants and animals which are endemic to the region.
- Most of the times, Core part is the legally protected area like the National park, sanctuaries under Wildlife Protection Act 1972.
- Management and research activities are allowed to some extent without affecting ecological diversity and wildlife.
- Activities like grazing, human settlement are not allowed in the core zone. So it is always free from human encroachment.

2. Buffer Zone

- Buffer zone surrounds the core zone. It acts like the blanket to the core part.
- In the Buffer zone, some activities like Grazing, fishing, research, tourism are allowed under strict regulations without affecting ecological diversity.

3. Transition Zone





- This zone is the outermost cover of the biosphere reserve.
- This zone contains the least diversity and density of animal and trees.
- It is an example of 'Human- Nature Coexistence'.
- This zone includes human settlements, agriculture, forests etc.

Functions of Biosphere Reserve

There are tripartite i.e. three main functions of the biosphere reserve given follow

1. Conservation

• Conservation of diversity and integrity of plants and animals within natural ecosystems

2. Development

• Sustainable use of natural resources for the Cultural, Social, Economic development of local community

3. Logistics Support

· Provide areas and facilities for multi-faceted research and monitoring

Biosphere Reserves in India

SI No.	Name	State	Year	Type	Key Fauna
1	Rann of Kutch	2008	Gujarat	Desert	Indian Wild Ass
2	Gulf of Mannar	1989	Tamil Nadu	Coastal	Dugong (Sea Cow)
3	Sundarbans	1989	West Bengal	Gangetic Delta	Royal Bengal Tiger
4	Cold Desert	2009	Himachal Pradesh	Western Himalayas	Snow Leopard
5	Nanda Devi	1988	Uttarakhand	Western Himalayas	NA
6	Nilgiris	1986	Tamil Nadu, Kerala & Karnataka	Western Ghats	Nilgiri Tahr, Lion-tailed Macaque
7	Dihang-Dibang	1998	Arunachal Pradesh	Eastern Himalayas	NA



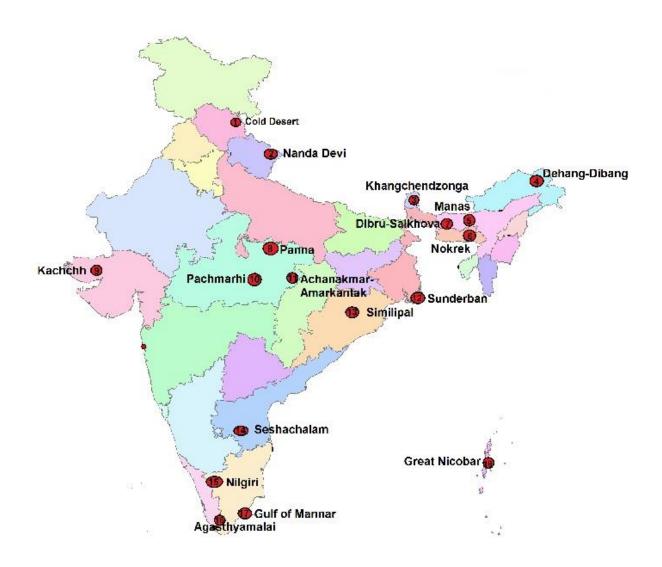


8	Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve	1999	Madhya Pradesh	Semi-Arid	Giant Squirrel, Flying Squirrel
9	Seshachalam Hills	2010	Andhra Pradesh	Eastern Ghats	NA
10	Simlipal	1994	Odisha	Deccan Peninsula	Gaur, Royal Bengal Tiger, Wild elephant
11	Achanakamar - Amarkantak	2005	Madhya Pradesh & Chhattisgarh	Maikala Hills	NA
12	Manas	1989	Assam	Eastern Himalayas	Golden Langur, Red Panda
13	Khangchendzonga	2000	Sikkim	Eastern Himalayas	Snow Leopard, Red Panda
14	Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve	2001	Kerala & Tamil Nadu	Western Ghats	Nilgiri Tahr, Elephants
15	Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve	1989	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Island	Saltwater Crocodile
16	Nokrek	1988	Meghalaya	Eastern Himalayas	Red Panda
17	Dibru-Saikhowa	1997	Assam	Eastern Himalayas	Golden Langur
18	Panna	2011	Madhya Pradesh	Ken River	Tiger, Chital, Chinkara, Sambharand Sloth bear

Here is a map to give you the location of these Biosphere Reserves in India:







Out of these 18 biosphere reserves from India, there are 11 biosphere reserves which are internationally recognised under World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) of the Man and Biosphere (MAB) programme of UNESCO.

Man And Biosphere (MAB) Programme

- MAB programme was launched in 1971.
- It is an intergovernmental scientific programme that aims to establish a scientific basis for the improvement of relationships between nature and human.
- Biosphere Reserves are nominated by the national government for inclusion in the world network of biospheres.





- Then the committee of MAB programme recognises the BRs after fulfilling the criteria.
- There are currently 669 sites in 120 countries in World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) of the Man and Biosphere (MAB) programme.
- Out of these, 10 BRs are from India.

List of Biosphere reserves in MAB Programme

- 1. Nilgiri Biosphere- Oldest entry from India in the list in 2000
- 2. Gulf of Mannar
- 3. Sundarban
- 4. Nanda Devi
- 5. Nokrek
- 6. Simplipal
- 7. Pachmarhi
- 8. Achanakamar- Amarkantak
- 9. Great Nicobar
- 10. Agasthyamalai- Latest entry from India in the list in 2016
- 11. Khangchendzonga- Added in 2018

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