

AFRICAN CHEETAHS TO BE INTRODUCED IN INDIA

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Biodiversity, Ecology, and Wildlife Related Issues

The Asiatic [Cheetah was declared extinct](#) in India in 1952. According to reports, the last Indian cheetah died around 1948.

In India, over the years, cheetahs brought in from abroad have been kept in zoos. Cheetahs became extinct due to various reasons like hunting, destruction of habitat and human intervention. Wildlife experts say that for cheetahs to survive, a large area of grassland and a prey base are required

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The Supreme Court has directed the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) to [introduce African cheetahs](#) into the Indian habitats.

The top court has set up a three-member committee to guide the NTCA in this experimental project to revive the cheetah population.

In 2012, the SC had stalled the introduction of foreign cheetahs into Palpur Kuno Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh fearing their conflict with another project to reintroduce lions into the same sanctuary.

The Hyderabad-based Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) had even initiated a project to clone Indian cheetah. But this is yet to bear fruit.

Around 7,000 cheetahs are now left in the wild, most of them in Africa. Being the mildest of the wild cats, cheetahs need special attention and care. Conservationists now fear the lack of enough area and prey base for the African cheetahs in Indian habitats. Low survival rates of cubs, animal-human conflict, are some of the other challenges ahead.

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