

# ‘INDIA AMONG NATIONS THAT FACE GRAVE DANGER TO SOIL BIODIVERSITY’

Relevant for: World & Indian Geography | Topic: Distribution of key natural resources - Land Resources incl. Land conservation in world & India

India’s soil biodiversity is in grave peril, according to the Global Soil Biodiversity Atlas prepared by the World Wide Fund for Nature.

The WWF’s ‘risk index’ for the globe — indicating threats from loss of above-ground diversity, pollution and nutrient over-loading, over-grazing, intensive agriculture, fire, soil erosion, desertification and climate change — shows India among countries whose soil biodiversity faces the highest level of risk. Coloured red on the Atlas, these include Pakistan, China, several countries in Africa and Europe, and most of North America.

Soil biodiversity encompasses the presence of micro-organisms, micro-fauna (nematodes and tardigrades for example), and macro-fauna (ants, termites and earthworms).

The findings were part of the bi-annual Living Planet Report (LPR) 2018. “A key aspect of this year’s report is the threat to soil biodiversity and pollinators [such as bees],” Ravi Singh, CEO, WWF-India, said.

Mr. Singh cited a Tamil Nadu Agricultural University study that observed that while 150 million bee colonies were needed to meet the pollination requirements of about 50 million hectares of agricultural land in India, only 1.2 million colonies were present.

“Science is showing us the harsh reality that our forests, oceans and rivers are enduring at our hands,” Marco Lambertini, Director General, WWF International, said in a press release.

The two key drivers of biodiversity loss were the over exploitation of natural resources and agriculture, the WWF added in its report.

## Word of caution

While India’s per capita ecological footprint was less than 1.75 hectares/person (the lowest band among countries surveyed), its high population made it vulnerable to an ecological crisis, even if per-capita consumption remained at current levels, the WWF warned.

Our existing notification subscribers need to choose this option to keep getting the alerts.

**END**

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com