

IUCN/SSC. 1984. Conservation/Recovery Plan: Asiatic lion (*Panthera leo persica*). In Jackson, P. (Ed). Proceedings from the Cat Specialist Group meeting in Kanha National Park. p. 254-255.

Keywords: 4Asia/4IN/Asiatic lion/conservation/conservation planning/conservation strategy/
Panthera leo persica/recovery/recovery plan

Conservation/Recovery Plan: Asiatic lion
(*Panthera leo persica*)

1. **Species Name:** *Panthera leo persica*; Asiatic Lion
2. **Priority Rating:** 15
3. **Country or Area:** Gujarat, Western India
4. **Problems Conservation Plan Must Overcome:**
 - 4.1 Prevent any further loss of habitat
 - 4.2 Competition from domestic livestock and the threat of cattle borne-diseases
 - 4.3 Damage from forest fires
 - 4.4 Hostile retaliatory action by local human population such as poisoning of lions, destruction of herbivores damaging field crops, etc.
 - 4.5 Disturbance from tourists, pilgrims and general traffic along public roads passing through the Sanctuary/National Park area; extraction of over 2.5 million trees killed by heavy cyclone in 1982.
 - 4.6 Poaching.
 - 4.7 Smuggling of timber and other forest produce from the Sanctuary/National Park area
 - 4.8 In-breeding due to the entire remnant population of Asiatic lions being confined to a single sanctuary area.
5. **Objectives of Conservation Plan:**
 - 5.1 To preserve and improve the entire Gir ecosystem
 - 5.2 To build up a strong and well-organised research base for the collection of data and for evolving techniques which will prove useful for the future scientific management of the Gir Sanctuary/National Park.
6. **Action Proposed:**
 - 6.1 Establishing alternative homes for the Asiatic Lion in Gujarat (in the Barda forest of about 200 sq. kms. near Porbandar - already under implementation) and in the Girnar hills, and also in the adjoining States of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh as a safeguard against any natural calamities, such as an epidemic, which could wipe out the entire present population of lions in the Gir Forest at one stroke. These diverse populations could subsequently be used for improvement of the race through cross-breeding (to be completed within 15 years).
 - 6.2 Undertaking a captive breeding programme for Asiatic lions at selected centres in Gujarat and adjoining States, integrating it with the existing lion breeding programme being undertaken at the Forest Department's Sakarbagh Zoo at Junagadh. This should be taken up urgently as a continuing programme.
 - 6.3 Preparation of a regular wildlife management plan for the Gir,
 - 6.4 Establishment of a permanent field research station in Gir, preferably under the auspices of the Wildlife Research Institute of India, Dehra Dun, to undertake systematic field research on problems connected with the ecology of Gir.
 - 6.5 Stoppage of the present artificial system of arranging 'lion shows' in Gir.

7. Organizations or individuals involved in Conservation Plan implementation.

- 7.1 Wildlife Wing of the Gujarat Forest Dept. (Baroda)
- 7.2 Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture, Dept. of Forests, Dept. of Environment (New Delhi)
- 7.3 Cat Specialist Group, IUCN Species Survival Commission
- 7.4 Saurashtra Branch of WWF-India (Rajkot).
- 7.5 Gir Coordinating Committee
- 7.6 Gujarat Ecological and Educational Research (G.E.E.R.) Foundation (Gandhinagar).
- 7.7 Wildlife Institute of India (Dehra Dun)
- 7.8 Institute of Forest Management (Bhopal)
- 7.9 Dept. of Biosciences of Saurashtra University (Rajkot)
- 7.10 Bombay Natural History Society (Bombay).

8. Protected Areas benefitted by the Conservation Plan:

- 8.1 Gir Sanctuary/National Park
- 8.2 Barda Sanctuary

9. Other species benefitting from the Conservation Plan:

- Leopard (*Panthera pardus*)
- Bluebull (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*)
- Striped Hyaena (*Hyaena hyaena*)
- Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa cristatus*)
- Sambar (*Cervus unicolor*)
- Pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*)
- Cheetal (*Axis axis*)
- Ratel (*Mellivora capensis*)
- Four-horned antelope (*Tetracerus quadricornis*)
- Mugger (*Crocodilus palustris*)
- Rock Python (*Python molurus*)