

## **South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN)**

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**South Asia Wildlife  
Enforcement Network**

**Context:** SAWEN recently its first ever meeting in India. Representatives of seven countries participated in the meeting and the members agreed on having an operational framework for strengthening the regional body to combat wildlife crime.

During the meet six proposals, including tracking of wildlife smuggling route, review of existing laws and a structure for the organisation were tabled.

### **About SAWEN:**

- SAWEN is a regional network comprises eight countries in South Asia –Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- It aims at working as a strong regional intergovernmental body for combating wildlife crimes by attempting common goals and approaches for combating illegal trade in the region.

### **Significance of SAWEN:**

The South Asia region is very vulnerable to illegal traffic and wildlife crimes due to presence of precious biodiversity and large markets as well as traffic routes for wildlife products in the region. The collaboration in harmonising as well as enforcing the wildlife protection in the region is considered very important for effective conservation of biodiversity.

### **How will it help India?**

India along with other member countries will take initiatives to bring “harmonisation and standardisation” in laws and policies to conserve fauna and flora and will also document the trend of poaching, illegal trade and related threats to the natural biodiversity.

This will also strengthen institutional responses to combat wildlife crime by promoting research and information sharing, training and capacity building, technical support, sharing experiences and outreach and to encourage member countries to prepare and implement their national action plans in curbing wildlife crime.

### **Background:**

Wildlife crime has emerged as one of the greatest threats to the survival of many wildlife species in South Asia as well as across the globe. This organized crime involving multi-billion dollars is highly trans-national and remains flourishing as a result of weak legal framework and/or lax enforcement in the source, transit and destination countries. Curbing the wildlife crime demands well coordinated multi-agency and multi-country efforts with high level of commitment and advancement.

**To be looked in UPSC Paper 2 Topic** : Important International institutions, agencies and fora, their structure, mandate.