

ASSESSMENT OF RANGE-WIDE CURRENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE ON ENDANGERED INDIAN PANGOLIN (*Manis craussicaudata*)

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Abstract

Indian pangolin is distributed throughout South Asia, from eastern Pakistan to much of India, south of the Himalayas, southern Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. It is classified as an Endangered (EN) species, listed under Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Although its population is declining at an alarming rate there seems to be little information available on this species across its range. This has created a knowledge gap for sustainable management and conservation of the species. For effective planning, it is necessary to study the trends in research of the species and monitor these gaps to realign research focus on current conservation needs. We systematically reviewed all the published English literature on Indian pangolin between 1980 and 2020 to synthesize range-wide current state of knowledge on this species. Internet-based searches in Google Scholar produced 3320 results. After a set of selection processes, 64 literature were assessed. During the 1980–2020 time period, 31 journals published articles on Indian pangolins. The maximum number of the study was conducted in 2020 (n=10). Among the range countries, most literature was based on India (n=24), whereas the least was on Nepal (n=1). Studies on the Indian pangolin were mostly focused on the theme ecology (48%, n=31). More than 63% of the research (n=40) was based on primary sources of information or empirical studies. We recorded a total of 12 distinct methods used to study Indian pangolin where community interview (n=19) was the most often utilized approach. We investigated the trend and spatial distribution of Indian pangolin research, identified research gaps, assessed methods employed in Indian pangolin research and provided conservation recommendations. We expect that findings from our study will help to fill in gaps on Indian pangolins and be useful in their conservation.

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