

ECOSYSTEMS FOUNDED THROUGHOUT INDIA



Diverse. Mysterious. Two adjectives that perfectly describe the ecosystems of India. Iconic creatures like Indian elephants, sloth bears, and Asiatic lions are native to India's Gir Forest. Yet there is more to this amazing country than rich forests and dense jungles. From snow-covered mountains to deserts and wetlands, India's amazingly diverse ecosystems have captured the imaginations of writers, explorers, and artists for centuries.

India's biodiversity has been a source of interest for centuries. In the 17th century, an artist named Ustad Mansur traveled with the Mughal emperor, Jahangir, and painted scientifically accurate portraits of India's plants and animals. During his travels, Ustad painted the best surviving portrait of a dodo, a flightless bird that went extinct in 1681. This painting is on display at the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia.



In northern India, a mountain range called the Himalayas makes up one of the region's most important ecosystems. Among the pinnacles, well-hidden due to their spotted, white-gray fur, shy snow leopards lurk among the snowy rocks. Musk deer, mouse-like pikas, bearded vultures, and blue sheep live in this ecosystem too. In the surrounding forests and plains, one can find clouded leopards, Himalayan brown bears, and herds of wild yak. Red pandas even live up in the trees, foraging and munching on bamboo.