IUCN Conservation Outlook Assessment 2014 **(archived)**
Finalised on 29 October 2014

Please note: this is an archived Conservation Outlook Assessment for Western Ghats. To access the most up-to-date Conservation Outlook Assessment for this site, please visit https://www.worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org.

Western Ghats

SITE INFORMATION

Country:
India
Inscribed in: 2012
Criteria:
(ix) (x)

Site description:
Older than the Himalaya mountains, the mountain chain of the Western Ghats represents geomorphic features of immense importance with unique biophysical and ecological processes. The site's high montane forest ecosystems influence the Indian monsoon weather pattern. Moderating the tropical climate of the region, the site presents one of the best examples of the monsoon system on the planet. It also has an exceptionally high level of biological diversity and endemism and is recognized as one of the world's eight 'hottest hotspots' of biological diversity. The forests of the site include some of the best representatives of non-equatorial tropical evergreen forests anywhere and are home to at least 325 globally threatened flora, fauna, bird, amphibian, reptile and fish species. © UNESCO

SUMMARY

2014 Conservation Outlook

Significant concern

This property has been recently inscribed in 2012 amid some controversy, given the difficulty to decide how best to represent the extraordinary biological richness of the Western Ghats. Finally a network of 39 separately managed sites, grouped in 7 contiguous clusters, was inscribed and efforts are under way to draw these sites together into a cohesive whole (including corridors to ensure wildlife connectivity) that tells the story of the outstanding value of the Western Ghats. Traditionally conserved by small populations of indigenous people leading sustainable lifestyles, the area is under increasing population and developmental pressure that requires intensive and targeted management efforts to ensure that not only are existing values conserved, but that some past damage may be remediated. The challenges are many, but the will by both government and non-governmental groups to ensure the conservation of the Western Ghats is high. However, until more data is accumulated (both on conservation trends and protection and management aspects), and given the number and level of threats that this property faces, its conservation outlook is currently assessed as of Significant Concern.

Current state and trend of VALUES

Good
Trend: Data Deficient

While the state of World Heritage values in the property can be considered as good at time of inscription, the current state and trend of World Heritage values are Data Deficient and targeted monitoring is required. It should be noted that the nomination was never clear as to which species occur within the property itself and which species occur in the Western Ghats (an area far larger than the property inscribed as World Heritage). However, at time of inscription it was stated that 325 species in the property were classified as globally threatened. This figure will certainly change, and careful monitoring will be required to

differentiate increased knowledge from real changes in conservation status. However, the capacity for monitoring within the property is high and many projects that will be helpful for monitoring the trend of World Heritage values, which are principally based on biodiversity, are in progress.

Overall THREATS

High Threat

The fact that so much biodiversity remains in the Western Ghats, given the tremendous population pressure both within and surrounding the property, is extraordinary. A large number of threats which severely threaten the OUV of the property exist and require coordinated conservation responses at all levels including political, sociological and biological. Constant requirements for development will continue to place the property under high threat. Climate change will probably exacerbate a system already under pressure.

Overall PROTECTION and MANAGEMENT

Some Concern

It is very difficult to assess the overall protection and management of the property at this point in time. Each of the 39 component parts of the property has its own management system and protective measures that vary throughout this large serial site that stretches over a distance of some 1,400 km from north to south. Functional corridors that assure wildlife movement between protected areas are required.

FULL ASSESSMENT

Description of values

Values

World Heritage values

▶ **One of the best examples of a tropical monsoon system on the planet**
Criterion:(ix)

The high mountains of the Western Ghats and their characteristic montane forest ecosystems influence the Indian monsoon weather patterns that mediate the warm tropical climate of the region, presenting one of the best examples of the tropical monsoon system on the planet, responsible for large-scale biophysical and ecological processes (SoOUV, 2012; Nomination, 2010).

▶ **Exceptional species diversity and endemism**
Criterion:(ix)

The Western Ghats contain exceptional levels of plant and animal diversity and endemicity for a continental area, and are essential for the conservation of a number of threatened habitats, such as unique seasonally mass-flowering wildflower meadows, Shola forests and Myristica swamps. A number of plant genera exhibit massive evolutionary radiation (SoOUV, 2012; IUCN, 2012; Nomination, 2010).

▶ **Endemic and threatened plants**
Criterion:(x)

The property is a global centre of plant diversity with a high degree of endemism. Around 4-5,000 plant species have been recorded in the property. Its forests include some of the best representatives of non-equatorial tropical evergreen forests in the world including large numbers of endemic and

threatened plant species. Of nearly 650 tree species recorded, 352 (54%) are endemic (SoOUV, 2012; IUCN, 2012; Nomination, 2010).

► Endemic and threatened mammals

Criterion:(x)

A number of flagship mammals occur in the property, including parts of the single largest population of globally threatened 'landscape' species such as the Asian Elephant, Gaur and Tiger. Endangered species such as the Lion-tailed Macaque, Nilgiri Tahr and Nilgiri Langur are unique to the area. Around 139 mammal species occur in the property of which around 17 are endemic (SoOUV, 2012; IUCN, 2012; Nomination, 2010).

► Endemic and threatened birds

Criterion:(x)

The Western Ghats have been identified as an Endemic Bird Area with 16 endemic breeding species, two of which are listed as Vulnerable. Around 508 bird species occur regularly within the Western Ghats (SoOUV, 2012; IUCN, 2012; Nomination, 2010).

► Endemic and threatened amphibians

Criterion:(x)

The property contains exceptional amphibian diversity, with up to 179 species, 65% endemic (SoOUV, 2012; IUCN, 2012; Nomination, 2010).

► Endemic and threatened reptiles

Criterion:(x)

The property contains exceptional reptile diversity, with some 157 species, 62% endemic (SoOUV, 2012; IUCN, 2012; Nomination, 2010).

► Endemic and threatened fish

Criterion:(x)

The property contains exceptional fish diversity, with some 219 species, 53% endemic (SoOUV, 2012; IUCN, 2012; Nomination, 2010).

▶ Endemic and threatened invertebrates

Criterion:(x)

While the species inventory of invertebrates is far from complete, endemicity is likely also to be very high, with some 80% of tiger beetles recorded as endemic (SoOUV, 2012; IUCN, 2012; Nomination, 2010).

Assessment information

Threats

Current Threats

High Threat

The fact that so much biodiversity remains in the Western Ghats, given the tremendous population pressure surrounding the property, is extraordinary. A large number of threats which severely threaten the OUV of the property exist and require coordinated conservation responses at all levels including political, sociological and biological.

▶ Crops

High Threat
Inside site

Agriculture and aquaculture impact 7% of odonates and 4% of plants (Molur et al., 2011).

▶ Invasive Non-Native/ Alien Species

High Threat
Inside site
Outside site

Invasive alien species (IAS) are considered as the second major threat to native flora only after habitat destruction, and Lantana camara is a major

invasive (Rao, 2012). IAS impact 22% of fishes (Molur et al., 2011).

▶ Tourism/ Recreation Areas

High Threat
Inside site
Outside site

High population pressure within and surrounding the property and risk of encroachment (IUCN, 2012). The growth of populations around protected areas and other forests has led to increasing human-wildlife conflict. Pressures on the region’s natural ecosystems are intensifying, driven by economic development, population growth and rising demand for power, agricultural commodities and minerals (CEPF, 2013; Gadgil et al., 2011; Kasturirangan et al., 2013; Bharucha et al., 2010). Residential and commercial development is one of the highest threats to freshwater biodiversity (Molur et al., 2011).

▶ Fire/ Fire Suppression

Low Threat
Inside site
Outside site

Occasional wildfires occur in the property (Nomination, 2010).

▶ Renewable Energy

High Threat
Inside site
Outside site

Fast running rivers and steep slopes have provided sites for about fifty major hydropower plants in the Ghats (Kasturirangan, 2013), some which are situated in or just outside the property boundaries with the potential for expansion in response to increased irrigation and hydro-electric demand. Similar pressures may arise for wind power generation, with the construction of a number of new windmills (possibly inside the property, or on its boundaries).Since all infrastructure development is subject to environmental impact assessment, the pressure that this infrastructure will have on the OUV of the property is contested (IUCN, 2012).

► Livestock Farming / Grazing

High Threat
Inside site
Outside site

Grazing within the property is a threat. Some protected areas have been declared “grazing free” thanks to ecodevelopment projects, largely financed by the Government. However, in other areas grazing remains a visible impact (IUCN, 2012).

► Forestry/ Wood production

High Threat
Inside site
Outside site

Unsustainable extraction of fuel wood, non-timber forest products and freshwater biodiversity will always remain a threat (IUCN, 2012; Molur et al., 2011). However, Gadgil et al. (2011) note that subsistence collection by local communities is not a threat and the issue is rather pressures created by organised industry.

► Commercial hunting

High Threat
Inside site
Outside site

Human-wildlife conflict is a major issue in a number of components (IUCN, 2012). Remaining forest patches are subject to intense hunting pressure, and the growth of populations around protected areas and other forests has led to increasing human-wildlife conflict. Raiding elephants cause crop loss, and leopards kill livestock. Compensation for farmers is generally inadequate, and wild animals are often killed or injured in an attempt to reduce further damage (CEPF, 2013).

► Tourism/ Recreation Areas

High Threat
Inside site

Tourism is increasing disturbance to sensitive areas. Massive pilgrimage

tourism within the property is of particular concern (Nomination, 2010; IUCN, 2012). Tourism has been promoted beyond the carrying capacity of the settlements and has led to scarcity of water, increased sewage and solid waste and forest degradation (Equations, 2011; Kasturirangan, 2013).

► Avalanches/ Landslides, Storms/Flooding

High Threat
Inside site

Changes in land use and tree cutting have led to big variations in the duration and intensity of rainfalls. Climate change has caused severe floods, landslides, erosion and fallen trees in many regions, the latest one in November 2009 in the Nilgiri Mountains (SWGM, 2010, Kasturirangan, 2013).

► Water Pollution

High Threat
Inside site

The main threat impacting freshwater biodiversity is pollution (Molur et al., 2011).

► Mining/ Quarrying

Low Threat
Inside site
Outside site

Although most mines have been excluded from the property, there remain mining concerns in Sindhudurg in Maharashtra. Similarly, Kudremukh National Park has a large iron-ore mine in the centre which, although the State Party has re-confirmed that “no mining occurs at present”, holds the potential to be reactivated. An additional concern is the liability of mine rehabilitation, which in this case was reported to be the responsibility of the park on land which has been returned to the park (an area of 5,000 ha). All mines within the property require rehabilitation (IUCN, 2012). A newspaper article reports “In the past few years quarrying and sand mining have also encroached into parts of the Ghats” (Rao, 2014) although not clear if this occurs within the property or elsewhere in the Ghats. Mining is cited as a major threat, especially as negative externalities are not sufficiently addressed (Gadgil et al. 2011). Energy production and mining impact 6% of

fishes, 5% of molluscs and 4% of freshwater plants overall (Molur et al., 2011).

Potential Threats

Low Threat

Continued requirements for development will continue to place the property under high threat. Climate change will probably exacerbate a system already under pressure.

► Mining/ Quarrying

Low Threat
Inside site
Outside site

While in theory these should not impact the property itself as new mines and hydroelectric installations would not be allowed in the property itself, there still remains the possibility that they could be developed around the property.

Protection and management

Assessing Protection and Management

► Relationships with local people

Serious Concern

While it is clear that there is much support from many local populations including academics and committed conservationists belonging to a variety of NGOs, there is also conflict with local people, particularly in some places in Kodagu and Karnataka. There are some 40 different Adivasi/indigenous peoples in several states of the Western Ghats region and significant concerns with rights issues. Participatory mechanisms through Village Ecodevelopment Committees (VEDCs) are in place, although there are still concerns that these do not respect existing indigenous institutions for decision-making consistent with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (IUCN, 2012).

► Legal framework and enforcement

Serious Concern

The 39 component parts of this serial property fall under a number of protection regimes, ranging from Tiger Reserves, National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, and Reserved Forests. All components are owned by the State and are subject to stringent protection under laws including the Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972, the Indian Forest Act of 1927, and the Forest Conservation Act (1980). Through these laws the components are under the control of the Forestry Department and the Chief Wildlife Warden, thus the legal status is adequate. 40% of the property lies outside of the formal protected area system, mostly in Reserved Forests, which are legally protected and effectively managed. The Forest Conservation Act (1980) provides adequate regulatory framework to protect them from infrastructure development. However, whether these Reserved Forests will successfully protect the values of such a large proportion (40%) of the property from various pressures including access and infrastructure development remains unclear (IUCN, 2012).

► Integration into regional and national planning systems

Data Deficient

The State Party explained how it would Improve coordination and integration between component parts of the property, particularly through the existing mechanisms of the Western Ghats Natural Heritage Management Committee and the preparation and implementation of an overarching management framework, for the serial property as a whole (SP, 2012). Given the complexity of integrating this into an already complex system including 4 different states and a national authority, further examination is needed to see if this mechanism is now in place and its level of functioning.

► Management system

Serious Concern

All the National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries are managed as per the prescriptions of the Management Plans as approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the state. The reserved forests are managed as per the prescriptions in the approved Working Plan (Nomination, 2010). However,

these plans are very complex and it is not clear how each component part is managed, nor how they contribute to an overall management strategy of the property (IUCN, 2012). The overarching management system of the Western Ghats Natural Heritage Management Committee (Chaired by the Director-General of Forests, and including representatives from national level; State level through the Chief Wildlife Wardens of Kerala, TN, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat and Goa; and representatives from Wildlife Institute of India (WII), ATREE, Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF), and the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel) is supposed to guide the management of the property as a whole (SP, 2012).

► Management effectiveness

Data Deficient

No studies on the management effectiveness of the property have been seen. Staffing at professional, technical and maintenance levels for the entire property includes Divisional Forest Officer/ Assistant Conservator of Forest (28); Ranger Officer (58); Deputy Ranger (35); Forester (238); Guards (757) and Watchers (125) for a total of 1,241 staff for the entire property (Nomination, 2010).

► Implementation of Committee decisions and recommendations

Data Deficient

Recommendations at time of inscription (2012) to take into account the outcomes of scientific studies of institutes specialized in the field, and their recommendations; to ensure proactive tourism management in anticipation of increased future visitation, and to ensure that visitation remains within the capacity of the property; to ensure any proposed infrastructure developments are subject to rigorous prior impact assessments, to determine if they are appropriate; and to establish improved coordination and integration between the components, particularly through the preparation and implementation of an overarching management plan or framework for the serial property as a whole (Decision 36COM 8B.10). A SP report is required to establish if these recommendations have been implemented.

► Boundaries

Some Concern

The property is a serial property with 39 different components in 7 contiguous areas. Areas within the property include a number of settlements, dams, artificial reservoirs, plantations and agricultural areas which are inappropriate for the core area of a natural World Heritage area (IUCN, 2012). Boundaries were somewhat modified prior to inscription, but IUCN considered that a revised proposal would have been a better outcome (IUCN, 2012). This was echoed in the report by Gadgil et al. (2011) which provided a different and more comprehensive proposal that in their view would more effectively serve the objectives of the World Heritage Convention.

► Sustainable finance

Mostly Effective

Funds are made available from budget allocations in Central and State budgets and other centrally sponsored schemes for all site elements of each Sub-cluster (Nomination, 2010). Government funding mechanisms provide a more reliable source of funding to sustain and scale up community-based conservation actions than grant funding or philanthropic donations. Government has significantly increased funding for research, while CEPF has significantly increased the availability of funding for conservation action by civil society. However, non-CEPF donor funding for biodiversity conservation has diminished significantly over the last five years (CEPF, 2013).

► Staff training and development

Highly Effective

The field staff are adequately trained in conservation and management techniques. The Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGNFA), Dehradun, imparts the basic training on forestry and management techniques. This training is supplemented by periodic orientation courses by IGNFA offered to officers holding various levels of responsibility. Additional training on wildlife management techniques is offered by the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. For subordinate-level officers and staff, the institutions providing training include the Southern Forest Rangers College, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu; Forestry College, Vaigai Dam, Tamil Nadu; Periyar Foundation, Thekkady, Kerala; Institute of Management in Government, Kerala; Kerala Forest Research Institute, Thrissur, Kerala; Kerala Forest School, Arippa and

Walayar, Kerala (Nomination, 2010).

▶ Sustainable use

Mostly Effective

Joint forest management includes focused action on organizing the communities, empowering them and providing support for sustainable alternate livelihoods and enhanced income generation activities. Capacity building efforts to make local communities practice ecologically sustainable and improved land use for enhanced productivity remains a prime concern (Nomination, 2010).

▶ Education and interpretation programs

Mostly Effective

Interpretation centres and nature education and awareness camps have been designed to sensitize visitors towards nature and to appreciate conservation initiatives. These facilities vary depending on the extent of tourist flow in each of the site elements (Nomination, 2010).

▶ Tourism and interpretation

Mostly Effective

Visitor facilities include accommodation in inspection bungalows and dormitories (Nomination, 2010).

▶ Monitoring

Data Deficient

The agency responsible for monitoring is the office of the Chief Wildlife Warden in each State, and it was proposed to monitor key indicators which included 5 high-profile mammals (Asian Elephant, Lion-tailed Macaque, Nilgiri Langur, Nilgiri Tahr, Tiger), 1 habitat (Myristica swamp) and 1 keystone tree species (Nomination, 2010). This might however be insufficient in order to identify trends in the property as a whole.

▶ Research

Highly Effective

A large amount of scientific research is undertaken in the property.

Overall assessment of protection and management

Some Concern

It is very difficult to assess the overall protection and management of the property at this point in time. Each of the 39 component parts of the property has its own management system and protective measures that vary throughout this large serial site that stretches over a distance of some 1,400 km from north to south. Functional corridors that assure wildlife movement between protected areas are required.

► Assessment of the effectiveness of protection and management in addressing threats outside the site

Serious Concern

Politically the entire Western Ghats is extremely difficult to protect and manage given the large number of different stakeholders operating in the area, and the fact that 40% has already been destroyed. Functional corridors that assure wildlife movement between protected areas are required.

State and trend of values

Assessing the current state and trend of values

World Heritage values

► One of the best examples of a tropical monsoon system on the planet

Good
Trend:Data Deficient

With climate change this value could deteriorate, but it will take a very long time to ascertain a trend rather than annual fluctuations. For now the current state is the same as when the property was inscribed.

▶ Exceptional species diversity and endemism

Good
Trend:Data Deficient

Exceptional species diversity and endemicity as well as essential for the conservation of a number of threatened habitats. A number of plant genera exhibit massive evolutionary radiation (SoOUV, 2012). Insufficient time has passed to analyse trends in these values.

▶ Endemic and threatened plants

Good
Trend:Data Deficient

Around 4-5,000 plant species have been recorded in the property. Of nearly 650 tree species recorded in the Western Ghats, 352 are endemic (SoOUV, 2012). Information is incomplete as to the conservation status of plants in the property, and more work will be required to establish a baseline for monitoring trends in plant conservation. IUCN has undertaken global Red List assessments of selected freshwater plants which could serve as a baseline (CEPF, 2013), although it would be helpful to monitor other plant species as well.

▶ Endemic and threatened mammals

Good
Trend:Data Deficient

Around 139 mammal species occur in the Western Ghats of which 17 are endemic, including the Lion-tailed Macaque, Nilgiri Tahr and Nilgiri Langur. The property also protects globally threatened species such as the Asian Elephant, Gaur and Tiger (SoOUV, 2012). Insufficient time has passed since inscription to analyse trends in these values.

▶ Endemic and threatened birds

Good
Trend:Data Deficient

Around 508 bird species regularly occur in the Western Ghats which has been identified as an Endemic Bird Area, with 16 endemic breeding species of which two are listed as Vulnerable (SoOUV, 2012). Insufficient time has

passed to analyse trends in values of the bird species occurring within the property.

▶ Endemic and threatened amphibians

Good
Trend:Data Deficient

The property contains exceptional amphibian diversity, with up to 179 species, 65% endemic (SoOUV, 2012). Insufficient time has passed to analyse trends in values. Again it should be determined whether all these species occur within the property.

▶ Endemic and threatened reptiles

Good
Trend:Data Deficient

The property contains exceptional reptile diversity, with some 157 species, 62% endemic (SoOUV, 2012). Insufficient time has passed to analyse trends in values. WILD has undertaken comprehensive global Red List assessments of reptiles which will serve as a baseline (CEPF, 2013). Again it should be determined whether all these species occur within the property.

▶ Endemic and threatened fish

Good
Trend:Data Deficient

The property contains exceptional fish diversity, with some 219 species, 53% endemic (SoOUV, 2012). Insufficient time has passed to analyse trends in values. IUCN has undertaken comprehensive global Red List assessments of freshwater fishes which will serve as a baseline (CEPF, 2013). Again it should be determined whether all these species occur within the property.

▶ Endemic and threatened invertebrates

Good
Trend:Data Deficient

While the species inventory of invertebrates is far from complete, endemicity is likely also to be very high, with some 80% of tiger beetles recorded as endemic (SoOUV, 2012). IUCN has undertaken comprehensive global Red List assessments of freshwater odonates and molluscs which will serve as a

baseline (CEPF, 2013). While trends in invertebrate status will be very difficult to ascertain, it could be possible to focus on specific groups such as odonates, if it is possible to determine which species occur in the property.

Summary of the Values

▶ **Assessment of the current state and trend of World Heritage values**

Good

Trend: Data Deficient

While the state of World Heritage values in the property can be considered as good at time of inscription, the current state and trend of World Heritage values are Data Deficient and targeted monitoring is required. It should be noted that the nomination was never clear as to which species occur within the property itself and which species occur in the Western Ghats (an area far larger than the property inscribed as World Heritage). However, at time of inscription it was stated that 325 species in the property were classified as globally threatened. This figure will certainly change, and careful monitoring will be required to differentiate increased knowledge from real changes in conservation status. However, the capacity for monitoring within the property is high and many projects that will be helpful for monitoring the trend of World Heritage values, which are principally based on biodiversity, are in progress.

Additional information

Key conservation issues

▶ **Population pressure/ encroachment**

Local

High population pressure within and surrounding the property with a high risk of encroachment. Residential and commercial development is one of the highest threats to freshwater biodiversity

▶ Development pressures

Local

Pressures on the region’s natural ecosystems are intensifying, driven by economic development, population growth and rising demand for power, agricultural commodities and minerals

▶ Local community rights

Local

Local communities have not been sufficiently involved in joint management of protected areas. However, powerful interest groups also appear to influence decision-making that may not be in the interests of conservation.

▶ Tourism

Local

Two types of tourism: those visiting for wildlife and those visiting for religious pilgrimages, require careful management. Tourism said to provide alternative livelihoods for people living in or near the property, if correctly managed.

▶ Poaching and human/wildlife conflict

Local

The growth of populations around protected areas and other forests has led to increasing human-wildlife conflict.

▶ Climate change

Local

The effects of climate change are beginning to be observed but may become more important in the future.

Benefits

Understanding Benefits

▶ Pollination

Honey is produced within the protected areas and the property is an important reserve for other pollinators.

► **Soil stabilisation**

The steep and other forested slopes provide protection from erosion, soil stabilisation and ground-water renewal.

► **Carbon sequestration**

Large size of forested area provides significant carbon sequestration and improves local impact.

► **Contribution to education**

Many of the components have educational centres or even schools inside the property for the local population.

► **Outdoor recreation and tourism**

Beneficiaries include local and regional businesses that rely on tourism, and the tourists themselves.

► **Collection of medicinal resources for local use**

Local people are allowed to collect medicinal plants in the property.

► **Wilderness and iconic features**

Some of the component parts include sacred groves, waterfalls and/or mountains

► **History and tradition**

Several important pilgrimage routes including temples.

► **Commercial wells**

A number of hydro-electric plants use dammed rivers located within site.

► **Access to drinking water**

Local communities living within the property use water provided by the site.

► **Livestock grazing areas**

Some livestock grazing and fodder collection is allowed for local populations within the property.

► **Collection of wild plants and mushrooms**

local people are allowed to collect wild food plants, mushrooms and medicinal plants in the property.

► **Does management of the site provide jobs (e.g. for managers or rangers)?**

Provision of revenue and jobs through park management, tourism and small enterprises.

► **Is the protected area valued for its nature conservation?**

The property is essential for the protection of a high percentage of the unique flora and fauna of the Western Ghats.
Data deficient

Summary of benefits

The greatest benefit of the property is the safeguard of an enormous number of endemic species found nowhere else in the world, many of which would disappear if they did not occur in a protected area. The property also provides important ecosystem services, ensuring water quality and soil stabilisation. With the sacred sites situated within the property as well as a wealth of wildlife and spectacular scenery the property provides important spiritual as well as tourism benefits. The component parks generate employment through park jobs as well as tourism and local enterprises such as the collection of medicinal plants and fruit, and honey production.

Projects

Compilation of active conservation projects

№	Organization/ individuals	Project duration	Brief description of Active Projects
1	CEPF		See CEPF portfolio of projects
2	ATREE		Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, Bangalore. Administers CEPF grants but also has its own projects.
3	Wildlife Conservation Society		Tiger and habitat conservation
4	Agumbe Rainforest Research Station		Rainforest research/King cobras
5	Wildlife Trust of India		Work on elephant corridor, studying linear infrastructure and its impacts on the Ghats, community initiatives, anti poaching training, veterinary serVices as well as anti snare work.

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