

Threats on Pangolin(Salak)



**Indian Pangolin Conservation Project,
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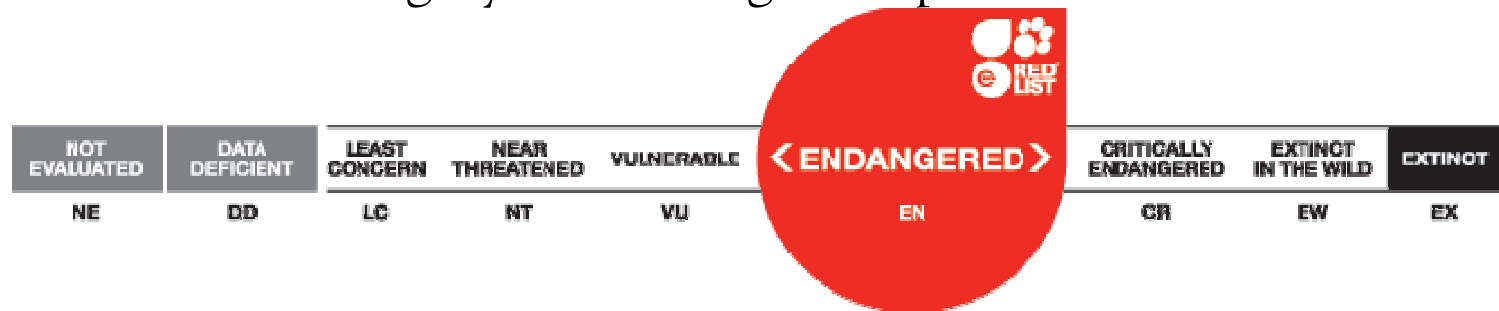


What is a Pangolin?

- An African and Asian mammal that has a body covered with horny overlapping scales (which helps in defending itself), a small head with an elongated snout, a long sticky tongue for catching ants and termites, and a tapering tail.
- These species range in size from 30 to 100 cm.
- The scales are made of keratin, the same material of which human fingernails and tetra pod claws are made.
- The tongues of pangolins are extremely elongated and extend into the abdominal cavity.
- All together 8 species of pangolins are found among which four are found in Asia and four in Africa.

Conservation Status

- According to the [IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#), all pangolin species are experiencing decreasing populations so are listed under category of Endangered Species.



- Pangolins are listed on Appendix II of CITES



Threats for Conservation

4

I. Illegal Trade:

- Though pangolin are protected by an international ban on their trade, populations have suffered from illegal trafficking due to unfounded beliefs in Asia that their ground-up scales can stimulate lactation or cure cancer or asthma.
- The average minimum price of pangolins (Rs 500-1000/kg) at local hunter gets rise exponentially (Rs 40000-50000 or even more) when it reached to borders by high ranked poachers.



Pictures reflecting Illegal Trade



2. Ethnological importance of Pangolin

- Various ethnological factors are responsible for decreasing pangolin from nature, it is believed that whole body of pangolin is very important in healing asthma, rheumatic fever, joint problem etc.
- According to the traditional practitioners, uterus of pangolin locally known as “garvello” is very important in avoiding the hazard of abortion. Scales are used in making garlands. It is believed that use of scale in children is a safety precaution from evils and bad spirits.



3. Human Utility

- Millions of Pangolins are hunted for food, for use in traditional medicine and as fashion accessories, and for a rampant illegal international trade in scales, skins, and meat.
- There is high demand for nearly all of their body parts, principally from China in order to make clothes and other ornaments.

Some Images for Human Utility of Pangolin



4. Killing for Meat

- Meat is one of the major cause of declining number of Pangolins from wild.
- Baby pangolins are enjoyed in the form of various dishes whereas the scales of adults are grinded and taken as a soup.



5. Habitat Destruction

- ❖ Destruction of habitat by deforestation, forest fire and other natural as well as human activities destroys the population of Pangolin in wild.



Trap to trap Pangolin in it's habitat.

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10



Other causes for declining Pangolin's population

- Predation: Leopards, Tiger, Wild Dogs, Pythons, Human, etc. are the predators of Pangolins.
- Use of Pesticides: Due to the use of pesticides in agricultural crops, Pangolins are in loss. As Pangolins main diet is ant and termites, when they are killed by use of pesticides there will be lower number of Pangolin due to food shortage.
- **Slow reproduction rate**
- **Land modification**

Steps for Conservation

- Introduction of **International Union for Conservation of Nature** (IUCN) Species Survival Commission (SSC) Pangolin Specialist Group (PangolinSG).
- Rufford SG (P Kaspal, AP Khatiwada, Nirjala Raut...)
- An organization named Save Pangolins also works for the protection of Pangolins.
- Carnivore and Pangolin Conservation Program too works for the conservation activities of Pangolin.
- ZSL London is also playing a vital role in its conservation.





Possible Steps that can be taken for the Conservation

- Public Awareness Program
- Illegal trade through international as well as domestic borders should be stopped.
- Strict rules and regulations should be formulated and implemented.
- Habitat should be properly managed.