

The Habitats Trust Awards Rs. 3.3 Crore to Six Biodiversity Conservation Projects Across India

Category: Business

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The Habitats Trust (THT) announced the recipients of the ninth edition of The Habitats Trust Grants, awarding Rs. 3.3 crore to 6 conservation projects working to protect India's threatened species and critical habitats. The selected projects span diverse ecosystems including Mangroves, Oak forests, grasslands. and demonstrate innovative, community-led and science-driven approaches to conserving the country's rich biodiversity.

India is home to nearly 8% of the world's recorded biodiversity, making it one of the world's richest repositories of wildlife and ecosystems. Protecting this natural heritage requires sustained support for conservation efforts across landscapes and species, including many lesser-known flora and fauna that play a vital role in maintaining ecological balance. Through its annual grants programme, THT supports conservation practitioners working at the forefront of these efforts, enabling innovative, science-led and community-driven solutions across the country.

This year's grants have been awarded across three categories, reflecting the diverse conservation challenges and solutions emerging from across the country.

2026 Grant Categories and Recipients

THT Conservation Grant

Supports organisations addressing India's conservation challenges, with a focus on lesser-known species and critical habitats.

- Arulagam – One Health Approach for Conserving Critically Endangered Vultures and Hyena in Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, Tamil Nadu
- Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology – Croak, Coexist, and Conserve: Conservation of Threatened Amphibians in Human-Shaped Landscapes of River Catchments with Community Participation in Western Ghats

THT Action Grant

Supports urgent, on-ground conservation projects for lesser-known species and habitats requiring immediate intervention.

- Devvrat Singh – Evidence-Based, Community-Led Conservation of the Indian Wolf in Bahraich's Intense Human-Wolf Conflict Landscapes: Strengthening OECM Approaches
- Nagpur Centre for Peoples Social Forum – Community-Led Grassland Conservation and Fodder Security Around the Two Protected Areas of Vidarbha

THT Research Grant

Supports interdisciplinary research that informs evidence-based conservation action.

- Centre for Ecology, Development and Research (CEDAR) – Remnant and Restorable Ecosystem (RARE) Assessment: Developing a Blueprint for Conservation and Restoration of Himalayan Oak Forests
- MS Swaminathan Research Foundation – Coastal Habitat Monitoring for Enhanced Resilience, Species Conservation, and Community Well-Being

Congratulating this year's grantees, **Roshni Nadar Malhotra, Founder & Trustee, The Habitats Trust**, said, *"India's biodiversity is far beyond its iconic wildlife. It includes thousands of lesser-known species and ecosystems that quietly sustain ecological balance and support millions of lives. Through The Habitats Trust Grants, we are proud to support the conservationists working tirelessly to protect this natural heritage. Their work not only strengthens biodiversity conservation today but also helps secure a healthier and more resilient future for generations to come."*

Rushikesh Chavan, Director, The Habitats Trust, said, *"The quality and diversity of applications this year reflects the growing momentum of conservation efforts across India. From protecting overlooked species and restoring critical habitats to generating research that informs conservation action, these projects show how local knowledge, scientific expertise and community participation can come together to create meaningful and lasting impact."*

This year, The Habitats Trust received 117 applications from

all across the country. Following a rigorous five-stage evaluation process, 27 projects were shortlisted for field evaluation, of which 10 finalists presented their proposals before an expert jury.

The jury comprised Roshni Nadar Malhotra, Chairperson, HCL Group and Founder & Trustee, The Habitats Trust; Dr. M. K. Ranjitsinh, wildlife expert and architect of India's Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972; Bahar Dutt, wildlife biologist and environmental journalist; and Brian Heath, Founder & CEO, Mara Conservancy, Kenya. Projects were evaluated on their conservation relevance, scientific rigour, feasibility, stakeholder engagement, scalability and long-term impact.

Since its inception in 2018, The Habitats Trust Grants has supported 38 conservation projects across 21 States and 5 Union Territories, disbursing more than Rs. 16.2 crore to strengthen grassroots conservation efforts across India. By investing in research, innovation and on-ground action, the programme continues to empower conservation practitioners working to protect the country's extraordinary biodiversity and build resilient ecosystems for the future.

For more information, please visit www.thehabitatstrust.org/tht-research-grant.php

About The Habitats Trust

Founded in 2018 by Roshni Nadar Malhotra, Chairperson of HCL Technologies, and Shikhar Malhotra, CEO and Vice-Chairman of HCL Healthcare, The Habitats Trust (THT) is focused on addressing some of the most pressing developmental challenges

arising from biodiversity loss, the climate crisis and global water scarcity. It is committed to undertake pioneering work that goes beyond sustainability and offers regenerative models for a thriving world. THT today works in 32 states and UTs of India with over 120 partners covering an area of over six lakh hectares. Over the last six years THT has made innovations for solving complex multidisciplinary challenges by using cutting-edge technology, ecological restoration, and species and habitats conservation.

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