

Unit 4

Biodiversity and Conservation Lecture 6

Hotspots of Biodiversity

Biodiversity hotspot is a biogeographic region with a significant reservoir of biodiversity that is threatened with destruction

To qualify as a biodiversity hotspot a region must meet two strict criteria: it must contain at least 0.5% or 1,500 species of vascular plants as endemics, and it has to have lost at least 70% of its primary vegetation

Around the world, at least 25 areas qualify under this definition, with nine others possible candidates. These sites support nearly 60% of the world's plant, bird, mammal, reptile, and amphibian species, with a very high share of endemic species

In India, the hotspots are Eastern Himalayas and Western Ghats

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The high profile of the biodiversity hotspots has resulted in considerable criticism. Critics have argued that the biodiversity hotspots

- ☐ Do not adequately represent other forms of species richness (e.g. total species richness or threatened species richness)
- ☐ Do not adequately represent taxa other than vascular plants (e.g. vertebrates, or fungi)
- ☐ Do not protect smaller scale richness hotspots
- ☐ Do not make allowances for changing land use patterns
- ☐ Do not protect ecosystem services
- ☐ Do not consider phylogenetic diversity