

'Humans have made a mess of the planet'

The need to preserve India's wildlife is making noise in foreign shores too! Eminent American conservationist and biologist George Schaller feels that though India has achieved a significant success in wildlife conservation over the past 50 years, a lot of consistent work needs to be done on the part of policymakers to bring the issue on the forefront.

"India's progress towards wildlife conservation and environment has seen a positive change. In the 60s, there were no policies on tiger conservation and a lot of poaching was being done. Now, the government too has become very concerned," says Schaller who has dedicated 50 years of his life for such causes. His research on the Indian tiger in the Kanha National Park is considered as the basis for field biology study world over. Recently, he was honoured with the Lifetime Service Award at the 12th Sanctuary Wildlife Awards held in the City.

Currently the vice president of a global conservationism



George Schaller

society called Panthera, Schaller stresses on the need to focus on conserving other species too. "Other than tigers, elephants and leopards need to be saved too!" says Schaller who was recently in the City for an environment and wildlife film festival.

His passion towards what he has made into a profession is quite evident when he is all acerbic towards those who don't realise the need to save wildlife and environment. "Humans have made a mess

of the planet. Ultimately what everybody wants is a healthy life. People need to realise that they cannot have a healthy life in the absence of healthy nature around them," he points out. On the role of wildlife filmmakers in sensitising people towards environmental issues, he says, "Filmmakers can connect people with the wildlife issues like no one else can! I hope that there are more and more films which focus on getting people involved towards wildlife conservation."

However, there are also concern areas as he states that arranging funds for making such films is a tedious task not just in India but world over. "I think it is time for big business establishments to pay back to the nature," he chuckles and adds, "Arranging funding has always been difficult for anything that is controversial. Wildlife filmmakers should go to big business establishments and convince them to donate generously," says Schaller, who can easily be labelled as wildlife's biggest defender.

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