

Chief Secretary chairs meeting with NGOs on Forests, Wildlife, and Environmental Conservation in Ladakh

Leh, April 02, 2026: The Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, chaired a meeting with prominent non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the fields of forest conservation, wildlife protection, and environmental sustainability across the region.

The meeting focused on strengthening ongoing conservation initiatives, biodiversity preservation, and habitat protection in Ladakh. Deliberations also covered collaborative environmental action, promotion of community-based conservation models, mitigation of human-wildlife conflict, environmental awareness, waste management, and sustainable development, along with identifying priority areas for joint action during 2026–27.

A wide range of leading NGOs participated in the meeting, including the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Wildlife Conservation and Birds Club of Ladakh, Ladakh Ecological Development Group, Ladakh Environment and Health Organisation (LEHO), Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust, Ladakh Animal Care Society, Ladakh Centre for Peace and Sustainable Development, Brown Bear Trust, and Ladakh Women Alliance. Representatives from Kargil-based organizations, including the Himalayan Ground Trust, also joined the meeting virtually.

During the session, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wildlife Warden, Rajesh S., delivered a detailed presentation outlining key priority areas such as climate-resilient ecosystems, afforestation with a focus on the Indus corridor, mitigation of human-wildlife conflict, biodiversity governance, pollution control, and rangeland management. He further highlighted the need for robust institutional mechanisms, strengthened monitoring and data systems, and identified specific areas for collaborative action, particularly in the Kargil Forest Division.

In his address, the Chief Secretary emphasized the importance of building a unified platform for collaboration among NGOs and government agencies. He noted that fragmented efforts often limit outcomes and called for a holistic partnership approach to address critical environmental challenges.

Highlighting the importance of responsible tourism, especially wildlife tourism, he stressed the need for structured management and sustainable practices in the sector.

He also underscored the role of advocacy, outreach, and eco-clubs in raising awareness about climate change and glacier conservation.

Proposing the formation of thematic task forces, he encouraged stakeholders to take up focused projects and learn through shared experiences. The Chief Secretary further suggested leveraging Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives to build stronger partnerships between private entities and conservation efforts.

To enhance coordination, he recommended the appointment of a nodal officer for partnership-driven initiatives, particularly in conservation and tourism infrastructure. He also emphasized the need to train local guides for responsible tourism practices and called for improved convergence among stakeholders for more impactful engagement in the future.

The participating NGOs expressed appreciation for the initiative, describing it as a significant step toward structured collaboration between civil society and the government in Ladakh. They also shared field-level insights and highlighted challenges, particularly in wildlife tourism.

The meeting was attended by Secretary, I&FC, Rahul Sharma; Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Bhupesh Chaudhary; Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wildlife Warden, Rajesh S., IFS; Wildlife Warden, Amandeep Mittal, IFS; DCF (HQ), Vihal V. Surve, along with representatives of various NGOs.



