

5. ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF GANGES

The **Sundarbans** area has a wide range of rare fauna, including the Bengal tiger, estuarine crocodile, Indian python and many reptiles and birds. The extent of mangrove Reserved Forest in Indian Sundarban is around 4260 sq. km., which is administratively divided into the Sunderban Tiger Reserve (2600 sq. km.) and Forest Division. (1660 sq. km.). The Bengal Tiger faces extinction due largely to the threat of poaching for their pelts. Out of the 28 designated tiger reserves, 10 are located in the Ganga Basin, and comprise a total "core area" of over 8838 Sqkm.



Environmentally sensitive areas in the Ganga basin comprise Biosphere Reserves, Wildlife Sanctuaries, National Parks and Tiger Reserves among others (rare and endangered species). At present about 31 per cent of the National parks in India are located in Ganga basin along with 15 per cent of wild life sanctuaries protecting some of the endangered species like Bengal Tigers, Ganga Dolphins and Vultures.

