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# Kashmir Markhor: On the Brink

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**News Context:** With only 200–300 individuals remaining in the **Kazinag Range**, the Markhor is one of India's most endangered mammals.

- **Species Profile:** Known for its spectacular **corkscrew horns**, the Markhor (*Capra falconeri*) is the world's largest mountain goat.
- **Habitat:** Primarily found in the high-altitude scrub forests of **Kazinag, Hirpora, and Lachipora** wildlife sanctuaries in Jamm& Kashmir.
- **Threats:**
  1. **Habitat Fragmentation:** Border fencing along the LoC prevents seasonal migration.
  2. **Competition:** High-altitude grazing by domestic livestock (competition for food).
  3. **Poaching:** For its horns and meat.
- **Conservation Status:**

o**IUCN:** Near Threatened (globally), but critically endangered in the Indian context.

o**WPA 1972:** Schedule I (highest protection).

- **Next Step:** Integration of "**Community-led Trophy Hunting**" models (similar to Pakistan) has been debated but is legally restricted in India. Focus remains on habitat restoration.