

BI-MONTHLY OUTREACH JOURNAL OF NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

s t r i p e s

Volume 2 Issue 1

November-December 2010



VALMIKI TR



MANAS TR

BUXA TR



NAMDAPHA TR

MANAGEMENT



TIGER SUMMIT



# STRIPESmail

My heartfelt thanks for this issue - this is marvellous. Looking forward to seeing you in GTF meeting, as I have been asked to participate.

**Shant Raj Jnawali**  
NTNC, Nepal

I m really delighted to receive STRIPES. Simply fabulous pics along with quality material make this STRIPE reader's delight. You and your team deserves all kudos.

**Shafa'at Hussain**  
CCF, Ajmer

Thank you for keeping us updated with STRIPES. I did circulate previous editions to my group of friends and in my organization and many are interested knowing more about Project tiger, as we stay in Bangalore, very close to 2 national parks (Bandipur & Nagarahole), As far as my profile is concerned I am working as a Risk management consultant in Genpact, and I am a member of Team-BHP, an auto enthusiast blog, Give India NGO and an amature photographer,

**Avijit Sarkar**  
avijit.sarkar@genpact.com

Thanks for sending Stripes. It was fascinating to read and get updates on tiger conservation.

**Urmila Pingle**  
Member NTCA

This report is very impressive and we are very proud of you and your team. Thank you for sending it and we will distribute it widely.

**Francisco Dallmeier**  
Smithsonian Institution, USA

Thank you sir, for providing opportunity to view your News letter regularly.

**Md. Mozaharul Islam**  
Bangladesh.

Volume 2  
Issue 1  
November-  
December  
2010

### Appraisal

Valmiki Tiger Reserve,  
Manas Tiger Reserve,  
Buxa Tiger Reserve,  
Namdapha Tiger Reserve  
Pg 4-12



### Tiger Summit

The St.  
Petersburg  
Declaration  
on Tiger  
Conservation  
Pg 13

### Management

Bilateral  
Cooperation  
in Wildlife  
Management  
P16



**EDITOR**  
Dr Rajesh Gopal  
Member Secretary NTCA

**EDITORIAL  
CONSULTANT**  
Ananda Banerjee

**EDITORIAL  
COORDINATOR**  
S P Yadav

**FEEDBACK**  
Annexe No 5  
Bikaner House Shahjahan  
Road  
New Delhi  
[stripes.ntca@gmail.com](mailto:stripes.ntca@gmail.com)

**Cover photo**  
Sachin Rai

BI-MONTHLY OUTREACH JOURNAL OF NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

S t r i p e s

note from the editor



This issue carries the status of Valmiki, Buxa, Namdapha and Manas Tiger Reserves. The appraisal has been done by Special Teams

of NTCA, to focus on reserves having low tiger density. All these reserves have site specific problems requiring special attention and support. Several useful suggestions have emerged from the Special Teams, which are being acted upon in collaboration with States. It is encouraging to note that there is a general improvement in law and order situation in reserves like Valmiki, Manas and Buxa.

Besides national efforts, India is actively engaging with the other range countries to strengthen tiger conservation. We have an ongoing MOU with Nepal and a protocol on tiger with China. An Indian delegation



visited China for a bilateral cooperation in wildlife management during August/September, 2010. Several issues relating to control of wildlife crime, tiger conservation, collaboration in research, training and capacity building were discussed. The implementation of the tiger conservation protocol and China's accession to the Global Tiger Forum also figured in the agenda. Both the countries have expressed their willingness to share experiences and best practices in management of protected areas including tiger

reserves.

India participated in the Global Tiger Summit held at St. Petersburg, Russia in November, 2010. The Summit adopted a declaration by the tiger range countries to collaborate for strengthening the cause.

**Dr Rajesh Gopal / Member-Secretary, NTCA**



The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) constituted special teams, vide letter no. 7-22/2009-NTCA, dated 10th August 2009, for an urgent appraisal of tiger reserves, having low tiger density and problems on account of extremist engineered disturbances.

A team, comprised of Samir Kumar Sinha Dr. R. K. Singh Dr. Rathin Barman Dr. R. P. Mishra and Dr. D. S. Srivastava, was given the responsibility to appraise Valmiki Tiger Reserve (Bihar) and Manas Tiger Reserve (Assam) on the terms of reference; 1. Appraisal of status of tiger, co-predators and prey animals, 2. Protection efforts taken visà-vis the advisories of Project Tiger / NTCA, 3. Administrative / ecological problems and managerial issues, and 4. Suggestions for restoring the area and eliciting local support to strengthen protection.

# VALMIKI TIGER RESERVE, BIHAR

The field visit and survey of Valmiki Tiger Reserve was done between September 7 and 14, 2009 and the team interacted with a cross-section of people including frontline staff, senior officials of the reserve and Bihar Forest Department, Principle Secretary (Environment and Forests) to the state government, officials of the civil administration

and Sashastra Seema Bal, local MLA, community representatives and local villagers.

The team found that:

1. Density of tiger and its prey is poor compared to other tiger reserves in terai habitats of the country. However, in the recent years it has shown signs of improvement and most of the areas are occupied by



tiger and co-predators. Wildlife monitoring system is not up to the mark and field staff are poorly oriented towards wildlife management.

2. The protection mechanism is not attuned to the current need of stringent protection in tiger areas. In fact, the protection system that existed during the regime of State Forest Development Corporation is still continuing without any change. Very few of the advisories of NTCA / Project Tiger regarding the protection measures are being followed. Infrastructure and human resources required for effective protection is grossly inadequate. Poaching pressure on tiger and prey species seems to be low. It is also possible that due to poor surveillance and low awareness level amongst the staff, poaching cases are un-noticed.

3. Law and order situation has improved significantly and naxal problem is negligible in the area. Few years back, these problems were a cause of concern for management of the reserve.

4. Deployment of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) inside the area has strengthened the protection system of the reserve but establishment of 10 border out posts (BoPs) inside the core area might have negative bearings on its habitat and wildlife.

5. The tiger reserve staff and managers are overburdened with territorial works like regulation of saw mills and implementation of forestry related schemes of the state government. This results into reduced focus on the management and protection of the reserve.

6. Procedures for settlements of rights as per the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act are underway, but notification of eco-sensitive zone, core / critical area and buffer/peripheral area is yet to be done. The state has not constituted an Advisory Committee for the sanctuary, a mandatory provision according to the Act.

7. Boundary demarcation is incomplete, which causes clash with locals. Disputed international boundary at Susta in Madanpur range is actively used by wildlife poachers, timber fellers and smugglers.

8. Managers and field officials do have interest working in wildlife protected area but they lack training, experience and expertise in wildlife management. Due to tough service conditions in the

reserve and old age, most of the frontline staff show poor willingness to serve in the reserve.

9. Central and state funds are not made available on time, this results into delayed and poor implementation of management and protection measures. During 2008-09, the reserve was not permitted to utilize the sanctioned central assistance grant due to non-signing of tripartite MoU by the state with NTCA. Due to this the reserve has suffered a lot.

10. Most of the open areas have been planted with commercial tree species in the past, leading to scarcity of grasslands and meadows crucial to sustain

herbivore population. The existing grasslands are un-managed and are progressing into woodlands, while open hilly areas are occupied by dwarf Phoenix having no fodder value for ungulates. So far, very limited habitat management interventions have been made.

11. Forest fire is a critical problem in the reserve. Continuous fire in the reserve has supported colonizing fire resistant unpalatable floral species like Phoenix on one hand and destroyed dead organic matter and forest regeneration on the other.

12. Banning boulder mining in the eastern sector of the reserve has visible positive impact on wildlife habitat. This has also resulted into raised water level in the river benefiting the villagers who channelize the water for irrigation.

13. The confiscated timber and non-timber produce of the reserve are auctioned by the department

and local people demand that these resources should be made available to them.

14. Hundreds of fringe villages depending on the reserve for forest resources cause biotic disturbance. Eco-development Committees are functional and several rapport building measures have been implemented through the committees. However, negligible efforts have been made to reduce villagers' dependency and regulate / control domestic cattle grazing inside the reserve.

15. There is no compensation policy of the government for crop-depredation by wild animals and the villagers are not given any compensation for loss of crop or livestock. This is one of the main complains of locals.

16. Communication between the reserve



**Banning boulder mining in the eastern sector of the reserve has visible positive impact on wildlife habitat. This has also resulted into raised water level in the river benefiting the villagers who channelize the water for irrigation.**





crucial gesture to improve the situation.

**Based on our assessment the team made the following recommendations;**

1. The state government must fill-up the vacant posts of frontline staff immediately and sanctioned strength of field staff as well as officials should be increased. Deployment of armed guards should be done at earliest possible.

2. There is a need to change the protection system by deploying frontline staff in groups in patrolling camps. The camps should be located at strategic sites inside the reserve. Sufficient infrastructure including vehicles should be provided to forest ranges. The forest road network should be strengthened and the road along southern boundary should be maintained for round the year mobility.

3. A system should be developed for wildlife and habitat monitoring, and number of field staff deployed for tiger monitoring should be increased. They should be properly trained and oriented towards their job. A long term scientific monitoring of habitat and prey population should be implemented by a competent independent agency in collaboration with the state forest department.

4. There is an urgent need to improve fodder availability for wild herbivores by eradicating unpalatable floral species from the areas where there are fair chances of growth of palatable grasses. Existing grasslands should be managed and protected from fire and domestic cattle grazing. It is suggested that forest fire control measures should

management and community is not up to the mark, which causes misunderstanding among them and villagers are confused on many issues due to ignorance.

17. The present management and staff do have understanding and acceptance of their internal weaknesses and perceptions of external threats, a

be adopted on time and adequate funds should be made available for this. Villagers should be motivated for their participation in initiatives for fire control.

5. State level Steering Committee for tiger conservation and Sanctuary Advisory Committee should be constituted.

6. Headquarters of deputy directors should be

shifted close to the reserve. Staff quarters and office building should be constructed as per the needs. Creating veterinary facilities is critically needed.

7. A feasibility study on establishing a corridor connecting Madanpur range to rest of the reserve needs to be conducted.

8. Impact of establishment of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) BoPs on wildlife and its habitat in core area of VTR should be monitored in order to take measures to reduce / regulate their activities having negative impact on flora and fauna of the reserve. It is important to prescribe Do's and Don'ts to be followed by the BoP personnel to maintain the natural and legal integrity of the area. A system should be developed to record wildlife sighting by SSB personnel of BoPs.

9. Timely fund availability to the reserve must be ensured by the NTCA and state forest department. Some reserve fund should be set aside in the APOs to meet the expenses till the funds of next year APO are released to the reserve.

10. The state should delineate and notify core/critical area at earliest. Eco-sensitive zone should also be declared in order to regulate and restrict non-forestry and incompatible land use around the protected area. The state should improve the alignment of boundary by acquiring / purchasing the revenue lands intertwined with the southern boundary in eastern side of the reserve. The acquired land should be included in the reserve.

11. Keeping in view the increased work load and diffused focus on management of the reserve, we recommend that the jurisdiction of managers and field staff should be restricted only within the reserve boundary and its eco-sensitive zone. Separate ranges should be set up to look after territorial and other forestry related work outside the reserve. We also suggest segregating the human resources for implementation of eco-development activities and protection. The state and NTCA could also think of implementing eco-development activities through competent NGO, which would also act as an interface between the reserve and communities.

12. Staff should be made more responsible towards day-to-day wildlife monitoring. Maintaining daily wildlife monitoring diary should be mandatory for the frontline staff and their superiors must cross-check the records on regular basis.

13. The state government should take measures to

**There is a need to change the protection system by deploying frontline staff in groups in patrolling camps. The camps should be located at strategic sites inside the reserve. Sufficient infrastructure including vehicles should be provided to forest ranges.**

attract energetic and motivated frontline staff and range officers by providing incentives and addressing their welfare issues as pointed out in detail in this report.

14. The team recommend institutionalizing a process involving eco-development committees to deliver the confiscated forest produce among villagers to meet their bona fide needs.

15. To obtain the support of the locals, it is much desired to frame a compensation policy for crop-

depredation and livestock damage caused by wild animals outside the reserve. In case of crop loss, the compensation amount should be realistic and fixed in consultation with agriculture experts and village panchayat. Procedures of application for compensation should be simple. The reserve management should also device innovative ways of reducing human-wildlife conflict.

16. Eco-development activities aimed at confidence building as well as dependency reduction measures should be implemented as per village level micro-plans. It seems difficult to prepare micro-plans for 150 odd villages at a time. Villages / eco-development committees should be prioritized for preparing the micro-plans.

17. Disposal of minor forest and wildlife cases should be done and the frontline staff should be discouraged to file fake cases on innocent villagers.

18. A committee should be constituted at forest range level comprising of community representatives, NGOs and line departments, under the chairpersonship of ACF rank official. This would felicitate communication and co-ordination of the reserve management with communities and line departments.

Despite having several constraints, the management has done commendable work of stopping mining in the eastern sector of the reserve, in compliance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's order. It has re-established undisturbed connectivity with 40 sq. km. area east of Pandai River. Better law and order situation and deployment of SSB in the area has positive impact on overall management of the reserve on one hand and decline in wildlife crime on the other. The reserve could withstand poaching pressure of nineties due to connectivity with the large forested tract of Nepal. It is high time for management interventions to revive its potential.



# MANAS TIGER RESERVE, ASSAM



© Sachin Rai

www.landofthewild.com

The field visit of Manas Tiger Reserve between 30th September and 5th October 2009 and we interacted with cross-section of people including frontline staff, senior officials of the reserve and Assam Forest Department, Deputy Chief of Bodoland Autonomous Council, officials of the civil administration and Sashastra Seema Bal, community representatives and local villagers.

Various methods to accomplish the objectives of appraisal were adopted and tried to understand the situations minutely. In general, the reserve is recovering at a significant pace after several years of civil unrest, which caused great damage to management, infrastructure and wildlife of the area. Supports of local community groups to built up the damaged infrastructure and protection of the area is commendable. The tiger reserve management is also committed and trying to re-establish Manas a safe

home for wildlife, but 'system error' inherited to the reserve is the main obstacle, which needs to be sorted out at earliest to get the desired conservation success.

During the appraisal it was found that;

1. In all practical purposes, the Manas National Park area is only being considered as the Manas Tiger Reserve area, which is only about 18% of the total area of the tiger reserve. This is one of the main reasons for not having a tiger oriented conservation and management practices in Manas.

2. There is confusion and poor communication between the Assam Forest Department and Bodoland Territorial Council on several issues pertaining to management of the tiger reserve.

3. Tiger occupies most of the areas but density is low. The team could observe tiger signs in many areas. Pugmarks of a tigress and cubs were also seen along Beki River in Bansbari range. Some NGOs are involved



in camera trap surveys of tiger and have successfully photographed tigers in a small portion of the tiger reserve. Secondary information suggests increased sightings of tiger in recent years.

4. Density of natural prey is low. Domestic cattle from the fringe villages supplement the natural prey of tiger.

5. Grasslands areas are advancing into woodlands due to long absence of proper grassland management interventions.

6. Wildlife monitoring system is not in place in the reserve and field staffs are very poorly oriented towards a systematic wildlife monitoring system.

7. Research officer of the reserve has been engaged elsewhere for other assignments and this is one of the reasons for not having in-house research activities. Limited numbers of NGOs are doing wildlife research / monitoring activities in the reserve, but their efforts are also restricted to a small area inadequate to provide comprehensive management inputs.

8. Poaching pressure of prey was reported by local community members however tiger and leopard poaching seems low.

9. Infrastructure and human resources required for effective protection is grossly inadequate.

10. Protection mechanism is basically dependent on the local volunteers and long term viability of this system is questionable.

11. Road along the southern boundary of the National Park area crucial for protection mechanism but it is not operational.

12. Advisories of NTCA / Project Tiger regarding the protection measures are poorly followed in the reserve.

13. Encroachment seems to be a big problem in Manas. However, some encroached areas have been evacuated from unauthorized human settlements; still a large portion is under encroachment. Several areas of the reserve are under constant encroachment threats.

14. Law and order situation has improved significantly in the Manas Tiger Reserve areas in comparison to recent past time.

15. Involvement of local youth groups as conservation volunteers for the Manas Tiger Reserve is a good sign of community participation for the management of the reserve. However, long term viability of these groups needs further thoughts.

16. Presence of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) in the southern boundary has strengthened the protection mechanism in many areas of the reserve. But a regular and systematic coordination between SSB and Forest

Department is required for more effective protection measures.

17. No proper system to report or monitor of wildlife / forest offences in the reserve. Only in National Park area efforts are in place but it is also inadequate or not as per standard procedures.

**Based on our assessment the team made the following recommendations:**

1. There is an urgent need to address administrative issues on priority basis. The confusions between the state government and BTC on management of Manas TR should be resolved and entire reserve should be brought under unified control of the Field Directorate for all practical purposes.

2. The BTC should be a party in all committees/bodies meant for the management of Manas TR.

3. It is needed to reorganize forest divisions and ranges of the tiger reserve and create sufficient posts of officials and frontline staff to manage the entire reserve area effectively. Sufficient infrastructure needs to be created throughout the reserve. Sufficient funds should be secured through the state and central grants.

4. There is a need to develop a system to regulate the activities of NGOs in the reserve so as to derive maximum output from their efforts. Volunteers engaged for protection duties should be under direct control of the Field Director rather than their own organizational management system.

5. Joint forest patrolling with SSB in the southern boundary and with Bhutan counterpart in the northern boundary should be initiated.

6. South boundary of the national park should be properly demarcated and the road along the boundary must be made usable and maintained for management and protection of the reserve, especially the core area. Protection camps should be increased along the southern road instead of increasing camps inside the reserve.

7. Frontline staff and conservation volunteers should be trained for day-to-day monitoring of prey and predators.

8. Local universities and NGOs should be encouraged to undertake research activities even outside the Manas National Park. The reserve management should create basic facilities in these areas to attract the researchers.

9. Habitat management interventions should be

**Wildlife monitoring system is not in place in the reserve and field staffs are very poorly oriented towards a systematic wildlife monitoring system**



emphasized for recovery of the grasslands.

10. Timely fund availability to the reserve must be ensured by the NTCA and state forest department.

11. A process should be institutionalized to regulate implementation of BTC funded activities by agencies/departments other than the reserve management and ensure that the activities are as per the management plan of the reserve. Such activities should be brought into the notice of state government as well as NTCA.

12. The reserve management, state government and NTCA should act pro-actively to ensure timely fund flow for field based activities and overall management of the reserve.

13. Eco-development activities should be started in the fringe villages to reduce dependency of villagers on the reserve. Eco-development committees need to be constituted for the purpose. We suggest implementing eco-development activities through competent NGO rather than the forest department.

14. A long term comprehensive awareness programme is strongly required to mitigate the human-wildlife conflict problem. Community groups

along the south boundary may be funded for such activities. Compensation for crop damage and cattle killed outside the reserve should be given to the villagers. A realistic compensation package needs to be developed in consultation with experts and communities.

It is worth mentioning that the reserve management, BTC and local communities have shown their commitment to regain the old glories of Manas. The park is getting attention from the civil administration, BTC and national and international NGOs. Rhino population was wiped out from the reserve by poachers during the civil unrest period.

But, now Government of Assam and organizations like Wildlife Trust of India and WWF-India has successfully brought back the species to the park from Kaziranga through reintroduction and translocation programmes. Local Civil society groups have formed their own “conservation volunteers” for helping the park managers for conservation and protection measures. This can be noted as a new beginning for the Manas National Park. However, similar efforts need to be initiated for the entire Manas Tiger reserve area.



# BUXA TIGER RESERVE, WEST BENGAL

Bibhab Kumar Talukdar, Aparajita Datta and M. Firoz Ahmed

**B**uxa declared as a Tiger Reserve in 1983 lies in Alipurduar sub-division of Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal. Its northern boundary runs along the international border with Bhutan. The Sinchula hill range lies all along the northern side of BTR and the Eastern boundary touches that of the Assam State. National Highway No.31 C roughly runs along its southern boundary. It is the eastern most extension of extreme bio-diverse North-East India & represents highly endemic Indo-Malayan region. The fragile "Terai Eco-System" constitutes a part of this Reserve. The Phipsu Wildlife Sanctuary of Bhutan is contiguous to North of BTR. Manas Tiger Reserve lies on east of BTR. BTR, thus, serves as international corridor for elephant migration between India and Bhutan. The reserve encompasses as many as eight forest types. In 1986, Buxa Wildlife Sanctuary was constituted over 314.52 sq. km. of the Reserve forests. In 1991, 54.47 sq. km. area was added to Buxa Wildlife Sanctuary. A year later, in 1992, Government of West Bengal declared its intentions to constitute a National Park over 117.10 Sq. Km. of the Buxa Wildlife Sanctuary. State Government finally declared National Park vide notification No.3403-For/11B-6/95 dt. 05.12.1997.



All-Indian assessment report of 2006 compiled by the Wildlife Institute of India has could not get a single picture of tigers in their camera trapping exercise for Buxa while tiger occupancy in Northern West Bengal (Buxa-Jaldapara-Gorumara) was estimated to be 596 km<sup>2</sup> and numbers estimated to be 10 in the entire area. While park authorities acknowledge high human pressures and difficulties in arresting these pressures they dispute the assessment of tiger numbers. The Buxa Tiger Reserve was recently categorized by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) of India as poor based on evaluation made by the officials earlier. To find out the current state of the tiger reserve, the NTCA has formed an appraisal team comprising of the above mentioned team members authored this



report.

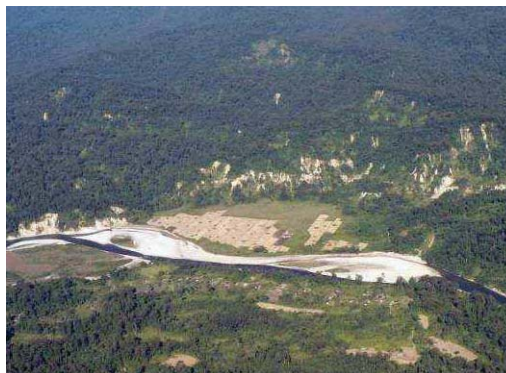
The appraisal team visited Buxa TR from 18-21 September 2009 and feel that the Tiger reserve still holds the potentiality to conserve tigers and other keystone species. The reasons for Buxa TR being listed among poor performing tiger reserves is partly due to the high anthropogenic pressures from within settlements inside and surrounding the park area, mainly from cattle grazing, fuelwood, timber and NTFP extraction. The team found that the ground infrastructure that Buxa TR is having and being maintained by the Buxa Tiger Reserve authorities are of good standard to enhance conservation and protection. However shortage of frontline staff is being reported which needs to be addressed to strengthen active management of the tiger reserve. Siltation in riverbeds in Buxa TR due to Dolomite extraction in Bhutan has changed the hydrology of the tiger reserve leading to erosion of land masses and reduction of water holding capacity of the rivers causing massive flood in 1993. This could also potentially reduce the suitable habitats for the herbivores in the reserve which could have negative effect on the tiger population. The human interferences in the tiger reserve also a major cause of worry which needs to be addressed on priority basis. Regular monitoring of prey and predators along with the active habitat management is needed to expand its horizon towards better management of tigers and other species in the Buxa TR.

# NAMDAPHA TIGER RESERVE, ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Bibhab Kumar Talukdar, Aparajita Datta and M. Firoz Ahmed

The 1985 km<sup>2</sup> Namdapha Tiger Reserve is located in Changlang district in eastern Arunachal Pradesh. It was declared a Reserved Forest in 1970 under the Assam Forest Regulation Act 1891 (first proposed in 1947), subsequently as a wildlife sanctuary in 1972, finally declared a National Park in May 1983 and a Tiger Reserve in March 1983. An area of 177 km<sup>2</sup> of RF was added to the Tiger Reserve in 1986 and is designated as the buffer zone, while the rest (1808 km<sup>2</sup>) is considered the core zone. Despite the decline and lack of tiger signs, the official census by park authorities in 2002 reported 61 tigers based on the pugmark census method. However, as part of the census conducted in 2006 presumably using the pugmark census method, park officials reported 14 tigers; the basis of this estimate is not clear. The All-India assessment report of 2006 compiled by the Wildlife Institute of India has estimated tiger numbers for entire Arunachal Pradesh to be around 14 with tiger occupancy of 540 km<sup>2</sup> for Namdapha. The Namdapha Tiger Reserve was recently categorized by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) of India as poor based on evaluations of officials and reports by independent scientists.

To determine the current state of the tiger reserve, the NTCA constituted an appraisal team in August



2009. The team visited Namdapha from 8-12 September 2009. The team is of the opinion that the Namdapha TR is of immense value from biodiversity point of view that also shelters tiger and other key animals. Illegal hunting is a serious threat to wildlife in the park, and is prevalent among all tribal groups. The main targets of subsistence hunting are ungulates and primates, and dried wild meat and fish are sold in the villages. There is also illegal hunting for tiger, elephant, musk deer, bears, otters and other cats. Hunting is mainly carried out with guns, cross-bows and a variety of indigenous traps, while metal foot snares are used for tigers.

The appraisal team feels that in order to strengthen conservation and adaptive management of the habitat, flora and fauna, it needs improvement in many areas ranging from building infrastructure and motivating field staff for effective and regular patrolling and monitoring, community interface and generating local livelihood opportunities to reduce dependency on park resources, addressing the encroachment issues within the

core area of the tiger reserve by urgently finding alternate land to resettle people in the park, increasing the frontline staff strength in the reserve for effective patrol and bringing in a mechanism within the state government for timely release of funds being budgeted for the Namdapha TR.



# The St. Petersburg Declaration on Tiger Conservation

Saint Petersburg Russia, November 23, 2010

**W**e, the Heads of the Governments of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of India, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Nepal, the Russian Federation, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, being custodians of the last remaining tigers in the wild, having gathered at an unprecedented Global Tiger Summit in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, from 21 - 24 November 2010, with the common goal of tiger conservation; **RECOGNIZE** that Asia's most iconic animal faces imminent extinction in the wild. In the

past century, tiger numbers have plummeted from 100,000 to below 3,500, and continue to fall. Tiger numbers and habitat have declined by 40 percent in the last decade alone, lost largely to habitat loss, poaching, the illegal wildlife trade, and human tiger conflict. Three subspecies have already disappeared, and none of the other six are secure;

**ACKNOWLEDGE** that the tiger is one of the important indicators of healthy ecosystems and a failure to reverse these trends will result in not only the loss of tigers but also a loss of biological diversity throughout the entire Asiatic region, together with the tangible and intangible benefits provided by these magnificent predators and the ecosystems they inhabit;





NOTE that whilst the conservation of the tiger is primarily a national responsibility and that increased cooperation and coordination of efforts among the tiger range countries is essential, the reversal of this crisis is additionally dependent upon financial and technical support from the international community, bearing in mind that most Tiger Range Countries are developing countries. The crisis facing the tiger has yet to receive the international attention it deserves and saving this species is a common responsibility;

UNDERSTAND the role of international agreements on the conservation of biological diversity and protection of rare and endangered species, including the tiger, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES), and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS);

ACKNOWLEDGE the work to date of the Global Tiger Forum and encourage its revitalization and more active role;

RECALL and endorse The Manifesto on Combating Wildlife Crime in Asia, adopted in Pattaya, Thailand, in April 2009; the Recommendations of the Global Tiger Workshop in Kathmandu, Nepal, October 2009; the Hua Hin Declaration on Tiger Conservation at the First Asian Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation (1st AMC) in Hua Hin, Thailand, January 2010; and the Work Plan of the Pre Tiger Summit in Bali, Indonesia, July 2010;

WELCOME the adoption of National Tiger Recovery Programs (NTRPs) and the Global Tiger

Recovery Program (GTRP); and

ACKNOWLEDGE and appreciate the presence and support of other governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other supporters of tigers. Because it is our obligation to future generations, and because we must act now, we hereby declare the following:

Strive to double the number of wild tigers across their range by 2022 by

1. doing everything possible to effectively manage, preserve, protect, and enhance habitats, including:

- a. Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in planning and development processes in tiger habitat;

- b. Making critical tiger breeding habitats inviolate areas within the larger tiger conservation landscapes where no economic or commercial infrastructure development or other adverse activities are permitted; and maintaining the landscapes and creating corridors around and between them where all permitted development activities are tiger- and biodiversity- compatible;

- c. Improving protection by using systematic patrolling to safeguard tigers, their prey, and habitats; and

- d. Working collaboratively on trans-boundary issues, such as the uninhibited movement of tigers and the management of tiger conservation landscapes.

2. Working collaboratively to eradicate poaching, smuggling, and illegal trade of tigers, their parts, and derivatives through:

- a. Strengthened national legislation, institutions, and law enforcement to combat crime directed





against tigers;

b. Strengthened regional law enforcement activities through bilateral and multilateral arrangements such as Association of South East Asian Nations Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SA-WEN), and the Protocol between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Russian Federation on Tiger Protection;

c. Strengthened international collaboration, coordination, and communication;

d. Specialized expertise, where relevant, from international organizations including the CITES Secretariat, INTERPOL, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Bank, and the World Customs Organization, (recognizing that some of these agencies may, themselves, require additional resources); and

e. Long-term national and global programs to create awareness of the value of wild tigers and their ecosystems and thus eliminate the illicit demand for tigers and their parts.

3. Engaging with indigenous and local communities to gain their participation in biodiversity conservation, minimize negative impacts on tigers, their prey, and habitats, and reduce the incidence of human-tiger conflict by providing sustainable and alternative livelihood options through financial support, technical guidance, and other measures.

4. Increasing the effectiveness of tiger and habitat management, basing it on: a. The application of modern and innovative science, standards, and technologies;

b. Regular monitoring of tigers, their prey, and habitat;

c. Adaptive management practices; and

d. Building capacity of institutions involved in science and training and creating a platform for interactive knowledge exchange at all levels.

5. Exploring and mobilizing domestic funding, including new financing mechanisms based on forest carbon financing including REDD+, payment for ecosystem services (PES), ecotourism, and private sector, donor, and non-governmental organization partnerships.

6. Appealing for the commitment of international financial institutions, such as World Bank, Global Environment Facility, Asian Development Bank, bilateral and other donors and foundations, CITES Secretariat, non-governmental organizations, and other conservation partners to provide or mobilize financial and technical support to tiger conservation.

7. Looking forward to the establishment of a multi-donor trust fund or other flexible arrangements to support tiger conservation.

8. Requesting financial institutions and other partners, including the Global Tiger Initiative, to assist in identifying and establishing a mechanism to coordinate and monitor the use of the multi-donor trust fund allocated for tiger conservation and the implementation of the GTRP, including its Global Support Programs for capacity building and knowledge sharing, combating wildlife crime, demand reduction, and the GTRP progress report. In the interim, we request the Global Tiger Initiative to fulfill this role.

9. Agreeing to convene high-level meetings on a regular basis to review the progress of NTRPs and the GTRP and to help ensure continued high levels of political commitment to tiger recovery.

10. Building tiger conservation awareness by celebrating Global Tiger Day annually on 29 July.

11. Welcome and sincerely appreciate the pledges made during the Tiger Summit, we also appreciate the continued support of the Global Environment Facility, Save the Tiger Fund, Smithsonian Institution, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife Conservation Society, and WWF, and other partners in the Global Tiger Initiative, and welcome the participation of new ones.

*By the adoption of this, the St. Petersburg Declaration, the tiger range countries of the world call upon the international community to join us in turning the tide and setting the tiger on the road to recovery.*

## Bilateral Cooperation in Wildlife Management

Minutes of the meeting between the Peoples Republic of China and the Republic of India on Bilateral Cooperation in Wildlife Management held on 31st of August 2010

In pursuance to the felt need of mutual engagement between the Peoples Republic of China and the Republic of India on forestry and wildlife matters, a delegation of the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India had visited Beijing to enhance the bilateral cooperation in forest management during April 18-23, 2010. This has been followed by visit of another delegation of the Ministry of Environment and Forests from 30th of August 2010 to 3rd of September 2010 to discuss matters relating to cooperation in control of wildlife crimes, tiger conservation, collaboration in research, training and capacity building. The agreed agenda items for the bilateral meetings were as under:

### 1. Wildlife Crime Control:

- National law and regulations on regulating wildlife crime, including tiger,
- Law enforcement system for wildlife cases, including tiger;
- Situation, key areas, trends of wildlife cases, including tiger,
- Discussion on information sharing and periodic consultation mechanism on wildlife crime, including tiger;
- Discussion on coordination mechanism of law enforcement agency at grass root level
- Bilateral consultation before and during international forum meeting;
- Other means of bilateral cooperation: bilateral meeting, joint training, exchange of visits, information exchange, etc.

### 2. Tiger Cooperation:

- Situation of tiger conservation and future action plan, exchange of views on global tiger conservation action plan and related issues;
- Exchange of technicians for short-term training in the tiger protected area of the other country'
- Review of the implementation of the Tiger Conservation Protocol, enhancement of cooperation;
- Exchange of views on China's accession to the Global Tiger Forum.

### 3. Cooperation in Wildlife Research, Training and Capacity Building

A meeting was held at the State Forestry

Administration office on 31st of August 2010 with Mr Meng Xianlin, Deputy Director General and his colleagues from the Management Office for Import & Export of Endangered Species, P.R.China.

Mr. Meng Xianlin, Deputy Director General, Management Office for Import & Export of Endangered species, P.R. China extended a warm welcome to the Indian delegation led by Mr. A.K. Srivastava, Inspector General of Forests, Ministry of Environment and Forests and highlighted areas of mutual cooperation in wildlife matters between the two countries.

In his opening remarks, Mr. A.K. Srivastava, Inspector General of Forests, thanked the State





Forestry Administration, P.R.China for inviting the Indian delegation to China and for their warm hospitality extended to the delegation. He mentioned that there had been renewed cooperation between the two countries in various areas including climate change, forestry and wildlife conservation. Both the countries have had a Memorandum of Understanding on Tiger Conservation since 1995. Also, an agreement on Forestry Cooperation was signed in May 2007 at New Delhi during the visit of President H.E., Mr. Hu Jintao. The Cooperation in the area of Environmental Conservation has further been strengthened with the visits of Minister of Environment & Forests H.E., Mr. Jairam Ramesh to China in 2009 and 2010. He shared the views expressed by Mr. Meng Xianlin, DDG on the need for bilateral cooperation in combating illegal trade in wildlife products, mutual understanding on

conservation issues in the international fora including CITES, sharing of best practices in management of protected areas and collaboration in research and capacity building.

This was followed by presentations on wildlife enforcement issues by Ms. Rina Mitra, Additional Director, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, India and Mr. Wan Ziming, Division Chief, Management Office for Import and Export of Endangered Species, P.R. China.

Ms. Rina Mitra gave a detailed presentation of the mandate of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and enforcement of wildlife laws including CITES. She stressed the need for coordinated enforcement as a strategy for effective conservation and suggested designation of Nodal Officers for actionable intelligence sharing to track organized wildlife criminal networks having linkages in both the countries. She also suggested exploring the possibility of an arrangement on the lines of the agreement existing between the two countries for combating trafficking in narcotics.

Mr. Wan Zimming gave a detailed presentation on CITES enforcement in China, enforcement organs involved and the enforcement efforts made by P.R.China in the recent years. He also highlighted the need for bilateral cooperation in CITES enforcement including mutual cooperation in various international conventions. He also proposed the areas for future cooperation, including mutual information exchange on wildlife crime issues, exchange visits and meetings, designation of nodal officers and organizing joint awareness programmes for various enforcement agencies operating in the border areas of both the countries.

While acknowledging the poaching and illegal trafficking of wildlife products including tiger body parts as the biggest threat to wildlife conservation in the region, both the countries have shown willingness and agreed to share actionable intelligence besides nominating Nodal Officers for sharing of real time information.

Further, a meeting was held on 2nd September 2010 to discuss the matters relating to Wildlife Crime Control, Tiger cooperation, Research, training and capacity building with Mr Yan Xun, Deputy Director General, Department of Wildlife Conservation, State Forestry Administration and his colleagues. List of participants is enclosed. (Annexure- 2)

Mr Yan Xun, Deputy Director General, State Forestry Administration initiated the discussion by welcoming the Indian Delegation and introduced the members of his delegation. He highlighted the functions of



[www.landofthewild.com](http://www.landofthewild.com)





© Sachin Rai

[www.landofthewild.com](http://www.landofthewild.com)

Department of Wildlife Conservation and other sister organizations. He stated that both the countries have similar problems and threats relating to wildlife conservation and enforcement. He further stressed that the tiger is key species in both the countries and there is strong need to identify common issues relating to tiger conservation. It was stated that they are ready to act upon any specific information on illegal trafficking of tiger or other wild animal body parts.

Shri A.K.Srivastava, Head of the Indian Delegation thanked the Government of PR China for having hosted the bilateral meeting between both countries. He introduced the members of the Indian Delegation. Further, he briefed on the historical background of the bilateral cooperation, meetings/ visits, area of cooperation and the outcome of the meeting held on 31st August 2010.

Mr Wang Weisheng, Division Chief, Department of Wildlife Conservation, SFA stated that both the countries have signed a bilateral protocol way back in the year 1995 on conservation of tigers, however the

progress has not been as per expectations. He said that frequent dialogue and exchanges will clear their position on tiger conservation, would identify the common positions and would lead to future cooperation. Further, he stated that majority of the tiger range countries are developing countries and they need funding support as well as technology for tiger conservation. He emphasized on exchange visits of field officials to the protected areas of each other countries, exchange visits of scientists/ experts working in the field of tiger conservation, sharing of enforcement information for not only border areas but also of mainland. He further elaborated upon their position on the Global Tiger Initiative (GTI), their active consideration and willingness of joining the Global Tiger Forum (GTF).

Mr Xun expressed his concern on the process and outcome of the Global Tiger Summit to be held in Russia. He further stated that there are a number of institutions/ universities which are doing research on tigers such as Beijing University, North East University



and South China Research Institute . He expressed his willingness to accept expertise of Indian Scientists for tiger conservation and suggested for better, effective and regular bilateral meetings, exchange visits of officials, Protected Area Managers, experts and scientists.

While welcoming the suggestions of the PR China, the Head of the Indian Delegation requested Mr S.P. Yadav, DIG (NTCA) to make a presentation on the tiger conservation in India. Mr Yadav in his presentation briefed about the protected area networks in India, problems as well as success of the Project Tiger & tiger conservation, recommendations & implementation of the tiger task force, milestone initiatives taken by the Government of India for tiger conservation, India's capacity to handhold Tiger Range Countries (TRCs) in the scientific estimation & monitoring of habitat & tigers, tiger reintroduction from wild to wild, position of Government of India on the GTI and the Global Tiger Recovery Programme (GTRP) & the GTF. Further, on the behalf of the Secretary General GTF, he extended invitation to the Chinese side to participate in the international meeting/ workshop scheduled to be held on 25-26 October 2010 at the Sariska Tiger Reserve.

Mrs Rina Mitra, Additional Director, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau explained the points agreed for cooperation on enforcement against wildlife crimes and sharing of intelligence.

Mr P.R.Sinha, Director Wildlife Institute of India elaborated on the area of research and capacity building of the protected area managers in the field of tiger & other wildlife conservation and forensics.

Both the countries have expressed willingness to sharing of experiences and best practices in the management of Protected Areas (PAs) including Tiger Reserves, training and capacity building of PA managers, scientists and technicians in use of modern technologies for effective management of Protected Areas. The P.R. of China has shown considerable interest in joining the Global Tiger Forum, the only intergovernmental international body working for tigers, to strengthen tiger conservation in the region.

Details of the decisions taken in both the meetings with the officers of the State Forestry Administration of the Peoples Republic of China for further follow up action are as under:

#### 1. Wildlife Crime Control:

■ Both the sides agreed to the need for collaboration in investigation of trans - border wildlife crime to trace the backward and forward linkages so as to effectively deal with the organized criminal syndicates operating in the region.

■ Both the sides agreed to the need of designating Nodal Officers for intelligence exchange on wildlife crimes and sharing information on significant seizures.

■ Both the sides were convinced that bilateral cooperation in wildlife matters needed to be strengthened through regular periodic bilateral exchange of delegations. Visits of the delegation were proposed to be held in India and China alternatively.

■ Both the sides appreciated the need of mutual cooperation in wildlife matters in various international fora and the need for consultations between the two countries prior to the international conventions, particularly the CITES.

■ Both the sides felt the need for exchange of resource persons and training modules for training the wildlife enforcement officials including customs.

■ Both the sides agreed to explore the possibility of organizing joint awareness programmes for various enforcement agencies operating in their border areas.

### **BOTH THE COUNTRIES HAVE EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO SHARING OF EXPERIENCES AND BEST PRACTICES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS (PAS) INCLUDING TIGER RESERVES, TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING OF PA MANAGERS, SCIENTISTS AND TECHNICIANS IN USE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS.**

#### 2. Tiger Cooperation:

■ Exchange of Protected Area Managers/ Field level officers working in the field of tiger conservation.

■ Exchange of information/ actionable intelligence for control of wildlife crimes including trade of tiger body parts and other wild animal products.

■ Sharing of experiences and best practices in the management of Protected Areas including Tiger Reserves.

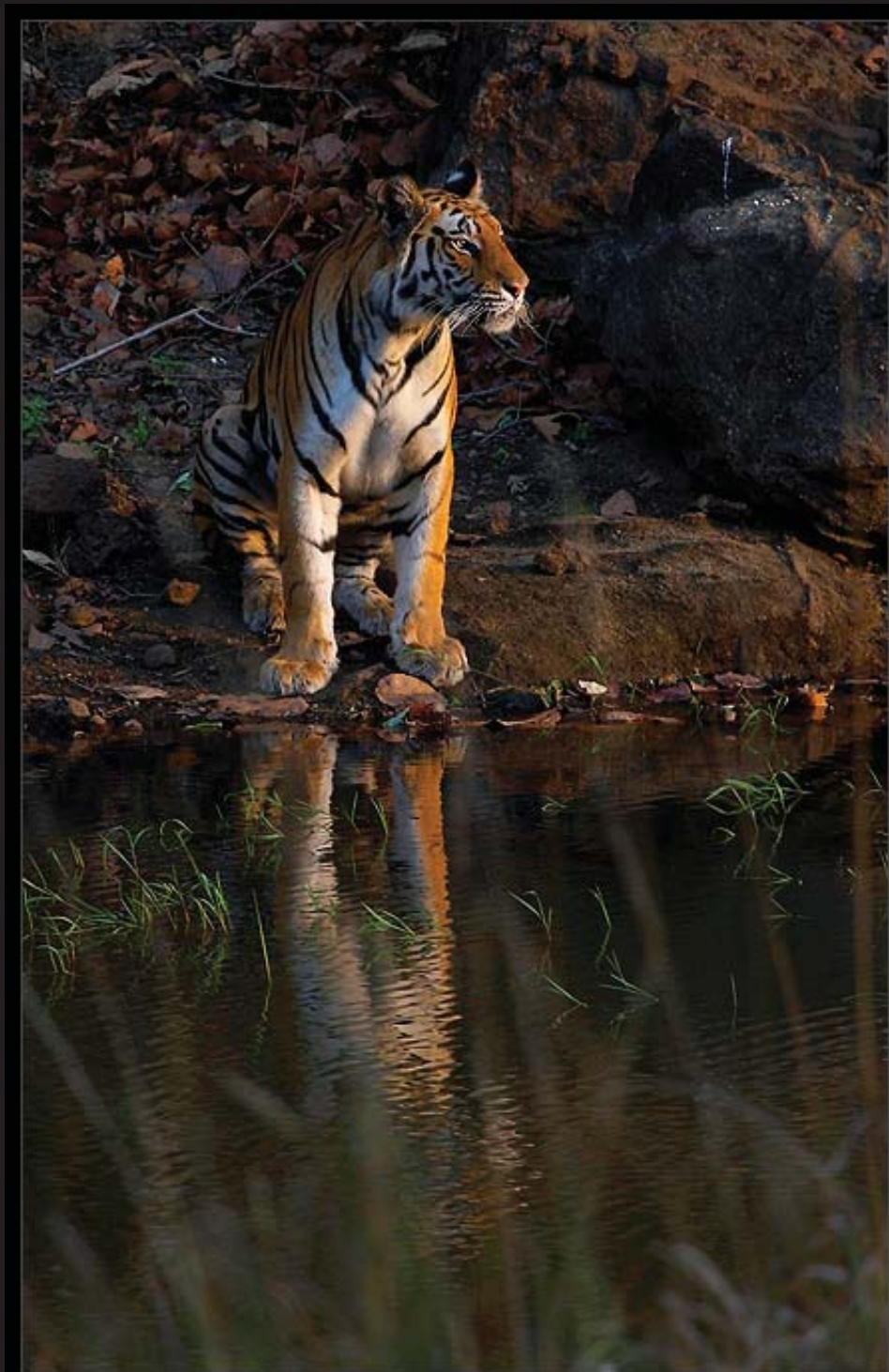
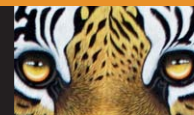
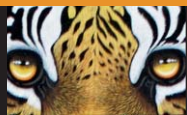
■ Bilateral meetings at regular interval

■ Cooperation in Wildlife Research, Training and Capacity Building

■ Cooperation in Training and capacity building of PA managers, scientists and technicians in use of modern technologies for effective management of PAs.

■ Joint collaborative programmes on use of molecular biology as tool of species conservation and use of advanced forensic tools to curb illegal wildlife trade.

*The Head of Indian delegation extended an invitation to the senior officers of the State Forestry Administration of the Peoples Republic of China to visit India in 2011.*



© Sachin Rai

[www.landofthewild.com](http://www.landofthewild.com)