

ANNUAL REPORT 2007-08



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ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008



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INTRODUCTION

The financial year 2007-2008 saw Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) operate for its tenth year. Since the early days of 1998 when WTI was set up in response to the rapidly deteriorating condition of Indian wildlife, it has blossomed into a well-respected conservation agency with specialised skills in diverse fields like ecology, conservation biology, veterinary science, law, policy, enforcement, marketing, and social sciences. WTI has managed to attract and develop a consortium of people and includes among its ranks field biologists, conservation biologists, lawyers, finance and business managers, veterinarians, sociologists, anthropologists and communication specialists.

A list of major achievements during the financial year 2007-2008 is given below :

- 1) This year witnessed the successful acclimatisation and soft release of two Himalayan black bears (Seppa and Seppi) in Khari Pong of Pakke Tiger Reserve. Monitoring of Seppa was stopped after his collar dropped off. Seppi had to be captured for an injury she received and was recovering for eventual release.
- 2) The state forest departments of Uttarakhand and Assam declared a number of identified corridors as state elephant corridors. WTI and IFAW organised a national workshop on 'Securing Elephant Corridors for long-term conservation of Asian Elephant in India' in Bangalore in December. The workshop was attended by prominent elephant specialists and government officials as well as NGO representatives.
- 3) KHPPT (Kashmir Handmade Pashmina Promotion Trust) had the trademark design for KHPPT products made by April 2007. The brand was called Pashma. KHPPT got the craftmark licence for the brand 'Pashma' for Kashmir Handspun and handwoven pashmina products in November 2007. This mark certified the authenticity of the exclusively handcrafted and hand-processed pashmina products made by artisans of KHPPT.
- 4) WTI in conjunction with the World Land Trust acquired 19 acres of mangrove forest in Kerala for conservation.
- 5) The Tibetan Conservation Awareness Campaign saw all Tibetan monasteries, schools and settlements in India being covered by WTI.
- 6) Several Rapid Action Projects were carried out to help field staff in their conservation duties. These ranged from generating awareness on the flood situation in Kaziranga to provision of anti-venom for forest staff at Dudhwa to artificial nesting and rearing for chicks of openbill storks under Arrearjhar Joint Forest Management Committee in Assam and mitigating human-elephant conflict in Kaziranga.
- 7) 20 whale sharks were rescued and released during this year. The whale shark inflatable was displayed at different rallies and school fairs and succeeded in generating awareness and concern for the survival of the species. Several

international symposia were attended by WTI staff working on this project during this year.

- 8) The Global Tiger Forum was assisted by IFAW-WTI in bringing out the first edition of 'Action Tiger : Tiger Action Plans of 12 tiger range countries' which was launched at an event in New Delhi in December 2007 and sent out to different stakeholders in tiger conservation worldwide.
- 9) A workshop on wildlife rehabilitation was organised for ERN (Emergency Relief Network) members. The first meeting of ERN Members was also organised during the workshop. The ERN Digest 2006-2007 was also released during the workshop.
- 10) Around 2000 Animal Action Week activity packs were distributed to schools around the country. Educational activities for students included group discussions, debates, quiz programmes, games, painting competitions, collection of pledges, etc.
- 11) This year witnessed several publications seeing the light of day. They included a book called 'Commentaries on Wildlife Law' written by Ritwick Dutta on the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 that had a compilation of Supreme and High Court judgments on Wildlife Protection Act 1972, Indian Forest Act, 1927, Forest(Conservation) Act, 1980 and other statutes. Several other internal reports were published.

VALMIKI TIGER CONSERVATION PROJECT

Valmiki Tiger Reserve in Bihar is a level I Tiger Conservation Unit (Dinerstein *et al*, 1998) together with Royal Chitwan and Parsa Reserves of Nepal with which it is contiguous. One of India's neglected tiger areas, it was taken up for tiger conservation work by WTI in 2004. Initially, we confirmed the presence of the tiger by obtaining pictures through camera traps placed strategically within the reserve. This done, we initiated work on assessment of tiger prey abundance in the park. At present, we are working on obtaining tiger abundance data using state of the art technology and are also trying to work with the local communities living around the park who are dependent on the resources of the reserve to reduce their dependency on the forest.



Field Assistants in Valmiki placing camera traps to monitor movement of the tigers
(Inset: Camera trap pictures of a Tigress in Gonauli Forest Range)

CENTER FOR WILDLIFE REHABILITATION AND CONSERVATION

Situated near Kaziranga National Park in Assam, The Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC) handled 164 cases during 2007/2008, of which 68 animals were released back into the wild. Some of the important species of mammals brought to the centre during the financial year included rhino and elephant calves, hog badger, leopard, hog deer, leopard cat and jungle cat. Among birds, oriental pied hornbill, brown fish owl, barn owl and lesser adjutant stork were some that were teated. Burmese rock pythons were the most common cases among reptilian fauna. Others included copper-headed trinket snake, banded krait, king cobra, and Indian soft-shell turtle.

Number of cases handled at CWRC during 2007-2008

Outcome of the cases brought to CWRC from April 2007 to March 2008							
Class	Cases admitted	Outcome(%)					
		Released	Died	DOA	Escapes	Transferred	In Care
Mammalia	86	24	47	3	0	6	6
Aves	44	13	27		0	4	0
Reptilia	34	31	3	0	0	0	0
Total/Average	164	68	77	3	0	10	6

Apart from the annual IFAW grant, CWRC received a sum of Rs 1 lakh grant from the MP Local Area Development funds of honorable member of Rajya Sabha, Mrs Hema Malini. The fund was utilised for the construction of keeper accommodation, stores and furnishing inside the small animal nursery. The centre now has separate areas for clinics, surgery, laboratory, small animal nursing, large animal nursing, office, rooms for officer on duty and quarters for caretakers, besides enclosures and paddocks for holding rescued animals. The campus area has been doubled with the addition of about 3.5 hectares of land in 2007-2008. This additional area is being currently used as a grazing land for elephant calves during acclimatisation and nursing.



A poisoned tiger cub, a capped langur and a slow loris are under care in the rehabilitation centre, KNP

The number of cases admitted to CWRC has been steadily increasing since its inception in 2002, with this year's figure exceeding that of all the previous years. The number of cases is expected to touch the 200 mark in the next financial year. For the second consecutive



An injured femal hog deer rescued from Agoratoli undergoing treatment at the Rehabilitation Centre



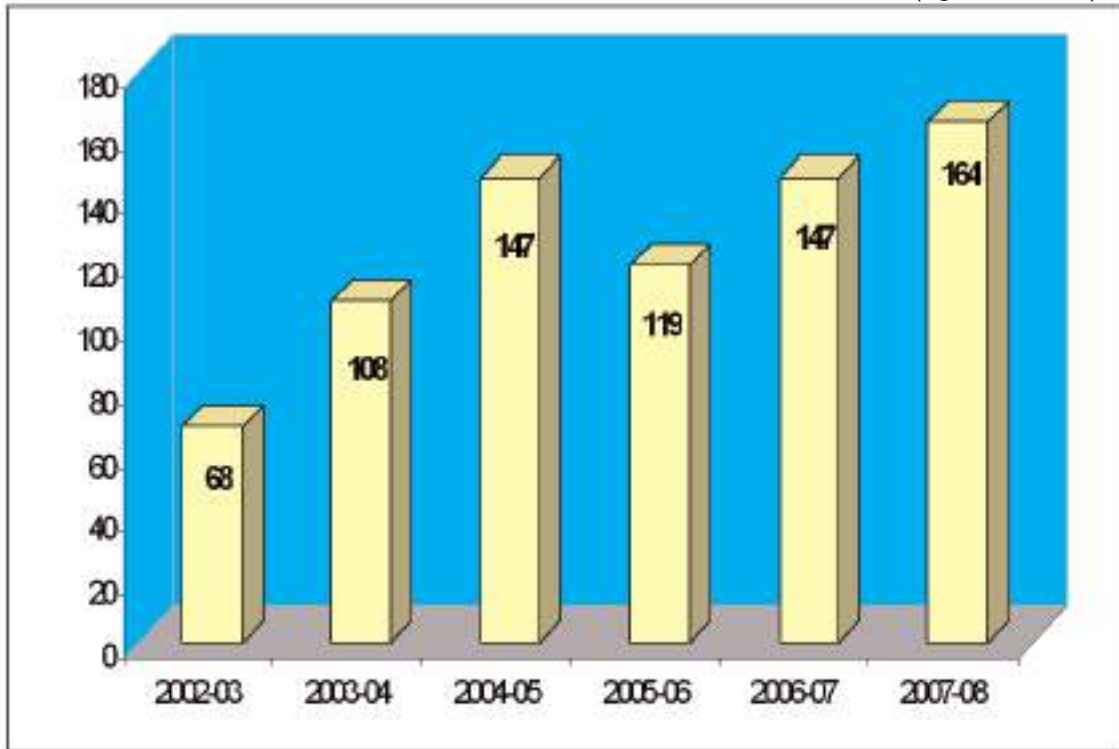
A juvenile Oriental pied hornbill rescued from Agoratoli, KNP under care in CWRC



A Jackal pup of around 1.5 month old was rescued on 12.04.07 is under rehabilitation process in CWRC

year, the Brahmaputra flood plain experienced no serious flooding demanding no disaster relief. The monthly average number of cases admitted to the centre during this period was therefore uniform throughout the year without any appreciable increase during the monsoon months (June-August).

Graph showing yearwise increase in rescue/rehabilitation cases in CWRC`
(figures in Nos.)



An adult male leopard rescued from Mariani range on July 4 under observation in CWRC

CENTRE FOR BEAR REHABILITATION AND CONSERVATION

During the financial 2007-08, the Centre for Bear Rehabilitation and Conservation located on the west bank of Pakke river in Arunachal Pradesh remained home to the non-releasable bears Teddy, Dayun, Karbi and Zoo-2. These bears, between three to six years of age had exceeded one year of age when the new rehabilitation protocol was enforced in 2006 and therefore, were not considered for rehabilitation.

The revised protocol of “assisted release” this year witnessed the successful acclimatisation and soft release of two bears (Seppa and Seppi) in Khari Pong of Pakke Tiger Reserve. Taken to the forests when they were four months of age, they spent nearly eight months in the forests walking with the caretaker. Six months after their release in April 2007, Seppi had to be captured for treating an injury she got in September 2007. Monitoring of Seppa was stopped in January 2008 when his collar dropped off as per the schedule. Seppi will be released as soon as she recovers completely from the injury.



One of the bear cubs, Seppa in her natural habitat after his soft release in the wild at Khari Pong at Pakke Tiger Reserve

In the meanwhile, five bears rescued in 2007, Talamsema, Harang, Deomali, Pocha and Mangaldoi were taken to Upper Dikarai in Pakke Tiger Reserve for rehabilitation. If all goes well, all these five bears would be independent enough to take to their wild habitat by June, 2008.



Five other rehabilitated bears at the Centre during the “Walk the Bear Program”

GREATER MANAS CONSERVATION PROJECT

Rhino Rehabilitation Project

The first three rhinos rehabilitated in the Manas National Park have settled down to the new environment and are also ready for release from the *in-situ* boma as they are approaching sexual maturity. During the latter part of the financial year, another female rhino calf was moved to the pre-release enclosure in Bansbari range in Manas National Park taking the total count to four. She was only 18-20 months of age, and was not allowed to mingle with the three sub-adult rhinos that were relocated during the previous years.

A meeting was called by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, (MoEF), Government of India to review the rhino reintroduction projects being initiated by WTI and WWF. In the meeting it was decided that though the rhino reintroduction projects of WTI and WWF are distinctly different projects, they complement each other. The MoEF has granted permission for release of the three rhinos under WTI's reintroduction project, from their pre-release enclosure to Manas National Park.



The hand reared rhinos grazing in the pre-release enclosure (*boma*) in Bansbari range, Manas National Park

Elephant Rehabilitation Project

The reintegration programme of six elephants which were relocated from CWRC to Doimari in Manas National Park in February 2007 continued throughout the year. During the latter part of the financial year two more elephants, namely Anjan and Sangeeta were moved from CWRC to Doimari to join the other elephants in the programme. By July 2007, the first group of six elephants formed two distinct groups, one comprising Mohan, Rupa and Pari and the other one consisting of Nomal, Babu and Pinku. The elephants were constantly



The elephant calves, Anjan and Sangeeta playing in the mud after their release to Doimari, Manas National Park monitored through radio telemetry and their activities and behaviour recorded on a day-to-day basis including the data on their encounters with wild herds. However, in the latter part of the financial year, Mohan was found to be frequently creating trouble in the anti-poaching camps of Manas National Park. A decision was taken to withdraw Mohan from the programme and retain him in captivity till a decision was made on his placement. Anjan, Sangeeta, Rupa and Pari have now formed a group and are staying together whereas Nomal, Babu and Pinku are in one group. Though the elephants under reintegration have on several occasions encountered their wild counterparts, so far they have not been integrated into a wild herd.



A group of three relocated elephants, Mohan, Rupa and Pari in the wild at Manas National Park



The other group of Nomal, Babu and Pinku in Manas National Park



Dr. Bhaskar Chaudhury monitoring the released elephants through radio telemetry

Mobile Veterinary Services

The Mobile Veterinary Services (MVS) clinics function under the concept that animals estranged from their natural habitat, either due to human interference or by accident, must be given every chance to return to their natural habitat. It is recognised as the quickest and most effective manner of supporting emergency and rehabilitation requirements. Each MVS unit is manned by a veterinarian and ably supported by a caretaker, whose rehab and veterinary skills are honed from time to time through workshops, internships and training programmes. All MVS vehicles are designed and equipped to undertake rescue operations in inhospitable environments and all types of emergencies.



Keepers at CWRC offloading an injured female adult hog deer rescued from Agaratoli range on July 27, 2007

After the initiation of the Central Assam MVS unit and CWRC near Kaziranga National Park, WTI soon realised that these facilities, though centrally located, alone cannot address the emergency relief needs of wildlife in distress in far flung locations in Upper Assam, Lower Assam and neighbouring areas. There are now three MVS units operating in Assam, in the Central, Upper and Lower regions of the state. Additionally there is one MVS unit each in Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

The MVS units attended to more than 180 wildlife emergencies in the states of Assam, Arunachal and Uttarakhand during 2007-2008. About 54% of these animals were released after a period of stabilisation which varied from a few hours to less than six months. The cause of displacement is typically different in these states. While road and train accidents together with electrocution contributed to 21% of the reasons for wildlife displacement in Uttarakhand, trapping for food and trade contribute to 30% of the causes of displacement in the Bodoland Territorial Council Areas of Lower Assam. In Upper Assam, conflict and conflict related injuries were the major reasons, while it was wildlife straying into human habitation that formed the major cause for displacement in the fringe areas of Pakke Tiger Reserve in Arunachal Pradesh.



MVS Unit in lower Assam in a rescue operation of an injured vulture

The mobile unit veterinarians also assist the state forest departments in disease investigation procedures, captive elephant welfare and livestock vaccination programs to work towards creating an immune belt around Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks. The Lower Assam MVS Unit operating from Kokrajhar alone was involved in health support to 25 cases of captive elephants, 19 cases of disease investigations and immunization of 5900 livestock (against FMD, Haemorrhagic septicaemia and Black quarter) during 2007/2008. The services of the Central Assam MVS unit, being located centrally and near Kaziranga National Park, is more frequently called upon for rescue interventions than any other MVS

unit. Consequently, the number of cases handled by the Central Assam MVS veterinarian is more than that of all other MVS units.



An abandoned Himalayan black bear cub rescued from Paharpur on 17-3-08 is under care in the Field Station



An adult female gharial trapped in the fishing net rescued from the Manas river, Chirang.

WILD BUFFALO REHABILITATION PROJECT

The two wild buffaloes translocated to the pre-release enclosure in Dibru Saikhowa National Park from CWRC have done well and have slowly acclimatised to their new environment. Steps to relocate another buffalo calf from CWRC to the pre-release site at Dibru-Saikhowa are under way.



The two wild buffaloes translocated to the prerelease enclosure in Dibru Saikhowa National Park

Elephant Mortality database

Wild Elephant Mortality Database (EMDB) is a national level database on wild elephant mortalities collected from all the wild elephant bearing states of India. In 2007-08, 217 datasheets of elephant mortalities were filled from the elephant bearing divisions of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal. The data was then entered in the soft copies and compiled.



Adult elephant with gunshots injury at Chariduar Reserve Forest

TRAINING OF TRAINERS PROJECT

Training and Equipping

During the financial year 2007-2008, the Van Rakshak Division trained and equipped frontline field staff from the ranks of Range Officer and below in 16 protected areas of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. 230 staff were trained and equipped in Bihar and 397 staff were trained and equipped in Madhya Pradesh. Support for training and equipping of all 230 staff of Bihar and 102 staff of Madhya Pradesh came from WSPA (World Society for the Protection of Animals) with assistance for the training and equipping of the remaining 295 staff of Madhya Pradesh coming from IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare).

In addition to this, 171 newly recruited forest guards of Gujarat were trained by a grant from the Burgers' Zoo of Netherlands.

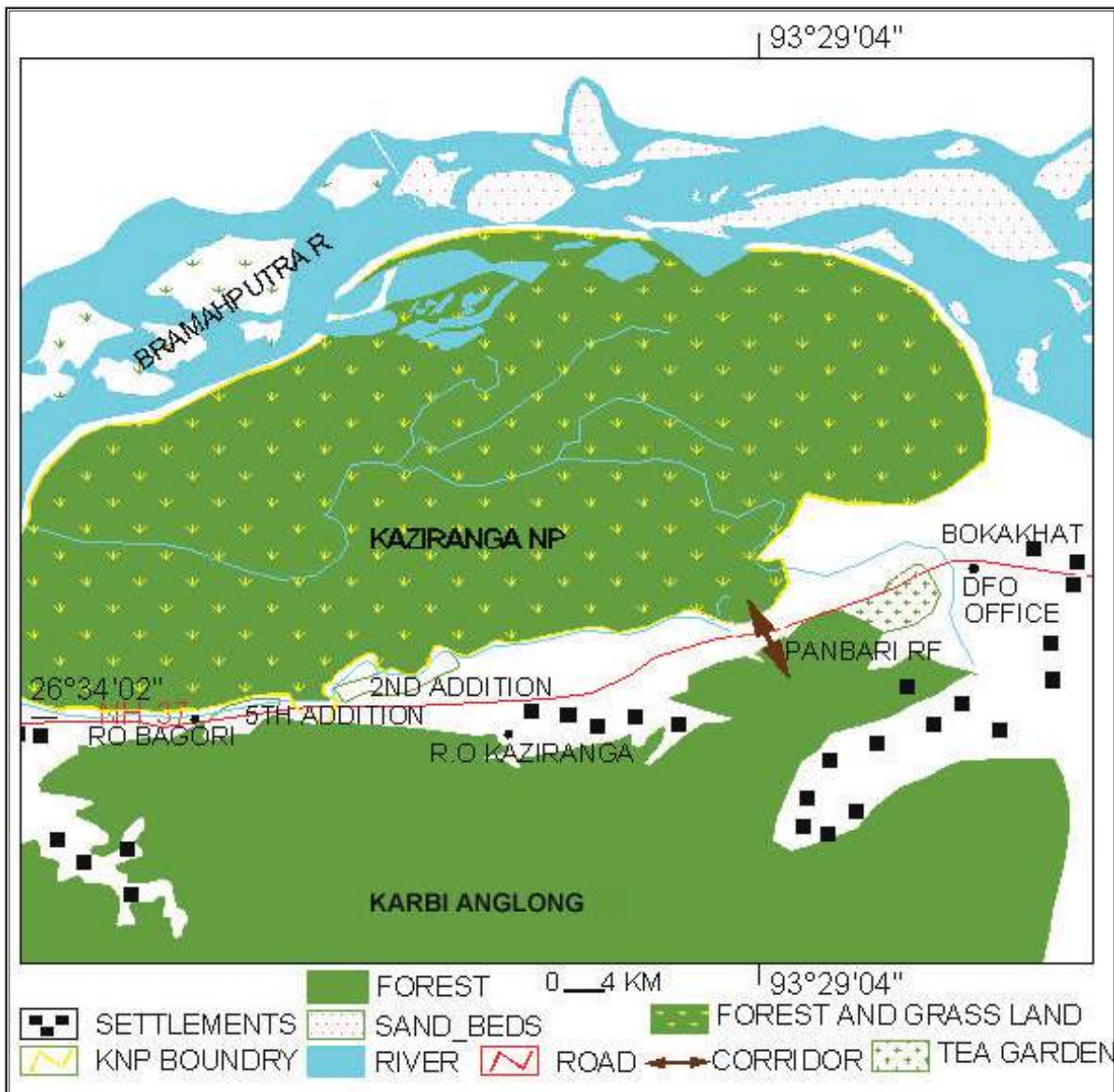


Forest guards of Pant Wildlife Sanctuary after their training workshop on Wildlife Crime prevention

PANBARI CORRIDOR SECUREMENT PROJECT

This corridor connects the elephant habitats of Kaziranga National Park with the forests of North Karbi Anglong. The corridor area that lies near Kaziranga National Park, the north of the National Highway 37, is mostly under agriculture. The Panbari Reserve Forest on the south has good forest cover. The corridor was intensively groundtruthed to collect land records of individual and government land from Siljuri and Methoni areas of the corridor.

The total area of the corridor is about 72 hectares of which about 28 hectares is government land. The remaining land is under the possession of local people. A part (13.5 hectares) of the government land was handed over to the forest department on July 5, 2005. Dialogues have been initiated with people owning the land and district administration for securing the rest of the corridor.



Map showing the Panbari corridor connecting the elephant habitats of Kaziranga National Park with the forests of North Karbi Anglong

INSURANCE AND MORALE BOOSTING

Morale Boosting

There were 10 accident claims reported this year out of which one was a disability claim, six were death claims and three others for minor injury. Three claims were settled with Rs 1 lakh each given for two death claim cases and Rs 50,000 granted for a single disability claim. Three claims for minor injury were settled under the ex-gratia scheme with Rs 35,000 paid to each applicant. Two claims were rejected by WTI since the names of the applicants were not in the database. One claim was rejected by the insurance company because the deceased did not have a driving licence when he met with a road accident. One claim is still pending with the insurance company.

Also according to the Protected Area Staff Status, a database developed by the Wildlife Trust of India, there were 17654 frontline forest staff in 23 states, as on August 31, 2008.

Statement of insurance claim settled during the Financial Year 2007 - 08							
Sl. No.	Name	Designation	PA Name	State	Amount	Nature	Cause
1	Chandrabhan Singh	Forester	Bandhavgarh National Park	MP	50000	Disability	Animal attack
2	Dada Bapurao Nanawade	Van Mazdoor	Tadoba Andhari WLS	MH	100000	Death	Road accident
3	Shyam Singh Dhurve	Casual Worker	Kanha NP	MP	100000	Death	Animal attack
Claims settled by WTI under Morale Boosting during the Financial Year 2007-08							
4	B.V. Bokotra	Van rakshak sahayak	Gir West Divn	Guj.	5000	Injury	Poachers attack
5	Bipin Nath	Game watcher	Sunei Rupai WLS	Assam	20000	Injury	Bullet Injury
6	Bhumidhar Deka	Casual Worker	Pobitora WLS	Assam	10000	Injury	Fall from elephant back

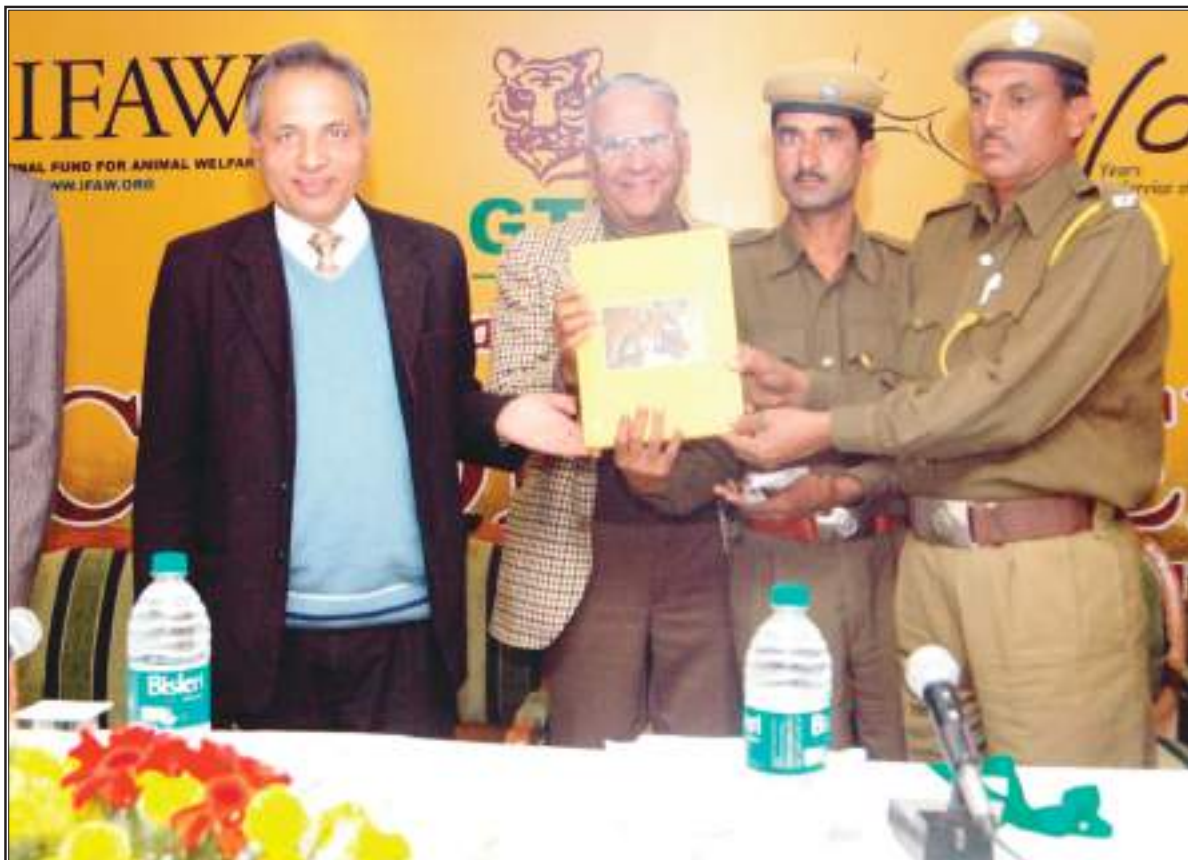
GLOBAL TIGER FORUM SUPPORT PROJECT

The Global Tiger Forum (GTF) is the only inter-governmental body exclusively set up for the conservation of tigers in the wild. The GTF was formed in the year 1994 as a result of decision of the first meeting of tiger range states held in New Delhi, co sponsored by UNEP and Government of India, to provide leadership and adopt a common approach globally to address the issues threatening the survival of tiger in the wild. The existing five sub-species of tiger (of the original eight) now survive only in 14 tiger range countries, namely, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, North Korea, Russia, Thailand and Vietnam. Of these, one sub-species, namely the South China tiger is en route to extinction and whether the tiger still exists in North Korea is debatable. Further, in four more range countries the status of tiger is critical.

GTF is currently involved in priority programmes like:-

1. Preparation/betterment of action plans for tiger conservation in trans-boundary areas and National Tiger Action Plans (NTAPs) of tiger range countries.
2. Capacity building of tiger protection staff in range states
3. Policy advocacy related to tiger conservation including addressing markets for consumption of tiger parts, products, and derivatives.
4. Organising international workshops/meetings like the GTF General Assemblies and International Tiger Symposiums.
5. Exchange of information through news letters.

IFAW-WTI assisted the GTF in bringing out the first edition of “Action Tiger: Tiger Action Plans of 12 tiger range countries” which was launched at an event in New Delhi in December 2007 and sent out to different stakeholders in tiger conservation, worldwide. At the 11th Executive committee meeting of GTF in December 2007, IFAW-WTI committed bearing of 50% of salary of suitable candidate for the post of Secretary General, GTF for three years (amounting to US\$ 54,000), support of technical officer for further three years, financial support for Laos and Cambodia’s membership fee for three years.



Mr Tritha Raj Sharma, Chairman of GTF Executive Committee and Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, Chairman, WTI with two forest staff releasing the “Action Tiger” book in New Delhi on December 2007

National Elephant Corridor Project

Habitat shrinkage, degradation and fragmentation have threatened the existence of various animals, especially larger herbivores like elephants. Many elephant populations have fragmented into sub-populations which occupy isolated pockets. This fragmentation has increased the interface between humans and elephants resulting in increased human-elephant conflict. One way of reducing the negative impact of habitat shrinkage, degradation and fragmentation is to maintain the connecting links between such habitat fragments i.e. “the corridors”. Elephant corridors ensure access to more areas and resources for elephants, increase genetic viability of the population and helps reduce conflict between humans and elephants. Working with an expert advisory committee, scientists and researchers, WTI identified eighty eight elephant corridors and published a report in 2005 entitled “Right of Passage:elephant corridors of India”.

WTI is now working with respective state forest departments, NGOs and Project Elephant directorate (MoEF, Government of India) to protect and secure the identified corridors. Some of the major achievements of the National Elephant Corridor project for 2007-08 are:

- To bring together representatives of all elephant range states and accelerate the process of protecting the corridors through formal declaration/notification and also to formulate a National strategy to protect the identified corridors, Wildlife Trust of India and IFAW organised a two day workshop on “Securing elephant corridors for long-term conservation of Asian elephant in India” in Bangalore on December 20-21, 2007 in partnership with Project Elephant (MoEF), Asian Nature & Conservation Foundation (ANCF) and Karnataka Forest Department. The workshop was attended by prominent government officials, eminent elephant conservation scientists and representatives of nongovernmental organisations.



- The MoU for handing over of the corridor land acquired in Edayarhalli-Dodasampige (Kollegal) elephant corridor in Karnataka was signed between WTI and Karnataka Forest Department. This is the first ever privately bought corridor to be added to a PA in Asia.



CWW & PCCF(WL), Karnataka, and Mr. Vivek Menon, Executive Director, WTI Unveiling the signage of Edayarhalli-Dodasampige (Kollegal) elephant corridor in Karnataka

- The first reprint of the report “Right of Passage: elephant corridors of India” endorsed by Project Elephant was also released during the workshop.
- The design of the signage to be fixed in all the identified 88 elephant corridors of the country for awareness was unveiled. The design has been approved by the Director Project Elephant.
- The state forest department of Uttarakhand and Assam declared the identified corridors as state elephant corridors. They along with Orissa, Karnataka and Meghalaya also allowed WTI to fix signages in the identified corridors.
- Three corridors of Satyamanagalam and Coimbatore forest divisions were intensively groundtruthed and a report entitled “Land acquisition perspective of vital elephant corridors in Coimbatore and Satyamangalam FD, Tamil Nadu, South India was produced. The corridors of Nilgiri and Anamalai Hills in TN were also taken up for intensive groundtruthing.

ANIMAL ACTION WEEK

The Animal Action Week which is held annually from October 1 to October 7th was held again

this year. The educational activities for students from Class VI to IX included group discussions, debates, quiz programmes, games, painting competitions, collection of pledges, etc. About 2,000 Animal Action Week activity packs, containing a 16-page colourful classroom activities booklet, a four-page information folder and a leaflet with a climate change pledge, were printed. About 500 CDs of the Animal Action Week theme - ***To the Rescue, Emergency Relief for Animals*** documentary film were made for distribution among participating schools.

Letters announcing the activities were sent as invites to 2500 schools. A total of 115 schools confirmed participation at the first stage. The activity packs were sent to 300 schools and sample packs were also sent to 1500 schools urging them to conduct the activities at a convenient week during the year.

The closing date of the competition saw a total of 700 paintings received from schools that had sent in their best short-listed entries; 203 specially designed greeting cards, 6467 pledges and reports and photographs from 10 schools.



Animal Action Week paintings exhibited at the Award function venue in New Delhi

The final winners were chosen by the renowned artist Bulbul Sharma from entries short-listed by an internal jury. Saumya Uttam's painting of a forest fire and people helping animals and Tuhina Kahali's painting of people stopping a train to enable elephants to cross over and depicted the essence of animal rescue. Both children were awarded a cash prize, a citation and the IFAW Young Achiever's Award at the Tenth Venu Menon National Animal Awards on the February 19, 2008.



Saumya Uttam, 12, Class VI, St. Mary's School, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi receiving the 1st prize of the IFAW Young Achiever Award



Tuhiina Kahali, 14, Class VIII of Barasat Indira Gandhi Memorial School Kolkata receiving the 2nd prize of the IFAW Young Achiever Award

EMERGENCY RELIEF NETWORK

At the start of the financial year, there were 246 registered ERN members. The members took part in rescues of wild animals in their regions and the network was extensively used in sharing information on such rescues. Some of the notable rescues included turtles, sarus cranes and pangolins. Members also took part in rescuing and rehabilitating wild animals in floods that happened in Gujarat and Orissa. A workshop on wildlife rehabilitation was organized at Kaziranga for ERN members from February 18 to 20, 2008. The first meeting of the ERN members was also organised during the workshop. Out of a total of 300 ERN members, 50 members from India and abroad participated in the workshop and meeting. The ERN Digest 2006-07 was also released during the workshop and copies were distributed to the participants, delegates and resource persons. By end of March 2008 the membership of ERN stood at 333.



Emergency Relief vaccination camp for cattles conducted at Koklabari, Manas National Park in Sept. 2007

SHAHTOOSH WORKERS ALTERNATE LIVELIHOOD

During this period, negotiations took place between the KHPPT (Kashmir Hand-made Pashmina Promotion Trust) and CDI (Crafts Development Institute) to obtain the Geographical Indication of Origin (GI) certification for Kashmir Pashmina. The KHPPT was formed as a trust with help from WTI in November 2006 to bring together the traditional artistry of shahtoosh and pashmina workers to promote Kashmir Handmade Pashmina and to establish it as an exclusive brand. This was in response to a ban on shahtoosh products in 2003 following a survey on the chiru antelope that established the link between the trade in shahtoosh and chiru killing. The alternative to shahtoosh was pashmina weaving, for 70% of shahtoosh workers, but since the Kashmir pashmina trade was facing tough competition from other areas outside Kashmir it was decided to form a trust to establish the unique nature and origin of the brand.

By April, 2007, the trademark design for KHPPT products was made. The brand was called Pashma. KHPPT got the craftmark licence for the brand “Pashma” for Kashmir handspun and hand woven pashmina products in November 2007. This mark certified the authenticity of the exclusively handcrafted and hand-processed pashmina products made by artisans of KHPPT.

The Kashmir Handmade Pashmina Promotion Trust participated in the Nature Bazaar 2007 that was organised by Dastkar in Dilli Haat and sold over 50 per cent of their production.

The workers of the KHPPT have agreed to form a workers’ company that will deal exclusively in handspun and hand woven pashmina products and market them. Two UK-based companies, dealing in handcrafted Kashmir pashmina shawls have placed orders for pashmina shawls. Shooting for a film on shahtoosh entitled ‘A Shawl to Die For’ started in October 2007. The film is in the final stages of editing and production.



“Pashma” tag

SLOTH BEAR CONSERVATION AND WELFARE PROJECT

During this financial year also, efforts were made to find a permanent home for around 50

dancing bears in Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Pune, Mumbai and Rajgir, (Nalanda). Though site selection was carried out, required permission did not come through from the respective state governments and related agencies. Among the two temporary facilities in Bilaspur and Rajgir, the Bilaspur one was wound up in January 2008. The animals were sent to Ahmedabad Zoo (four) and the Agra Bear Rescue Centre (six). The Rajgir facility which started functioning out of the dilapidated forest quarters in October 2007 was, by the end of the financial year, converted into a full-fledged centre having proper housing facility for the bears. Initially, three dancing bears surrendered by the kalandars were housed in the facility.



Bears rescued from Kalandars in Chhattisgarh enjoying freedom in the temporary rehabilitation facility in Bilaspur

Sloth bear cub rehabilitation: The ‘Walk The Bear’ programme was initiated for five male sloth bear cubs during the month of May-June 2007 in Bhimband Wildlife Sanctuary, Bihar. However the process had to be stopped as one of the cubs under rehabilitation was shot by suspected Maoists in the area in August 2007. The remaining four sloth bear cubs along with two other female bear cubs were transferred to the temporary facility in Rajgir in Bihar. The facility currently houses nine animals.



Bear cubs with keepers in Bhimband Wildlife Sanctuary, Bihar when ‘Walk The Bear’ programme was initiated

Kalandar Alternative Livelihood

Throughout the year, the rehabilitation process of providing kalandars with alternative livelihoods continued in Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh), Bihar and Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh). Kalandars were assisted by WTI to set up alternative livelihoods and funds were provided. The kalendar rehabilitation effort consists of several components including identification of skills, market study, training, post rehabilitation monitoring, extra support and emphasis on women and children to provide better lives for the families of kalandars. There is a field officer in each of the three states to carry out and closely monitor these activities. A total of nine bears were surrendered during this year. Four bears were surrendered in Chhattisgarh and five in Bihar. Throughout the year, there were regular visits by WSPA representatives to monitor the projects. WSPA representatives also visited Rajgir, Bihar in the first week of October and attended a function to hand over alternative livelihood packages to three Kalandars. Bank drafts were also given to kalandars in Bilaspur for purchasing agricultural land and additional logistical support provided.



Alternative livelihood, Kalandar Suleman Shah of Bihar in his Utensil shop after surrendering his bears to the forest department.



A grocery shop set up by Kalandar Kurwan as alternative livelihood.

Sloth bear Trade Control

The study found rampant trade in bile, skin, claws and fat of Asiatic black bear in the states of J&K, Himachal and Uttarakhand. Almost in all the localities where surveys were conducted, bears were killed either for trade or in retaliation to conflict. Most people use both authorized and unauthorised guns for the killings. The price of the gall and the gall bladder varied from Rs 1,500 to Rs 6,000 depending on the location. The consignments were sent to major towns within each state from where they were smuggled out to Nepal, China and even to Middle-East and Germany. No live bear trade in Asiatic black bear is reported.

Three states were covered for studying trade in sloth bears. These were Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. Sloth bear were mostly killed during March and April, a time when Mahua (*Madhuca logifolia*) a favoured food of sloth bear appears and also during winter when cubs are born. The cubs are generally captured after Dussera between November and

January by either smoking their dens, trapping, baiting or use of firearms, poisons and explosives. Sloth bear are mainly killed for trade of bear bile, fur, bone, male genitals, claws and meat. Locals find different uses for these products which may be smuggled out to places like Kolkata and Mumbai from where they are traded internationally. Price of bear gall is much lower (Rs 200 - 1000) but yields much more overseas. Sloth bear cubs are traded widely from these three states to reach the kalandars. Cubs may be sold from Rs 200-1,000 depending upon the location.

Curtailling trade is fundamental to conserving bears in the wild and various steps like information exchange, capacity building of staff, testing of traditional medicines, etc, may yield results. The report of the study will be published in 2009.



A two-month old sloth bear cub rescued from a wildlife trader in Chandil, Jharkhand on Feb. 6, 2008

Dancing bear campaign

Hotels and tour operators in Delhi and Agra who joined the WTI's "Say No to Bear Dancing" Campaign were asked to collect signed pledges from tourists. About 150 signed pledges were already collected from various tour operators in Delhi.

Book stores were also contacted for restocking campaign materials at their stores. Materials were sent to stores that requested for it. A rural campaign is also being planned.



A poster and book mark designed for the campaign against Bear Dancing

WHALE SHARK CONSERVATION PROJECT

Whale Shark Awareness Campaign

On May 3, 2007, in a function, the Gujarat forest department honoured the fishermen who had cut their nets to save whale sharks. Twenty whale sharks were rescued and released during this year. A report on the whale shark sightings/beachings along the Indian coast for the period 2002 to May 2007 was prepared. Photographs of WTI's whale shark campaign were requested by an environmentalist in Japan for distribution to junior schools. The whale shark inflatable was displayed at different rallies and school fairs and succeeded in generating awareness and concern for the survival of the species. Among the international symposia attended by WTI during this period were the Symposium on Marine Reserves organised by Green Peace in October, the International Conference on Environment Education and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) meeting, held in Seychelles in December 2007 with delegates from 40 countries.



“Save *Vhali*” awareness campaign rally in Surtrapada, Gujarat

WILD BUFFALO CONSERVATION PROJECT

Studies on the wild buffalo in Chhattisgarh documented that the central Indian population of this species is critically low and would require concerted efforts from the state government as well as WTI. At the request of a task force set up for the purpose of looking into the problems faced by the wild buffalo in Chhattisgarh, an action plan was prepared and submitted to the state government in August 2008. This action plan is now being

implemented and consists of *in situ* conservation initiatives in Udanti WLS and Indravati TR and an *ex situ* component of conservation breeding at both these locations.



Wild bufalos, Mother and calf in Udanti WLS being monitored by WTI

MALABAR CIVET PROJECT

This period saw the continuation of the survey of the Malabar civet that started in 2006. In spite of a total of 3,246 camera trap nights in 14 study areas spread across Kerala and Karnataka, no trap picture of a Malabar civet has been obtained as yet. The survey will be extended for another six months (April 2008 to September 2008) to cover few more areas in Kerala and Karnataka.



Field Officer, Nixon placing a camera trap in Peppara WLS, Kerala for survey of Malabar Civet

RAPID ACTION PROJECTS

1. **Generating awareness among target population about effects of flood on wildlife in and around Kaziranga National Park.**

Every year, there is a huge loss of wildlife and their habitats due to the varying degrees of floods that hit Kaziranga National Park. The rise in the water levels forces the wildlife to migrate out of the protected area and towards the neighbouring highlands. During this process they pass through human habitation, and need to cross the NH 37 thereby facing poaching, hunting and speeding traffic. This results in many wildlife casualties. It had been observed that many injured animals had been badly handled in rescue attempts by well meaning people. Many of these animals did not survive. It was clear that the local people needed to be informed and educated on this issue.

The IFAW-WTI rescue centre, CWRC, run in collaboration with the Assam Forest Department based adjacent to Kaziranga National Park takes care of any wildlife emergencies which

arise due to accidents, conflict, displacement, etc, and the animals are thereafter rehabilitated wherever possible. This RAP was thus aimed at educating people around Kaziranga National Park including those who volunteered to be a part of the rescue operations. The volunteers ensured that the drivers remained within the speed limits on the highway, especially at animal crossings. Intensive patrolling was also conducted along the vulnerable patches of highway specially during the night. The awareness campaign was organised in six villages adjoining the KNP. Villagers were taught how to handle marooned animals in flood waters and to respond to animals in distress. Well-known Assamese singer, Zubeen Garg along with 100 other artists also joined hands during the awareness activities. Barricades and cautionary signs were also put up along the highway (passing through Kaziranga) to check vehicle speeds at night. Several teams were set up to patrol the area.



Left: Well-known Assamese singer Zubeen Garg releasing wild animals rescued by WTI during floods in Kaziranga NP
 Top: He is leading a “Save Wild Animals” awareness campaign rally along with other artists.

2. Safety equipment for Whale Shark Rescue Team - Gujarat

The whale shark is the world’s largest fish and it migrates to Gujarat waters between November and May. The whale shark was the first fish to be included in the Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife Protection Act. Although its hunting and trade is banned, trade in small numbers may still be continuing. After a successful WTI campaign the fisher folk are voluntarily releasing whale sharks accidentally caught in their nets, usually supervised by the rescue team. However, the volunteers, forest guards and fisheries department personnel were going out to the sea without safety equipment. It was important to provide safety equipment not only to boost the morale of the volunteers and staff but also to prevent any mishaps, during the operations. This project equipped them with the mandatory safety equipment (25 life jackets, 2 flares, torch lights) to carry out their duties safely and efficiently.

3. Life jackets for the forest department of Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary

During the monsoon in July 2007 most parts of the Pobitora wildlife sanctuary were flooded due to the breach of important dykes. Home to over 80 of the greater one-horned rhinoceros, it is critical to have round the clock patrolling and constant vigil even during the flood. Poaching remains the most serious threat to the survival of the greater one-horned rhinoceros and maintaining proper security is critical. Poachers take advantage of the flood by targeting the animals that are forced to move highlands outside the protected area to

take shelter. Forest staff patrol both inside and outside the wildlife sanctuary in boats but the teams did not have life jackets. Reacting to a request, RAP provided 10 life jackets to the field staff, thereby ensuring their safety, boosting their morale and encouraging them to patrol the more remote areas of the sanctuary. This encouraged better protection and prevented poachers from having a free run during the floods.

4. Provision of anti-venom for the forest staff of Dudhwa National Park

Dudhwa National Park is situated on the Indo-Nepal border in Lakhimpur-Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh which harbours a wide range of wildlife and has a large snake population. Some 75% of the 100 cases of venomous snake bites which were reported in 2006 were fatal due to lack of timely and proper treatment. As a result both venomous and non-venomous snakes were being killed indiscriminately due to the lack of awareness regarding snakes. Adding to the problem was the acute shortage of anti venom and the resulting fatalities led to reluctance and demoralisation of the field staff to patrol the national park. In August, 2007 as per the proposed RAP, snake bite treatment kits were provided to the forest staff and doctors. A two-day training workshop which had a participation of over 300 people, including 40 doctors was held in collaboration with the forest department. The workshop made the local people aware of how to differentiate venomous snakes from non-venomous snakes and on how to react in case of a snake bite. The doctors were trained on how to treat snake bite victims and the procedures to follow during treatment. The project helped reduce conflict between the local people and snakes, and helped control the indiscriminate killing of snakes.

5. Strengthening intelligence network in Kaziranga National Park for anti-poaching activities -

In the year 2007-08 more than twenty animals were poached, largely outside the park. A total of fourteen rhinos were killed till August 2007. Local villagers used to help poachers



Dr. Prabal Sarkar handing over life jackets to the Range Officer, Pabitora WLS to assist forest staff on patrolling duty



Anti-venom treatment kits being distributed to forest staff and doctors of Dudhwa National park

by providing information on animal movement, and supporting them with equipment and planning. There was an immediate need for additional focus on anti-poaching activities. It was critical to develop a network to access information on poachers. Following a request from the Director of the Park, RAP decided to help the park management obtain quality information to counter the poachers. The RAP aimed at employing informers and introducing a reward system for information provided leading to successful arrest or seizures. It gave strong incentives to the villagers to cooperate with the forest department and thereby prevent poaching.

6. Strengthening the anti-poaching squad at Chandaka Wildlife Sanctuary, Orissa for better protection and to minimize human-elephant conflict

The Chandaka wildlife sanctuary is situated very close to Bhubaneswar, the state capital of Orissa and is surrounded by 52 villages at its periphery. Many local villagers depend on the park's natural resources for sustenance, resulting in huge pressure on the surrounding forests and degradation of the wildlife habitat. Consequently there is an increase in crop depredation by elephants in the area and human-elephant conflict is on the rise.

There have been many instances of illegal timber extraction (in last three years, over 500 offenders have been apprehended for timber and fire wood extraction), six people were killed in the last two years by elephants and two cases of elephant poaching have also been reported from the area in the period. To address both these problems it was proposed to provide the patrolling staff with two solar panels, two solar lanterns and two tents for better patrolling in remote areas which do not have access to power supply. The equipment provided under the RAP has resulted in making the anti-poaching squad better equipped to patrol the area. The improved patrolling will strengthen the protection of the park, and also help to minimise human-elephant conflict.

7. Artificial nesting and rearing of openbill stork chicks under Arrearjhar Joint Forest Management Committee, Assam

The openbill stork is protected under Schedule IV of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. Every year Asian openbill storks build a large nesting colony on the tall sal trees found in the Arrearjhar area. Rough estimates indicated the presence of more than 300 nests this year. While the death of chicks due to falls from the nests is a natural phenomenon, the high intensity of rainstorms last year resulted in excessive falls, thereby increasing mortalities. For instance, a heavy downpour on the night of the October 7 caused death of more than 50 chicks and a large number of eggs were damaged too. There was a



One of the nesting site of Openbill Storks at Arrearjhar area

suggestion to provide nettings to help break the fall for displaced chicks. The need for providing rehabilitation skills and awareness programmes in local communities was also felt. Nets were purchased and placed beneath the nesting colony, to save falling chicks and eggs.



Nettings placed beneath the nesting sites of Openbill storks to save chicks when displaced and prevent breaking of eggs.

The nets caught two openbill stork chicks that fell off their nests. These chicks were hand-raised and subsequently rehabilitated. In addition to rescue and rehabilitation of the fallen chicks, the project organised conservation awareness programmes to sensitise the local villagers on related issues. The proven effectiveness of this low-cost method to provide emergency relief will continue to make its impact to secure the openbill stork population of Arrearjhar. The team of well-prepared implementers stay in wait confidently for the next nesting season.

8. Power Fencing to Mitigate Human-Animal Conflict, Kuthori, Assam

Due to its proximity to Kaziranga National Park, the local people of Nagoan in Assam have often been in conflict with wildlife. These people are entirely dependent on paddy and mustard cultivation. Crop-raiding by elephants and other wildlife cause huge losses every year. In the past six years local cultivators had lost 75% of their crops repeatedly due to crop raiding by wildlife. The resulting conflict is currently a major threat to the survival of elephants. As a solution to the above problem a RAP was proposed by the local co-operative society, under which an eight km long electric fence was constructed and the necessary equipment to activate and maintain it. Energizers, batteries, insulators and lightening diverters was provided to them along with the technical support for its construction. Round the clock patrolling of the fence was done by village volunteers. As a result of the RAP there was no further incidence of human-animal conflict or crop raiding in the area during the year and the villagers have expressed their gratitude for this project.

9. Mitigating Human-Elephant Conflict & preventing elephant Depredation

Kaziranga National Park has approximately 1250 elephants as per the official census in 2005

and there are a large number of human settlements close to the park. Elephants tend to venture into these settlements, mainly tea estates and paddy fields. The communities who own these paddy fields are entirely dependent on cultivation with regular elephant depredation and the intensity of conflicts are very high. This conflict and retaliation are becoming the biggest threats to the pachyderms' survival here. The villagers whose crops are raided are victims of this conflict, yet they are not normally given relief by the government.

Reacting to a request from village volunteers, RAP encouraged them to adopt some measures to mitigate human-elephant conflict in the area. Watch towers were constructed along the corridors to keep a look out for approaching herds. A patrolling team was formed and local volunteers used to man the three towers to monitor the movements of elephants on a daily basis. The team used crackers and chilli bombs successfully as measures to drive the elephants away from their fields. The whole initiative also generated a lot of interest among local cultivators and created much needed awareness. As a result of the project the intensity of the human-elephant conflict and the level of crop depredation in the area has reduced considerably.

10. Providing a generator to facilitate charging of wireless sets, making communication possible during patrolling in Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary

Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary has the highest density of greater one-horned rhinoceros in the world. It is located in Assam, in the floodplains of the river Brahmaputra and is hence, annually hit by floods during the monsoon period. This is a dangerous period for the animals in the sanctuary as they often fall victim to poaching or drown while seeking shelter in the fringe regions and villages around the protected area.



Pabitora Range Officer M. Tamuli (left) with the Generator set

An active wireless network system is critical to monitor wildlife that move out of the park during the flood to take shelter in the highlands. However, during the flood, the electricity department cuts off power to the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary to ensure that human and animal lives are not lost due to electrocution; this means that the marooned staff cannot charge the batteries of their wireless system, resulting in breakdown of communication. Under such circumstances, where there is no information sharing, stray rhinos can become easy targets for the poachers.

Reacting to an urgent request during the flash floods, WTI provided a generator for the Pobitora forest staff within 24 hours. WTI's prompt action has therefore

helped the department to keep their wireless network system active, even in the absence of normal power supply.

11. Improving the communication network of Orang National Park by providing wireless hand sets and tyre replacements

Orang National Park is home to one of the highest populations of the greater one horned rhinoceros. However, it is threatened by high poaching pressures. Keeping constant vigil and round the clock patrolling is of utmost importance. The forest department put forward a request to get their wireless sets repaired, half of which were not working. Reacting fast to the request WTI has been able to repair the sets, purchase new batteries as well as replace old tyres in some of the vehicles of the park resulting in better communication system and improved patrolling.



WTI Trustee, Prof. P.C. Bhattacharjee (left) handing over the tyres and wireless sets to the Range Officer, Orang National Park

12. Poonch man-animal conflict management and capacity building project

Instances of man-animal conflict involving WPA Schedule I species such as common leopards and Himalayan black bears were reaching worrying levels. The past year saw 18 cases of black bears being killed by villagers. On October 6, 2007, a snow leopard was killed for the first time in two decades in Jammu and Kashmir.

The factors causing these conflicts include ‘acute habitat fragmentation’ owing to largescale deforestation during the peak of unrest, dwindling of wild prey base, excessive dependence of people on forest resources, lack of management strategies, etc. The wildlife department has been unable to keep pace with the challenges and threats to the habitat.

This project aims to devise strategies to mitigate and minimise the human-animal conflict through a multi-pronged approach.



A view of man-animal conflict prone Poonch region in J&K

Under this RAP, village committees were formed. In addition to imparting conservation awareness, local people were also trained on how to react in case of conflict. Equipment such as trap nets, cages, sleeping bags, jackets, trekking shoes and cameras were provided to the forest department team. Crackers and first aid boxes were provided to the forest department team as well as the village committees. Rescue and rehabilitation of wildlife



Dr. Iqbal, DFO, Poonch region (right center) facilitating the distribution of trap nets, cages, sleeping bags, jackets, trekking shoes and cameras to forest staff to curb human-animal conflicts

was done. Rapid communication network was formed for rapid action to manage the human-animal conflict. The village committees, police stations and the forest department team will work in collaboration to report any incidence of wildlife crime or human-animal conflicts to ensure prompt action. An intelligence network to curb wildlife crime has been developed.

Executive Director's Discretionary Grants (EDDG)

a) Honorarium for village heads in Pakke Tiger Reserve

Ghora Aabhe is a committee comprising heads of 16 villages for protection of the Pakke Tiger Reserve in the northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh. As part of the project, honorarium was provided to members of Ghora Aabhe for conducting various wildlife conservation initiatives. Wildlife conservation awareness meetings were organised in the northern fringes of the Pakke Tiger Reserve. Intelligence networks were developed with the help of gaon burahs (village heads), which helped the department to carry out anti-poaching activities. Three wildlife offences were registered with assistance from gaon burahs. Penalties were imposed on the offenders. Local people were encouraged in taking an active interest in conservation measures. A signage was put up for public awareness banning hunting, poaching, fishing and other illegal activities near Seijosa.

b) Provision of *Sanctuary* magazine to decision makers to create understanding of wildlife conservation issues.

WTI distributed *Sanctuary* magazine subscriptions to create an understanding of issues involved in wildlife conservation by decisionmakers. One hundred forest officials and leaders in the field of wildlife, whose understanding may have a bearing on the final outcome of critical conservation issues in the government, media, bureaucracy and politics, were given a year's subscription to the magazine.

c) Financial support for organisation of International Tiger Symposium

WTI contributed financially to the Global Tiger Forum for meeting of partial expenses of the International Tiger Symposium in Kathmandu in Nepal in April 2007.

d) Financial support for attending a workshop on rhino conservation in Kenya

WTI provided the registration fee to enable Mr Digvijay Singh Khati to attend a workshop on rhino conservation conducted by the Zoological Society of London in Kenya.

e) Creating conducive conditions for tiger survival in Sariska Tiger Reserve by village relocation outside the reserve

Sariska Tiger Reserve (STR), with an area of 881.11 sq km lies in the westernmost limit of the Aravallis. Reports in 2004 confirmed the total disappearance of tigers from Sariska. Tiger reintroduction therefore was planned by the government. But before that, creating conducive conditions for tiger survival is top priority. This includes village relocation outside STR. Bhagani is a small settlement, in the Core Area 1 in Range Tehla in Sariska, consisting of 21 families dependent on



A villager from Bhagani receiving the financial assistance provided by WTI for their relocation from Sariska Tiger Reserve

cattle rearing for livelihood. The Government of India had subsequently allotted suitable compensation for relocating the village. As the issue needed urgent action, it was considered under an EDDG grant. On the completion of formalities and signing of relevant agreements, on October 17, 2007, at an event held at the relocation site, WTI provided supplementary financial assistance to the villagers. Bank drafts were handed over to 18 families who volunteered to relocate. Subsequent to the supplementary financial assistance and the forest department's arranging for the balance money, all the villagers from Bhagani village relocated permanently to the new site, vacating the land at Sariska for wildlife.

WILDLIFE LITIGATIONS PROJECT

Activities are aimed at bringing persons accused of wildlife crime to book and to take action against violations of forest laws. It is noticed that in most cases in trial courts, the lawyers and enforcement agencies are not adequately equipped to handle cases of wildlife offences and are therefore not willing to take them on, especially as the remunerative incentive is low. Moreover, with regard to the criminal justice administration system as a whole, the prosecution in cases of crimes relating to wildlife is very weak and ineffective and therefore the conviction rates are extremely low. This leads to the accused being released on bail and he/ she indulges in crime again. This void can be filled up by the law taking up important wildlife crime cases. It is also observed that due to ignorance of forest and wildlife laws as well as relevant case laws, most of the violations go unnoticed. WTI assists enforcement agencies through its lawyers who are specialized in wildlife crime issues. The lawyers assist enforcement agencies to file cases against offenders and attempt to ensure convictions. WTI files cases or supports cases in higher courts and brings relevant violations of forest and wildlife laws and Supreme Court orders to the notice of court and seek relief. The role of this project is also to bring to the notice of the government or other appropriate forces, the violations of forest laws by state governments., its agencies, and private agencies, to obtain relief for wildlife and wildlife habitats. The P.E.L.T. Programme has a skillset of persons pursuing wildlife crime cases for more than a decade and has had significant achievement in several high profile cases notably, Sansar Chand, Ratiram Sharma and Salman Khan.

During 2007-08, Wildlife Trust of India, with financial support from Stop Poaching Fund, filed cases/supported cases or continued to follow up on earlier cases in relevant courts on wildlife violation cases. Brief notes on such cases, is provided below:-

Supreme Court Cases

I. Ashok Kumar vs State of Jammu and Kashmir

The Hon'ble Supreme Court is monitoring the directions issued by it earlier which was to the effect that there should be a complete ban on shahtoosh trade in Jammu and Kashmir and need for declaration of stock of shahtoosh shawls and ownership certificates implemented by the state.

II. Ashok Kumar vs State of Uttarakhand

An amended petition was filed before the Supreme Court regarding the existence of the Chilla Irrigation Colony, within the boundaries of the Rajaji National Park. While allowing for the construction of the irrigation department colony as well as the Chilla power project certain conditions were imposed while allowing the above two activities to take place.

High Court Cases

I. Cottage Industries Exposition & Anr. vs Union of India in Delhi High Court

A consignment of 12 shahtoosh shawls was seized by the Indian Customs on November 11, 1996. The petitioner got a stay order from the Delhi High Court in 1997 putting all legal proceedings on hold. The Wildlife Trust of India filed an intervention application in 2006

after which the stay order on a trial under the Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972 has been vacated and the petition dismissed.

II. Mohan Lal Relia vs Union of India in Delhi High Court

In another matter connected to this case the court dismissed this writ petition. This involved the seizure of 46 shahtoosh shawls from the premises of Trans Asia Exposition, Haus Khas, in 2000. WTI had moved an intervention application in this case too.



Shahtoosh shawls seized from traders in a Hotel in South Delhi

Central Empowered Committee (CEC)

I. Faiyaz A. Khudsar vs State of Jammu and Kashmir

(Filed before CEC in October, 2005)

The Hirpura Wildlife Sanctuary is an important habitat for the endangered markhor (*Capra falconari cashmiriensis*). An ancient road used by the caravans of the Mughal regime, known as the Mughal Road forms a 30 km long transect from the west (Poonch) to the east (Hirpura village) of the sanctuary. The upgrading of this road was challenged by Biodiversity Conservation Trust of India through its trustee, Faiyaz A Khudsar before the Central Empowered Committee (CEC). CEC conducted a site inspection and submitted its report before Supreme Court. The Supreme Court, after approving the recommendations laid down by the Central Empowered Committee, directed the state of Jammu and Kashmir to abide by the guidelines and recommendations on the project. WTI provided legal assistance to the applicant.



A Markhor in Limber WLS, Jammu & Kashmir

II. Dr. Gurcharan Singh vs State of Uttarakhand before CEC

(Filed before CEC in May, 2007)

The matter is regarding the ongoing construction/upgradation of a forest road inside the Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand. The forest road in question runs from Kalagarh to Khara gate which falls on the southern boundary of the Corbett Tiger Reserve. Stay has been imposed on the construction of the road. CEC has to submit its report on the matter. WTI provided legal assistance to the applicant.

III. Wildlife Trust of India vs State of Jharkhand (Application No. 251 of 2003) before CEC

The application was filed by Mr Ashok Kumar on May 31, 2003 before the Central Empowered Committee concerning the effect of mining, encroachment on the elephant habitat in the Saranda Forest Division in Jharkhand. Pursuant to the filing of this application SAIL has admitted that as per the scheme developed by State Forest Department an amount of Rs 6.2 crores was deposited to DFO for Protection & Conservation of forests and Wildlife Habitat including elephant.



One of the coal mines in forest land in Jharkhand

IV. Pradip Gupta vs State of Uttaranchal

(Filed before CEC in 2003, now in Supreme Court)

On July 4, 2007, during the site inspection of Corbett road, CEC took up this issue and has asked the forest department to submit a status report on the demolition of the colony.

V. Wildlife Trust of India vs State of Uttaranchal

(Filed before CEC in 2004)

The present case is regarding the relocation and resettlement of the families living in the Village Laldhang within the Corbett Tiger in accordance with the approved scheme of the Ministry of Environment and Forest. On July 4, 2007, during the site inspection of the Corbett road, CEC has also asked to submit a status report on the relocation of village and to resettle the remaining families as soon as possible.

VI. Wildlife Trust of India vs State of Haryana

(Filed before CEC filed in August, 2007)

Saraswati Wildlife Sanctuary spreads over an area of 4400 Ha in Haryana. It is considered a prime habitat of Hog deers. On October 3, 2007, after listening to the arguments, the CEC imposed immediate ban on the construction of the canal and asked State of Haryana to file a detailed affidavit on the matter.

VII. Wildlife Trust of India vs State of West Bengal

(Filed before CEC in April, 2008)

The application concerns the illegal use of forest land comprising part of the Senchal Wildlife Sanctuary, Darjeeling, West Bengal state for the purposes of using the same for keeping condemned pool cars of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council which is in violation of the provisions of law. The land has been transferred by the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council to the Forest Department.

Trial Court Cases

1. State vs Ganesh Oraon & Nando Kumar Ghosh

On March 29, 2007, the accused, Ganesh Oraon and Nando Kumar Ghosh from whom a rhino horn, two swamp deer skins and several pieces of elephant tusks had been seized earlier, were sentenced to four years imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10,000 (US\$ 250) each in the eastern Indian state of West Bengal. WTI lawyer assisted the public prosecutor in this case.

2. Salman Khan Cases

On September 28, 1998 the famous Indian film actor, Salman Khan, shot a chinkara, an endangered species. After several hearings, the court on April 10, 2006 convicted Salman Khan and co-accused Govardhan with five years imprisonment. Further, on August 24, 2007 the Sessions Court upheld the sentence of five years against Salman Khan.

3. Anand Tashi Vs. State of Delhi

Tashi, alias Anand and Lobsang Phuntsok, and a Nepali citizen, Jeet Bahadur were arrested in New Delhi on April 6, 2005, with a cache of 45 leopard skins and 14 otter skins. The accused persons were sentenced to five years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) by a Delhi Court



Film actor Salman Khan after his conviction in a case of killing an endangered species, Chinkara



Anand Tashi, Lobsang Phuntsok and Jeet Bahadur arrested in Majnu-ka-Tila being taken into a Court in Delhi

on November 30, 2007. They were also ordered to pay a fine of Rs 10,000 each, in default of which they would have to face an additional three months imprisonment.

4. State of West Bengal vs Rajinder Joshi

On March 27, 2008 Rajender Joshi, a wildlife trader belonging to Jalpaiguri district along Indo- Bhutan border in West Bengal state, was sentenced to four years in prison along with a fine of Rs 10,000 (US\$ 250). Joshi, son-in-law of the notorious wildlife trader, Ratiram Sharma, was accused of possessing and trading in wildlife articles.

NATIONAL ELEPHANT TRAIN HITS

A large number of elephants are killed each year by train hits. This is mainly due to elephants trying to cross the railway tracks and getting run over when they cannot find an escape route. In the year 2003, WTI undertook a project to mitigate this cause of elephant mortality in Rajaji National Park, Uttarakhand, by addressing the cause of these accidents. A joint effort between the departments of railways, forests and WTI initiated interventions and inputs of joint patrolling and creating awareness amongst several train drivers, and reduction of high embankments along the tracks. No train hit elephant mortality has been reported in Rajaji since 2002. The project is ongoing. The lessons learnt in Rajaji need to be replicated in other sensitive areas and this initiative has been started in Assam in January 2008. Thick forests bank the Ganga as it flows into the plains; this is the Rajaji National Park in Uttarakhand, northern India, home to a rich variety of wildlife.



Patrolling team in an accident prone area in the Rajaji National Park to alert train drivers when wild elephants/animals crossing the track

Between 1987 and 2001, eighteen Asian elephants and other smaller animals, were killed in train-hit accidents along a railway line that cuts across Rajaji National Park. This rail line connects the holy city of Haridwar with the capital of this state, Dehradun, and is one of the busiest rail stretches in the region. Invasive as the rail track is for this ancient wilderness and all wildlife within it, it is equally a lifeline for thousands of people commuting on this stretch everyday. There is no other way the railway line can be routed.

This project looked at this problem closely and has found creative solutions to reduce the danger on these tracks. Undertaken by Wildlife Trust of India-IFAW, supported and meticulously implemented by the Uttarakhand Forest Department in collaboration with Northern Railways, the suggested solutions have ensured zero elephant deaths on this 14 km track since 2001. The Rajaji example is now being replicated in other areas with similar problems.

WAYANAD CORRIDOR SECUREMENT PROJECT

Tirunelli-Kudrakote(Wayanad) elephant corridor

Thirunelli-Kudrakote (Brahmagiri-Tirunelli) corridor links Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary of Kerala with the Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary of Karnataka through the forests of Wayanad North Forest Division. The area is a part of a larger landscape including the Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary of Tamil Nadu and Bandipur Tiger Reserve and Nagarhole National Park of Karnataka. This is also the home to the largest population of elephants in the southern region of India. The corridor in question is a constriction with a number of settlements of varying sizes. The people living on the corridor also get antagonised due to extensive crop damage. The tribal families living on the corridor have now voiced that they would like to be relocated in an area with less human-animal conflict.



Farm land secured in Valiya Emmadi, Wayanad WLS for Thirunelli-Kudrakote elephant corridor

Wildlife Trust of India, with the support of IUCN-Netherlands and World Land Trust, UK has already purchased part of the land at Thirulakunnu settlement, and four families were rehabilitated to a place of their choice by giving equal extent of alternative farm lands and by providing houses and minimum facilities. Currently, the Thirulakunnu area is free of settlements and elephants, gaur, spotted deer and a number of other animals have started using the area. Similarly with support of Elephant Family and World Land Trust, UK, Wildlife Trust of India has also secured corridor land in Valiya Emmadi settlement and are making an effort to voluntarily rehabilitate six families. Following land acquisition, the proposed conservation plan involves legal protection of the land under state law.

CHILLA-MOTICHUR ELEPHANT CORRIDOR

The major objective of this project is to secure the Chilla Motichur corridor which lies across the river Ganges and connects the western part of Rajaji National Park (along with Dehradun Forest Division and Shivalik Forest Division) to the eastern part of the Park and maintains the Rajaji-Corbett elephant population as a single entity. Threats to the corridor include heavy road and railway traffic, Tehri dam evacuees (Khand Gaon-III), settlements, Raiwala army camp and ammunition dump and Chilla Power canal.

WTI is assisting the forest department for relocation of Khandgaon-III village for which an alternative site is available and all permission has been obtained by the state from central Government.

SIJU-REWAK CORRIDOR SECUREMENT PROJECT

Siju-Rewak corridor in Meghalaya state is a vital corridor that is threatened by biotic pressure of Arthika village and other development activities. The corridor connects the elephant population of Balphakram National Park and Siju WLS with Rewak Reserve Forest leading to Imangri Reserve Forest and Nokrek National Park. This maintains habitat contiguity for about 750 elephants. WTI's initiative is to secure the corridor through community conservation actions.

On September 3, 2007 about 200 hectares of corridor forest in Rongjak was declared as Siju-Aretika village forest by the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council after obtaining the consent of local people and support of WTI. As an income generation option to reduce dependency on forests, all the families at Aretika were provided with piglets and financial assistance to start piggeries. As confidence building measures and to improve education of children from Aretika, WTI repaired the existing school building and also provided them some teaching aids.



The newly declared Siju-Artika village forest in Rongjak corridor, Meghalaya

TIBETAN CONSERVATION AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Eight Tibetans chosen by WTI and Care for the Wild International to spread conservation awareness in Tibetan settlements participated in an exciting three-day wildlife tour to Jim Corbett National Park in the month of April. In Sikkim, unofficial meetings of WTI's Consultants with the Tibetan Welfare office, Tibetan Youth Club, and Tibetan Women's Association in Gangtok brought them an opportunity to participate in the Panchen Lama's birthday ceremony on April 24.

Questionnaire surveys were carried out in Rajasthan, Delhi and Madhya Pradesh in February 2008 to assess the success of the campaigns conducted by the respective resource persons. Nearly 1000 people were surveyed. About 60 percent of the people surveyed said that the campaign had succeeded in convincing the Tibetans to avoid using wild animal skins. The contract for the TCAC project funding by CWI ended in March 2008. During the two years of the campaigns, all Tibetan monasteries, schools and settlements in India were covered. A new proposal to conduct campaigns in Tibetan monasteries in India, Nepal and Bhutan is being prepared.



A resource person to the TCAC Campaign, Mr. Kalsang Phuntsok (second from left) conducting a questionnaire survey in Jodhpur, Rajasthan



Tibetans burning wild animal skins removed from their traditional dress "Chubba" after HH Dalai Lama's message against wearing Chubba with animal skins.

MANGROVE CONSERVATION PROJECT

Conservation of Mangroves in Kerala, India

The mangroves in Kunhimangalam village, Kerala bordered by River Perumbapuzha and River Pullamkodu was taken up for securement by World Land Trust and WTI in mid-2006. This was important as the isolated patches of existing mangroves in the state were under the threat of conversion and then filling up to meet the demand for plantations, habitation, tourism and other developmental activities.

Mangroves are important nurseries for several species of prawn, fish and other animals and have high level of productivity. They also serve as efficient barriers against storm surge. Loss of mangrove forest not only results in loss of yield of plant and animal resources but could also affect the shield of protection.

Most of the mangrove in Kunhimangalam is under the control of private owners and at the persuasion of WTI, many of them have offered to sell the land so that it could be protected, better managed and conserved.

WTI in partnership with World Land Trust initiated the project to acquire at least 50 acres of land to accord meaningful conservation of the mangroves of the area. In 2007–08, Wildlife Trust of India purchased about 9.8 acres of land with support of the World Land Trust. Approximately 19 acres of mangrove forest have thus been secured.



Mangrove forestland in Kunhimangalam, Kerala secured from encroachments of plantations, habitation, tourism and other developmental activities

In the meantime, people with tourism interests have also invaded the area and this has inflated the price of the mangrove forest. We are however, working at both local levels with the people and with the Government to see that the land use of the mangrove forest area is not altered.

RED JUNGLEFOWL RECOVERY PROJECT

This is a collaborative project with WII, Dehradun and MLN college, Yamunanagar, Haryana. It aims to identify pockets of genetically pure red junglefowl in the distribution range of the species in India. Blood samples from all major populations of red junglefowl in the country have been collected and will be subject to DNA analysis to obtain information about their genetic status. Additionally, abundance indices of all populations are being worked out to provide details about the size of each population.

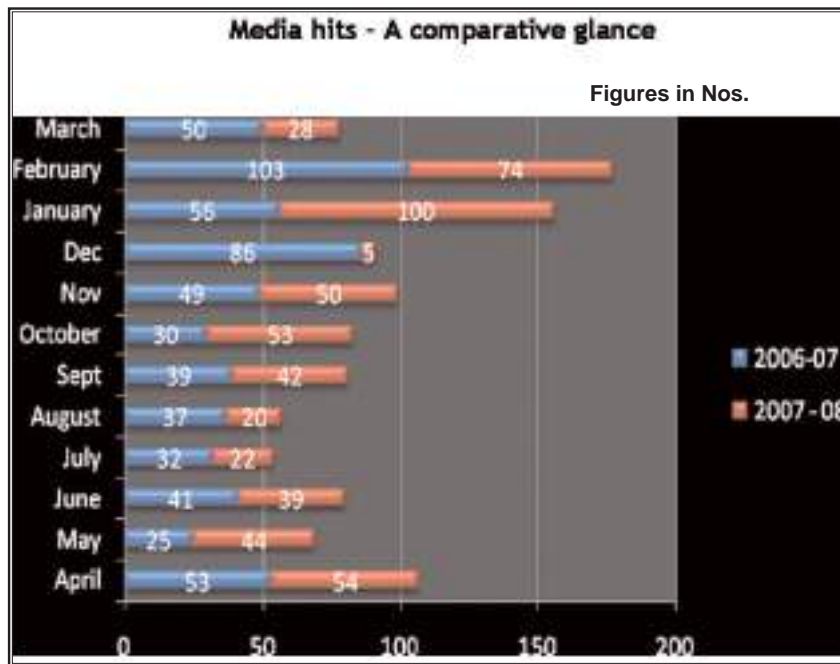


Red Junglefowl

COMMUNICATIONS

Six hundred and eightyfour media hits, print, online and electronic, were recorded in the year 2007-08 and 103 stories were uploaded to the website during this year.

The website hits during this year: 6805 visitors per month and there were 12,406 page views per month on an average for the whole year.



Publications:

A book on “Commentaries on Wildlife Law - cases, statutes and notifications” by WTI was released on May 27, 2007 by the Hon’ble former Justice of Supreme Court, Justice Leela Seth at a function organized at the India International Centre, New Delhi.

The book, popularly known as Legal Digest, is a first ever commentary on the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, it also includes compilation of the Supreme Court and High Courts judgments on Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, Indian Forest Act, 1927, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and other relevant statutes.

The book authored by Ritwick Dutta, Legal Advisor WTI and researched by Vyom Raghuvanshi, a former employee of WTI is the result of a three-year intensive research of judgments and orders related to wildlife conservation.

Other publications include :

Occasional Reports - 10 nos.

- 1 **Elephant in Exile** - A rapid assessment of the human-elephant conflict in Chhattisgarh.
- 2 **Jumbo Express** - A scientific approach to understanding and mitigating elephant mortality due to train accidents in Rajaji National Park.



Former Supreme Court Justice Leela Seth releasing the Book “Commentaries on Wildlife Law” on 26th May 200. From left: Advocate Ritwick Dutta, Mr. Ashok Kumar and Mr. Vivek Menon

3. **Captive Concern** - Health and management of captive elephants in Jaipur (2001)
4. **Ganesha to Bin Laden** - Elephant poisoning in and around Nameri National Park and Tezpur, Assam
5. **Fair Concern** - Health and management of captive elephants in Sonpur (2001-2004).
6. **Sighting Storks** - Status and distribution of greater adjutant storks (*Leptoptilos dubius*) in the Ganga and Kosi river floodplains near Bhagalpur, Bihar.
7. **Bait and Watch** - Popularisation of alternatives to dolphin oil among fishermen for the conservation of Gangetic dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*), Bihar.
8. **Awaiting Arribadda** - Protection of Olive Ridley rurtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) and their nesting habitats at Rushikuliya rookery, Orissa.
9. **Dog and the Bull** - An investigation into carnivore-human conflict in and around Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary, Arunachal Pradesh.
10. **Deadly Tracks** - A scientific approach to understanding and mitigating elephant mortality due to train hits in Assam.

Conservation Action Reports: 3 nos.

1. **Goats on the Border** - A rapid assesment of the Pir Panjal markhor in Jammu and Kashmir distribution, status and threats.
2. **Walking the bears** - Rehabilitation of Asiatic black bears in Arunachal Pradesh by Dr NVK Ashraf.
3. **Back Home to the wild** - Wildlife rehabilitation as a conservation and welfare tool in Assam by Dr NVK Ashraf.

Conservation Reference Series - 5 nos.

1. **Commentaries on Wildlife Law** -Cases, Statutes and Notifications by Ritwick Dutta.

2. **Poisons and the Pachyderm** - Responding to Poisoning in Asian elephants: A Field Guide by Dr Cheeran.
3. **Pakke Pachyderms** - Ecology and conservation of Asian elephants in Kameng elephant reserve, Arunachal Pradesh by Surendar Varma/Prabal Sarkar.
4. **Bringing back Manas** - Conserving the forest and wildlife of the Bodoland Territorial Council by Dr Rahul Kaul *et. al.*
5. **Canopies and Corridors** - Conserving the forest of Garo Hills with elephant and gibbon as flagships by Dr Rahul Kaul *et. al.*

Other Publications: 3 nos.

1. **IFAW - WTI Emergency Relief Network digest 2005 - 2006** - Compendium of reports filed by the ERN members.
2. **Action Tiger** - Tiger action plans of 12 tiger range countries.
3. **IFAW - WTI Emergency Relief Network Digest 2006 - 07** - Compendium of reports filed by ERN members.

HUMAN RESOURCES

During the financial year 2007-08, 18 people were hired by WTI; two for Communities for Conservation, two for Wild Species, four for Wild Rescue, two for Finance, three for Operations, two for Communications, one each for Wild Lands, Awareness for Conservation and Wild Aid Programme.

FINANCE

WILD LIFE TRUST OF INDIA				
BALANCE SHEET AS ON MARCH 31, 2008				
AS AT 31.3.07 AMOUNT (Rs.)	FUNDS & LIABILITIES	AS AT 31.3.08 AMOUNT (Rs.)	ASSETS	AS AT 31.3.08 AMOUNT (Rs.)
909,541.80	CORPUS FUND Opening Balance	909,541.80	FIXED ASSETS	17,504,987.13
909,541.80			(Schedule " C ")	19,842,608.23
11,838,690.76	CAPITAL FUND Opening Balance	17,004,987.13	CURRENT ASSETS, LOANS & ADVANCES	
5,744,598.53	Add : Addition during the year	3,412,682.50	CURRENT ASSETS	40,878.54
2,688,058.00	Add : Transfer from General Reserve	1,388,715.50	Cash in hand	919,545.80
20,269,347.29	Less : Sales/ Written off during the year	22,306,385.13	Bank balance in designated account	34,913,387.00
68,258.00	Less : Depreciation	27,744.00	Fixed Deposits	2,950,056.00
2,056,102.15		2,436,032.90	Accrued Interest	
17,504,987.13		18,842,608.23	LOANS & ADVANCES :-	
8,597,280.96	GENERAL RESERVE Opening Balance	14,139,664.28	Security Deposits	516,374.00
1,827,987.54	Less: Excess of Expenditure over Income	1,312,073.00	Advances	1,787,842.14
2,868,058.00	Less: Amount Transferred to capital fund	1,368,715.50	Prepaid Expenses	41,464.30
6,402,654.18	Add : Sales/ Written off during the year	27,744.00	Tax Deducted at Source	692,340.00
14,139,864.28	Add: Net Addition as per Schedule	2,576,188.00		
23,357,198.37	UNUTILISED FUNDS (Schedule " B ")	14,043,007.78		
		24,750,471.83		
1,216,520.47	CURRENT LIABILITIES & PROVISIONS Sundry Amounts Payable	2,058,966.37	TOTAL	61,604,596.01
67,128,112.06	TOTAL	61,604,596.01		

Significant Accounting Policies and Notes to Accounts - Schedule "D"
In terms of our report of even date attached

FOR KOSHI & GEORGE
Chartered Accountants



GEORGE KOSHI
Partner
M.No. 02981

New Delhi
22.9.2008

FOR WILDLIFE TRUST OF INDIA

 (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)
 (TRUSTEE)
 (TRUSTEE)





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