



Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) is a premier wildlife conservation organisation, dedicated to the conservation of India's wildlife and wild habitats.

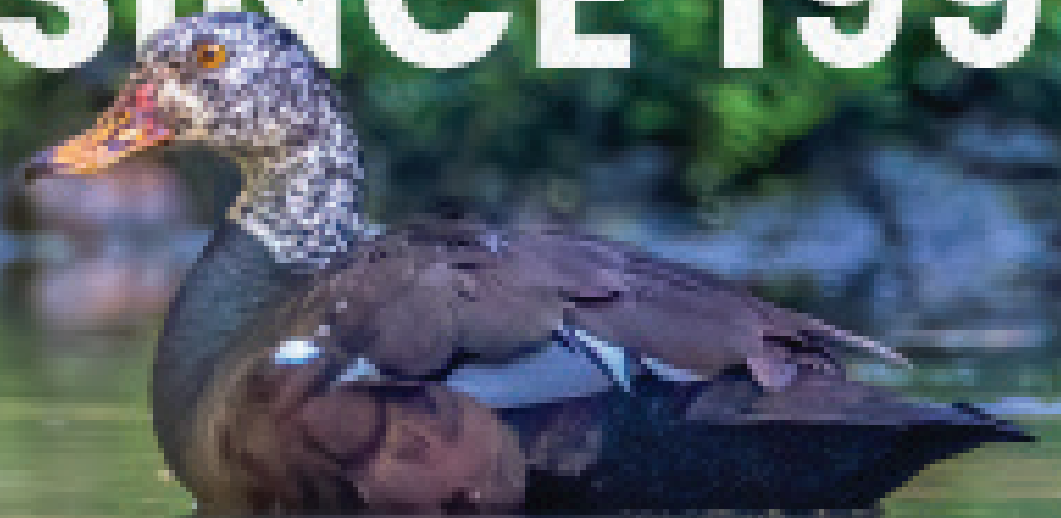
OUR MISSION

To conserve wildlife and its habitat and to work for the welfare of individual wild animals, in partnership with communities and governments.

OUR VISION

A secure natural heritage of India.

IN SERVICE OF NATURE, SINCE 1998



On the cover:

Pangolins are currently in great demand in the illegal wildlife trade. WTI has conducted a comprehensive study to understand the pangolin trade in India, participated in direct interventions such as the WCCB's Operation Shield, and recently initiated a project in Manipur to curb the illegal trade in pangolins.

Photograph: Ansar Khan

Once widely distributed across north-east India and south-east Asia, the white winged duck (*Asarcornis scutulata*) is now Endangered. Through 'Project Deo Hanh', launched in 2018, WTI aims to recover its status in the states of Assam (where it is the state bird) and Arunachal Pradesh.

Photograph: MS Ranganathan

THE CONSERVATION IMPERATIVE

According to the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report for 2022, the top three "most severe risks on a global scale over the next 10 years" are all related to the environment:

Climate Action Failure

EXTREMEWEATHER

BIODIVERSITYLOSS

Together with 'Human environmental damage' and 'natural resource crises', **environmental factors make up five of the top ten perceived future risks** according to the WEF report.

Around the world, biodiversity and ecosystem services are vanishing at an unprecedented rate and scale. Yet **the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat all rely on healthy natural ecosystems.**

So too does the global economy, for **it is estimated that over half of the global GDP is dependent on nature** ('The business case for nature', World Bank Group, 2021) and the land and the oceans absorb more than half of all carbon emissions.

Clearly, conserving and restoring natural spaces, and the biodiversity they contain, is no longer a matter of choice.

It is an imperative.

INDIA: A PRICELESS HERITAGE IN PERIL

In India, too, the need to conserve the nation's priceless natural heritage is stark and urgent.

The country's wild landscapes encompass four of the world's 35 biodiversity hotspots, 75 of the world's most important wetlands as defined by the Ramsar Convention, and eight natural World Heritage Sites as defined by UNESCO.

Its ten biogeographic zones are home to **400+ mammal species, 1200+ bird species, 500+ reptile species, 300+ amphibian species, 3000+ fish species, 80,000+ invertebrate species, and 50,000+ plant species.**

However, this immense natural wealth is under threat.

The **illegal wildlife trade**, driven by the unceasing demand for wild animal parts and derivatives in Southeast Asia and the Far East, has adversely affected a multitude of species, great and small.

The anthropogenic pressures exerted by a billion-plus population are also taking their toll on the nation's biodiversity. The sustained **destruction, deterioration and fragmentation of wild habitats** has forced humans and wildlife into closer contact, causing **Human-Wildlife Conflict** to reach chronic levels, and raising the spectre of zoonotic disease.

Asian elephants, already beleaguered by the indiscriminate slaughter of bulls for ivory, suffer the increasing **impairment of traditional migratory corridors**. The musk deer, the brown bear and the snow leopard face **poaching and habitat loss** in the alpine Himalayas. Several magnificent birds such as the white-winged duck, western tragopan, greater adjutant stork, sarus crane, great Indian bustard and Bengal florican require urgent attention. The pygmy hog, hispid hare, hoolock gibbon, Ganges river dolphin, gharial, olive Ridley turtle and whale shark are but a few examples of **native and migrant species in extreme distress.**

To address the issue of human conflict with Himalayan brown bears (*Ursus arctos isabellinus*) in Kargil, Ladakh, WTI initiated a Rapid Action Project in two villages. Sensitisation workshops were organised and Community Wildlife Watch committees were formed to improve waste management, monitor bear movement and ensure crowd-control during conflict situations.

Photograph: Niazul Hassan Khan



ABOUT US

Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) was formed in 1998 in response to the many crises confronting India's wildlife and wild habitats.

At inception, we were all of four members strong. Today, we're a group of over 150 full-time professionals and consultants: field biologists, social scientists, conservation managers, veterinarians, lawyers, and specialists in finance, business management and communications.

OUR APPROACH

Over the course of our 25 years in service of nature, we've learned to be **agile in our response to exigent issues** (providing emergency aid to distressed wildlife, for instance), while **embracing the grind of long-term goals** (such as securing wildlife corridors).

We've forged **crucial partnerships**, working with community members, tribal council leaders and union ministers alike to achieve desired conservation outcomes.

Increasingly, we've **leveraged technology**, developing apps to mitigate conflict, creating automated systems to prevent wildlife train-hits, and using military-grade surveillance to **disrupt wildlife crime networks**.

Our approach is undergirded by science and shaped by empathy. **We administer the vital stitch-in-time; we paint the broad strokes that make up the big picture.**

The loss of its preferred montane habitats – due to poor grassland management, unregulated tourism and climate change – has forced the resplendent shrub frog (*Raorchestes resplendens*) into decline. WTI has initiated an Amphibian Recovery Project in Munnar, with the aim of recovering local populations of Threatened amphibian species.
Photograph: Hadlee Renjith

MILESTONES



1

Mapped all the 101 corridors used by Asian elephants in India, drew out a green-print to secure them and worked out four securement models.



2

Canopies, corridors and catchments of the Garo Green Spine protected using three flagship species in 16 Village Reserve Forests in the Garo Hills, Meghalaya.



3

Pioneered systematic wildlife rehabilitation as a tool for conservation in India in partnership with IFAW.

4 Raised consciousness of judiciary, enforcement agencies and public to the word 'wildlife crime' and started a whole new arena of the fight against crime.



5 More than 16,000 wildlife staff of over 150 Protected Areas imparted Level 1 anti-poaching training. More than 20,000 frontline staff provided ex-gratia assurance against death or injury on duty.



6

Lobbied to make the whale shark the first fish to be protected under Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, in India and ensured its protection by a massive on-ground campaign in Gujarat.

7 Showed how to bring back a once neglected Valmiki Tiger Reserve in Bihar and increased tiger and prey numbers in the park.



8

Manas National Park removed from the UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites in danger and tripled in size politically with several endangered species being restocked.



9

Species recovery project saves the endangered Central India wild buffalo — progenitor of the world's buffalo stock — and increases its numbers in Udanti Wildlife Sanctuary in Chhattisgarh

10 Not a single elephant killed by trains in Rajaji National Park for over a decade (2001-11) after a project was undertaken to stop elephant deaths in Uttarakhand.

11 Shahtoosh formally banned in Jammu and Kashmir and a product called Pashm-e-Shahi created, creating an alternative model.

12 Exposed the illegal mongoose hair brush trade, lobbied and got all mongoose species protection under the Wild Life (Protection) Act.



13

Persuaded the Nyishi tribe around Pakke Tiger Reserve to use fibreglass hornbill beaks in Arunachal Pradesh instead of killing four hornbill species and using their beaks to adorn their headgear.



14

First comprehensive survey of the markhor (*Capra falconeri*), the largest goat in the world, triggers declaration of Kazinag National Park, expansion of Hirpora Wildlife Sanctuary and notification of Tatakuti Wildlife Sanctuary in Jammu and Kashmir.

15 Played a supportive role to the Indian government in its fight against re-opening the ivory trade at CITES, ensuring several years without ivory trade.



16

Played a key role in building the only global intergovernmental forum on tigers — the Global Tiger Forum.

17 Assisted in expanding India's protected area network by getting new reserves demarcated in Jammu and Kashmir, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.

18 Highlighted snares as killers of tigers and their prey in southern India and assisted in India's first anti-snare walks in Bandipur Tiger Reserve in Karnataka.



19

Conducted India's first private-public restoration of a degraded coral reef in Mithapur in Gujarat.

20 Eradicated the dancing bear tradition in India and rehabilitated Kalandars in four states.

21 Played a key role in a campaign in the north-east to conserve Amur falcons, which were being hunted in the tens of thousands.



22

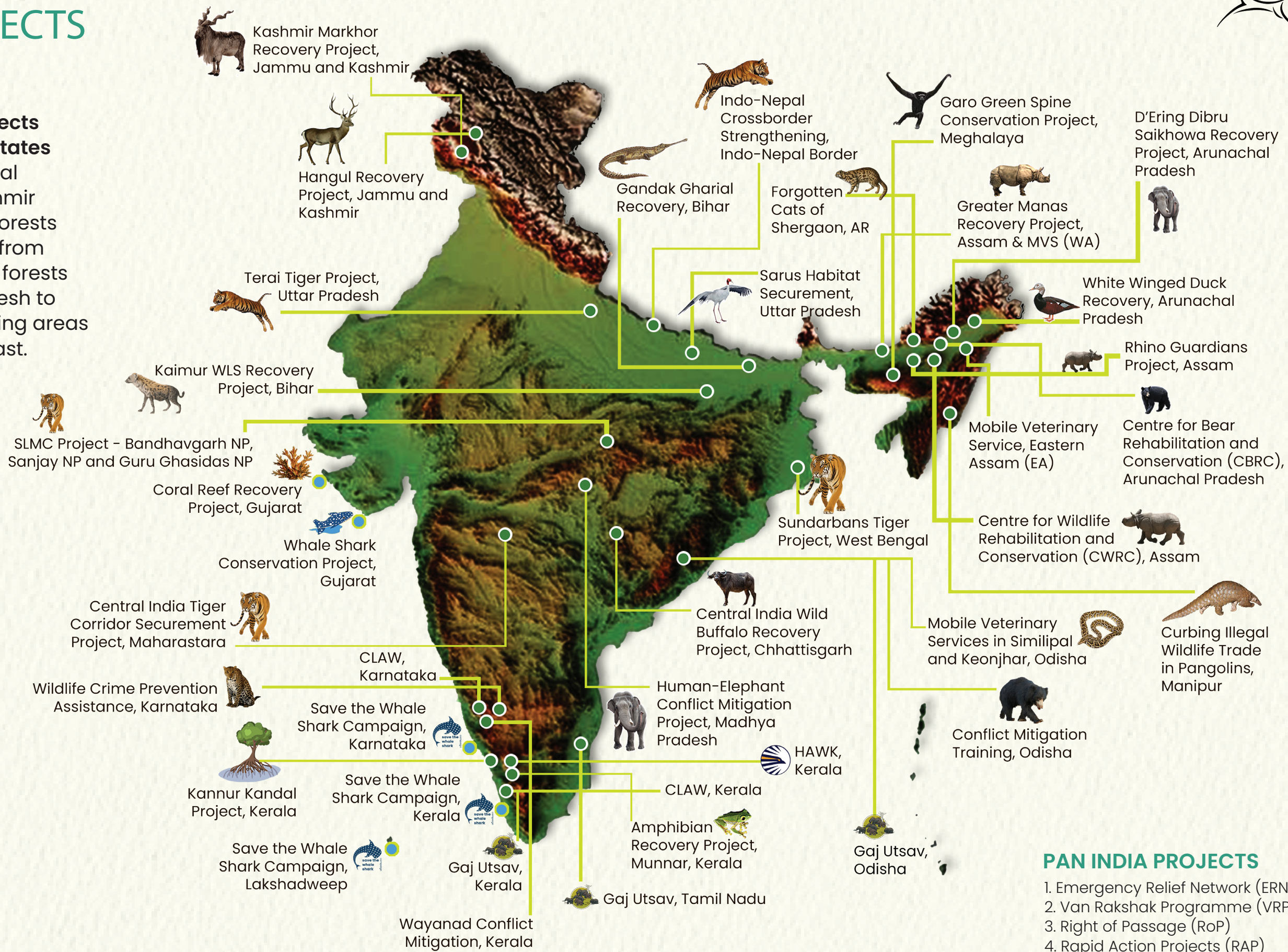
Successfully demonstrated the use of mass capture as a method of translocation and reintroduction of eastern swamp deer in Assam.

23 Worked with the Uttarakhand Forest Department to free the Chilla Motichur corridor of human habitation through voluntary relocation of Khand Gaon II and enabled secure passage for elephants and other wildlife in Rajaji Tiger Reserve, thus maintaining the Rajaji-Corbett elephant population as a single entity.

24 Secured the vital Thirunelli-Kudrekote corridor in Wayanad, Kerala, through the voluntary relocation of four villages — the first elephant corridor secured through human relocation in India — and had the vacated lands legally notified as forest land.

OUR PROJECTS

We run over **40 conservation projects across 23 Indian states** – from the Pir Panjal mountains in Kashmir to the mangrove forests of Kannur, Kerala; from Asiatic black bear forests in Arunachal Pradesh to whale shark pupping areas off the Gujarat coast.



PAN INDIA PROJECTS

1. Emergency Relief Network (ERN)
2. Van Rakshak Programme (VRP)
3. Right of Passage (RoP)
4. Rapid Action Projects (RAP)
5. Pan-india Enforcement & Legal Assistance

CONSERVATION ACTION

Our approach to conservation action is informed by a combination of nine **BIG IDEAS**:



INCREASING THE WELFARE of individual displaced animals and improving wildlife health are major tenets of our work. We leverage pioneering science-based rehabilitation techniques in establishments such as the **Centre for Bear Rehabilitation and Conservation** (CBRC, Arunachal Pradesh) and the **Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation** (CWRC, Assam), giving a range of animals – most of them Threatened species – a second chance at life in the wild.



© Rushi Pathak

Rescue and rehabilitation is just one aspect of our work. We have also established **Mobile Veterinary Service teams** that stabilise and release temporarily disadvantaged wild animals across the country. **In all, our rescue and rehabilitation teams have directly saved over 10,000 individual wild lives.**

We have also pioneered a pan-India network of wildlife rehabilitators known as the **Emergency Relief Network (ERN)**, through which we have assisted tens of thousands of animals over the years.



THE IMPORTANCE OF improving the functionality of Protected Areas is lent a sharper edge at a time when wild habitats are being destroyed and degraded at an alarming rate.

In Assam, we have assisted conservation efforts to 'Bring Back Manas', a UNESCO World



Orphaned Asiatic black bear cubs (*Ursus thibetanus*), hand-raised at the Centre for Bear Rehabilitation and Conservation (CBRC), explore their natural habitat as part of their 'soft rehabilitation' back into the wild.
Photograph: Amrit Menon / WTI



A hand-raised clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*) is examined by WTI veterinarians following a radio-collaring procedure conducted prior to its rehabilitation back to the wild.
Photograph: Sashanka Barbaruah / WTI

CONSERVATION ACTION

Heritage Site that was ravaged by militancy in the 1990s. As a result, Manas' area has been tripled in size politically and 350 sq km declared as the First Addition to the national park. **In 2021, another milestone was achieved with the notification of the 422 sq km Raimona National Park, an area of huge significance in the Greater Manas Landscape.**

Another crucial intervention has been undertaken in **Bihar's Valmiki Tiger Reserve**, where we started a long-term conservation project in 2003. Derided as a 'tiger reserve without tigers' at the time, Valmiki is now regarded as a conservation success, winning the prestigious RBS Earth Guardian Award in 2017. We are now assisting the Bihar Forest Department in improving the functionality of **Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary**.



© Arshad Hussain / WTI

this network, especially biological linkages, wetlands, grasslands, Important Bird Areas and sacred groves.

We're collaborating with local communities to monitor and protect **Important Sarus Wetland Sites** in eastern UP. We've created 400 artificial reefs to help conserve the **degraded Mithapur Reef**, situated 12 km south of the Gulf of Kachchh. We've also acquired a species-rich mangrove habitat at Kunhimangalam village in Kerala as the hub for our **Kannur Kandal (Mangrove Restoration) Project**.

In **Meghalaya's Garo Hills**, we're encouraging community-based protection to rewild swatches of tribal land and reconnect the fragmented **Garo Green Spine**, securing canopy connectivity for hoolock gibbons and migratory corridors for elephants.



SINCE ONLY 14 PERCENT of India's total forest area is currently under the Protected Area network, we also work to secure critical habitats outside



WITH THE CONTINUING degradation and fragmentation of wild habitats, securing the remaining tenuous habitat connections that allow wildlife to move between protected forests safely, without coming into conflict with humans, has emerged as a conservation priority.

Thus, under our umbrella **Right of Passage** project, we've assisted in the voluntary relocation of villagers to secure the **Kalapahar-Daigrung Elephant Corridor** in Assam. We've worked with international and local partners to secure the **Thirunelli-Kudrakote Elephant Corridor**, a vital habitat contiguity in the Western Ghats. By helping to free the **Chilla-Motichur Elephant Corridor** of human habitation, we've helped initiate the first step in reestablishing a crucial link in the Terai Arc landscape.

In Vidarbha, where one of India's largest tiger populations lives cheek-by-jowl with a growing human population, we've played an important role in the notification of **Navegaon-Nagzira Tiger Reserve** – a wildlife corridor that allows big cats to disperse between Protected Areas.



© Madhumay Mallik / WTI

We've also established an ever-expanding network of local individuals and organisations, our Green Corridor Champions, to help monitor wildlife corridors across the country.



AS TIGER AND LEOPARD populations rebound in India, these big cats, which typically require large home ranges to flourish, are found foraging out of increasingly saturated protected forests in search of food, water and suitable mates. The issue is brought into sharp relief in villages fringing Protected Areas, some of which are seeing a high incidence of conflict with large carnivores.

Our **Rapid Response Teams** lend forest departments much-needed support in the rescue and relocation

CONSERVATION ACTION

of conflict-involved animals. Yet direct interventions are a last resort in our conflict mitigation projects. Instead, **local people, trained, equipped and moulded into Primary Response Teams,** have proved **remarkably successful in defusing conflict situations without human or animal casualties.** Their primary strategy: to simply allow big cats safe passage out of human areas, and back to the wild.



© WTI

Human-elephant conflict is another pressing issue and while our long-term strategy includes the securing and monitoring of migratory corridors (see previous page, *Right of Passage*), we've engaged in several short-term interventions – for instance, a highly successful project in Rajaji National Park to prevent elephant deaths due to 'train hits'.

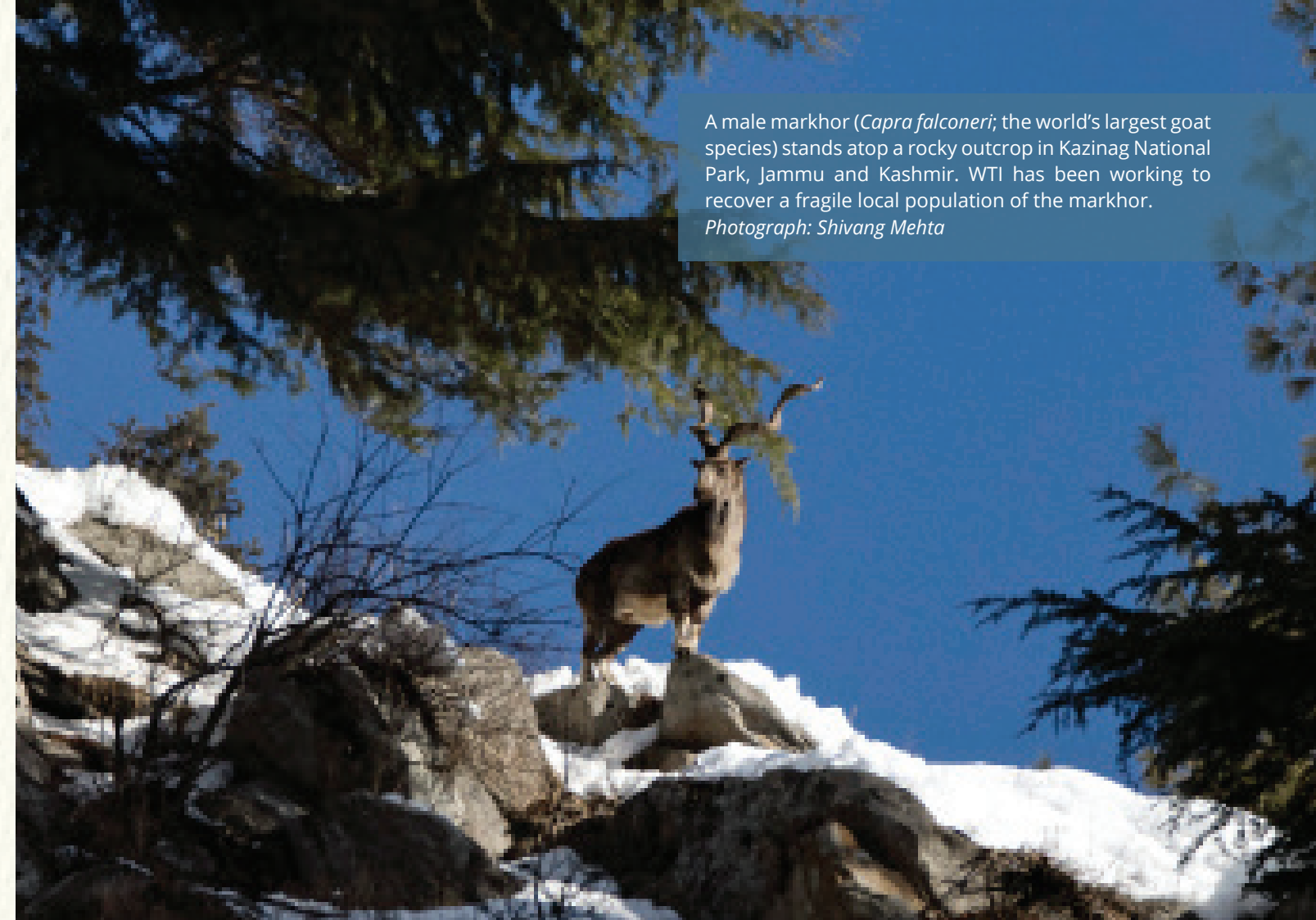


RECOVERING POPULATIONS OF threatened species is one of our long-term organisational goals. Our species recovery projects are greenlit after careful consideration of the conservation status of a species, the conservation relevance of a project, resource availability, and local and governmental support.

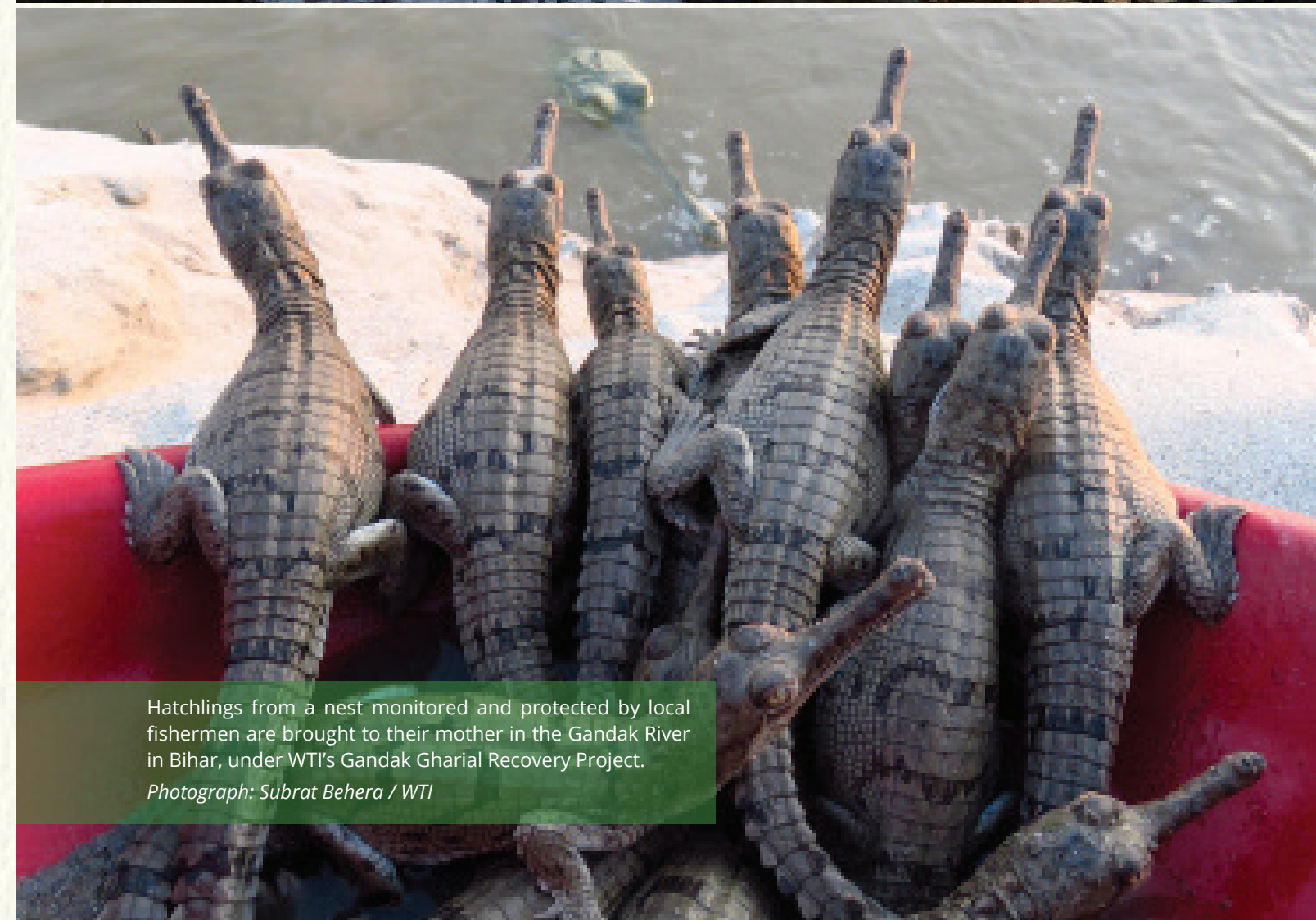
We've recently initiated a project to save the Endangered **white-winged duck** in Assam (where it is the state bird) and Arunachal Pradesh. We're recovering fragile local populations of the **Pir Panjal markhor** and the Critically Endangered **Hangul deer** in Jammu and Kashmir.

We're also facilitating the recovery of the last remaining **wild buffalo subspecies in central India** through conservation breeding and translocation, and have assisted in the recovery of a population of the Critically Endangered **gharial in the Gandak River** in northern Bihar.

We're undertaking, through a series of pioneering translocations from Kaziranga National Park, the reestablishment of a viable



A male markhor (*Capra falconeri*; the world's largest goat species) stands atop a rocky outcrop in Kazinag National Park, Jammu and Kashmir. WTI has been working to recover a fragile local population of the markhor.
Photograph: Shivang Mehta



Hatchlings from a nest monitored and protected by local fishermen are brought to their mother in the Gandak River in Bihar, under WTI's Gandak Gharial Recovery Project.
Photograph: Subrat Behera / WTI

CONSERVATION ACTION

population of **eastern swamp deer** (a Critically Endangered barasingha subspecies) in Manas National Park.

ENFORCEMENT & LAW

THE BATTLE AGAINST the illegal trade in wildlife and its derivatives is one of our keystone activities. Working through our network of operatives and informers, we've **assisted enforcement agencies in over 200 seizures of wildlife articles and live animals.**

In response to the growing sophistication of wildlife crime networks, we've developed **HAWK (Hostile Activity Watch Kernel)**: a real-time preventive intelligence gathering and information management system that monitors criminal networks and provides actionable inputs to enforcement officials. The system is being implemented state-wide by the Kerala Forest Department.

Another area of focus is ensuring that India's frontline forest personnel are trained, equipped and motivated to protect the nation's natural heritage.

Through our **Guardians of the Wild project** (a.k.a. the **Van Rakshak project**), we conduct Wildlife Crime Prevention workshops on subjects ranging from crime scene investigation to snare detection and removal.

Thus far, **we've trained and equipped over 18,000 frontline personnel in more than 150 Protected Areas** across India (and trans-boundary areas in Bhutan). The forest departments of 23 states have also joined our Supplementary Accident Assurance scheme (the only such pan-India NGO-run scheme), which currently covers over 20,000 frontline personnel under an ex-gratia umbrella.

WILD AID

ACROSS INDIA, WILDLIFE is plagued by innumerable threats that demand an immediate response. These issues worsen when responses are slow at the field level, eventually demanding greater logistical and financial investments. We've found that committed grassroots agencies can alleviate such problems in a timely manner, but are unable to act due to

a lack of funds, expertise or logistical support. Through our **Rapid Action Projects (RAPs)**, we collaborate with and support grassroots organisations, government agencies and community stakeholders, providing help where and when it's most needed.

Working with grassroots partners, we've helped mitigate bird trapping in the Bhoj Wetland, a Ramsar site, in Madhya Pradesh. We've trained Nyishi tribals to manufacture **artificial hornbill beaks** for ceremonial headgear in Arunachal Pradesh. We've staged mock drills to mitigate **human-bear conflict** in Nilagiri, Odisha, and conducted surveys to assess the status of **leatherback sea turtle nesting sites** in the Nicobar Islands. We've undertaken a community-based approach to conserving **sea horses in the Palk Bay region** and helped form teams of 'Hope Troopers', drawn from among the local communities, to **mitigate human-leopard conflict** in the Jaipur district, Rajasthan.

© WTI

CONSERVATION ACTION

The over 650 Rapid Action Projects we've initiated thus far span 25 states and three union territories, and have impacted over 30 species of mammals, reptiles, birds and fish.



© Adhith Swaminathan

NATURAL HERITAGE CAMPAIGNS

CONSERVATION CAMPAIGNS ARE our tool of choice to create awareness, change entrenched attitudes and bring a critical mass of people into alignment with specific goals.

Through sustained outreach, our 2004 **Whale Shark Campaign** made

saving whale sharks a matter of community pride for the fisher folk of Saurashtra, laying the groundwork for a project that has saved over 700 of these gentle giants. The campaign has now shifted to the shores of Karnataka, Kerala and Lakshadweep.

In 2017 we launched the **Gaj Yatra**, a campaign to create a groundswell of support for securing elephant corridors. The campaign is continuing in several elephant-range states.

Other campaigns have included an awareness drive to showcase the **central Indian wild buffalo**, whose local population is Critically Endangered, across major cities in Chhattisgarh. Our **Say No to Shahtoosh** campaign led to the ban of shawls made from wool extracted after killing the Chiru, an Endangered antelope. Our **Tibetan Conservation Awareness campaign**, launched by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, led Tibetans to pledge against the use of illegal wildlife products. Our campaign against the use of **mongoose hair paintbrushes** led the (then) Ministry of Environment & Forests to ban all trade in mongoose hair.

Our campaign against the **dancing bear tradition** leveraged community involvement in enforcement and, by rehabilitating the kalandars, ended the illegal trade in live sloth bears in India.

Building on its success in transforming hunters into protectors in coastal Gujarat, WTI's Whale Shark Campaign has launched in Kerala, Karnataka and Lakshadweep.
Photograph: WTI



WTI's ongoing Gaj Yatra campaign brings local and international stakeholders together to forge support for securing critical elephant corridors across India.
Photograph: Madhumay Mallik / WTI

POLICY & ADVOCACY

Engaging with and advising policy makers, influencers and implementers is a crucial aspect of our work to protect India's wildlife and wild spaces.

Internationally, we participate in fora such as the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)**, the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**, the **Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)**, the **International Whaling Commission (IWC)** and the **Global Tiger Forum (GTF)**, often acting as advisors to the Government of India.

These are some of the areas in which we've influenced critical policies and secured crucial legislative wins:

International Wildlife Trade

We've played an advisory role to the **Indian delegation to CITES** for over 20 years. In 2000 we helped influence the international community to keep the ivory trade ban in the 11th CITES Conference of Parties (CoP). In 2016, we played a key part in retaining the ban at the 17th CITES CoP.

As part of the Indian delegation at the CMS CoP12 in 2017, we were able to influence members to **list whale sharks in Appendix 1**, affording the species greater protection. Our efforts also led to the **up-listing of the Tibetan antelope to Appendix 1** of CITES and the resultant ban on the international trade of shahtoosh.

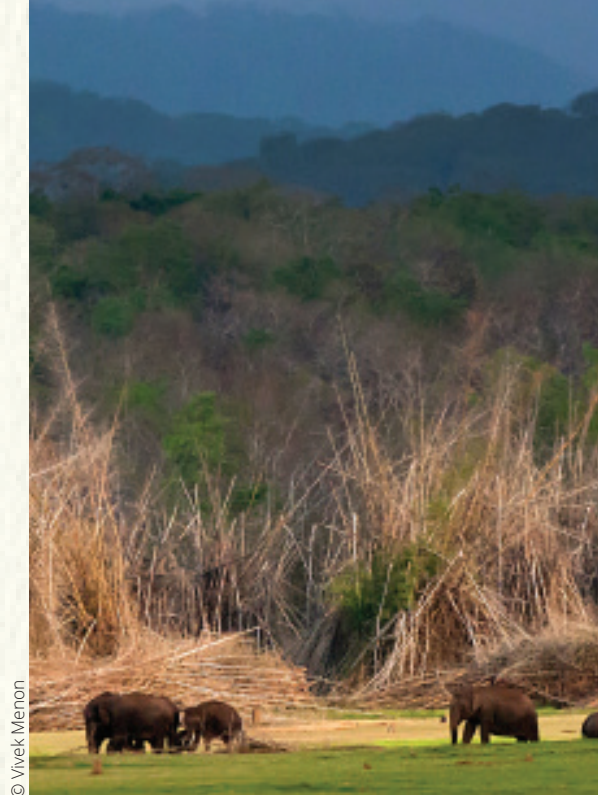
Our sustained lobbying for the **up-listing of Asian pangolin species** also bore fruit at CITES CoP17.

Wildlife Management

We have been part of several MoEFCC committees, including those that drafted the '**Human-leopard Conflict Management Guideline**' in 2011, the '**Human-elephant Conflict Mitigation Guideline**' in 2017, and the '**National Wildlife Action Plan**' in 2018. We have also prepared wildlife management plans for Odisha and Nagaland, Hirpora Wildlife Sanctuary in Jammu and Kashmir, and Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve in Tamil Nadu.

Wildlife Crime Enforcement

We were instrumental in the constitution of the MoEF's Wildlife Crime Cell in 2004, which later became the **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau**.



Right Of Passage

In 2005, the Project Elephant Task Force recommended the securement of 88 elephant corridors identified in our **Right of Passage publication** (updated to 101 corridors in the 2nd Edition). With support from the MoEFCC, several state forest departments have initiated projects to secure priority corridors based on this publication. We also helped elucidate the concept of elephant corridors in the **MoEF's Gajah Report** in 2010.

Expanding Protected Areas

In Assam we spearheaded efforts that led to 350 sq km (35000 ha) of Manas Reserve Forest being declared as the **First Addition to Manas National Park** in 2016. In Maharashtra we lobbied the government to have **Navegaon WLS, New Nagzira WLS and Koka WLS notified** (the entire area has since been declared a Tiger Reserve). Our advocacy was also instrumental in the declaration of **Man Singh Deo WLS in 2014**, securing 183 sq km of critical tiger landscape connectivity between forests in Central India.

COMMUNITIES

Engaging with the Kalandar community and supporting alternate livelihoods to wean them off the 'dancing bear' tradition. Promoting sustainable entrepreneurship among **Self Help Groups** in villages fringing the Nagzira-Navegaon wildlife corridor. Providing logistical support for the **Manas Kanamakra Weaving Centre** for Bodo women near Manas Tiger Reserve. Imparting training in moonj grass basket weaving for **Tharu tribal women in Done Valley**, Valmiki Tiger Reserve.

All these activities fall within the ambit of our conservation projects across the country.

Our ultimate goal is to reduce anthropogenic pressures on wildlife areas and demonstrate to communities that living, thriving, wild ecosystems can provide far more reliable livelihoods for local populations than marginal farming/fishing or the extraction of timber or minerals.



25 YEARS OF WTI

1998

16 November. A seed is planted. WTI begins with three members of staff in a small south Delhi office.

FIRST THEMES OF WORK

- Rapid Action Projects (RAPs)
- Van Rakshak programme (later a project)
- Elephant Conservation
- Wildlife Crime Control

1999

Wild Lands programme initiated to create buffers for existing Protected Areas.

2000

First RAP: Equipment support to frontline forest staff of **Corbett National Park**.

First **Mobile Veterinary Service** started in Kaziranga

2001

Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC), Assam, established in response to the annual floods in Kaziranga NP.



Awareness campaign launched against the **sale and use of Shahtoosh**, derived from the Tibetan Antelope.

2002

Centre for Bear Rehabilitation and Conservation (CBRC), Arunachal Pradesh, established.



Trade in mongoose hair brushes exposed, resulting in all mongoose species getting higher protection under WPA Schedule II (Part II).

2003

Whale Shark Conservation Campaign launched on the Gujarat coast.

Protected Area Staff Status (PASS) database operationalised to maintain records of nearly 25,000 forest staff across the country.

Wildlife Rehabilitators Exchange Network (WREN), later called the **Emergency Relief Network (ERN)**, launched.

First pair of Asiatic black

bears rehabilitated back to the wild from CBRC.

2004

Sansar Chand (famed wildlife trader) sentenced to five years in custody, where WTI successfully opposed his bail.

Began working with the Nyishi tribe in Arunachal Pradesh to manufacture artificial hornbill beaks to be used in traditional headgear, thus putting a stop to the killing of hornbills.

2005

Tibetan Conservation Awareness Campaign against illegal wildlife trade launched by His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, in New Delhi.

2006

Greater Manas Recovery Project launched, with a goal to restoring Manas NP's UNESCO World Heritage Site status.



Wild Buffalo Recovery Project initiated in Udanti WLS, Chhattisgarh.

A success for the **Kalandar Bear Welfare Project**, with eight sloth bears surrendered to the Chhattisgarh Forest Department.

2007

19 acres of Mangroves acquired in Kerala for protection, with support from World Land Trust (WLT).



2008

For the first time, WTI exposes, with critical evidence, the threat of online wildlife trade.

2009

Two clouded leopards rehabilitated in Sanfan Range, Assam.

A Shawl to Die For film wins award for Technical Excellence in Cinematography at CMS Vatavaran 2009.

2011

In a first, **WTI succeeds in transplanting live corals** from Lakshadweep to recover a degraded reef in Mithapur, Gujarat.

2012

WTI receives the **RBS Earth Guardian Award** at CBD CoP11.

2014

Another first: WTI successfully **translocates 19 eastern swamp deer** from Kaziranga NP to Manas NP.

2015

Kalapahar-Daigrung elephant corridor secured.

2016

First sensitisation workshop on wildlife offences for judges and prosecuting officers in Uttarakhand.

2017

WTI launches **HAWK**, a **first-of-its-kind wildlife crime intelligence monitoring system** for the country.



2018

Gaj Mahotsav campaign launched to celebrate the National Heritage Animal of India.



Ashok Kumar Memorial National Wildlife Law and Enforcement Conference established.

Community-managed **'Manas Kanamakra Weaving Centre'** for Bodo women launched.

2020

Two wild buffaloes successfully translocated from Manas NP, Assam to Barnawapara WLS, Chhattisgarh.

2021

Conservation Heroes Covid Casualty Fund launched. Over 16,500 individuals (from forest departments and local communities) supported through PPE kits and emergency rations.

Notification of **Raimona National Park** adds 422 sq km to the PA network.

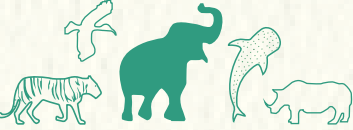
'Save the Whale Shark' Campaign launched along the coasts of Karnataka, Kerala and Lakshadweep.

2022

Gajotsavam launched in Kerala.

WHAT THE NUMBERS SAY

These are our top eight impact indicators, with numbers updated till February 2024.



54,334
animal lives saved



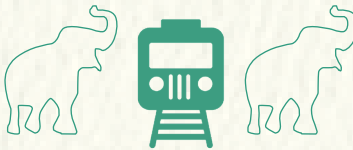
07
animal connectivities secured
(threats averted)



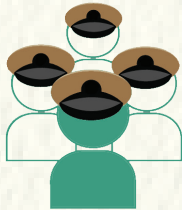
1,77,664.4
hectares of natural habitat
protected



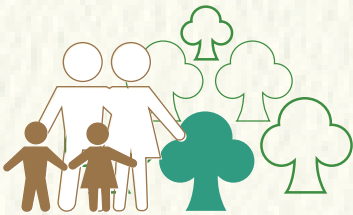
302
enforcement operations to
dismantle wildlife trade & trafficking



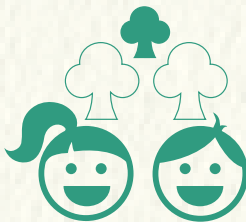
2,228
potential accidents of elephants
on railway tracks averted



20,076
forest guards trained under the
Van Rakshak Project



12,986
families enabled with green
livelihoods, reducing dependence
on wildlife



31,70,288
children made aware of
conservation



01
threatened species
recovered



314
ex-gratia provided to
frontline forest staff



OUR FOUNDERS

Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) started small at an office in New Delhi, with a capital of Rs 15,000. Today, we're one of India's leading wildlife conservation organisations.

The organisation was founded by four leading figures of conservation in India. The country had a paucity of on-ground nature conservation organisations and the time was ripe for one such start-up.

The four friends were **Ashok Kumar**, a pioneering and prominent warrior in India's fight against the illegal wildlife trade – in fact it was he who introduced the term 'wildlife crime' to the Indian lexicon; **Vivek Menon**, a young conservation biologist who had already partnered Ashok Kumar in setting up TRAFFIC India and found the final trade destinations for Indian elephant ivory and rhino horn; **Tara Gandhi**, an ornithologist who worked on communities and conservation with both WWF-India and the Commonwealth Secretariat; and **Thomas Mathew**, the erstwhile Secretary General of WWF-India.



WTI's founders: (left to right) Thomas Mathew, Vivek Menon, Tara Gandhi and Ashok Kumar

They went on to establish WTI on **16 November 1998** and served as Founding Trustees for the first ten years. Vivek Menon was nominated from the start as the Executive Trustee to run the organisation on a day-to-day basis.

Thomas Mathew, the founding Chair of the WTI Board, stepped down in 2005 due to personal exigencies. Ashok Kumar, having served on the Board first as Vice Chairman and then as Chairman, passed away in 2016. Vivek Menon and Tara Gandhi continue as WTI's Life Trustees with a strong Board that balances conservation, management and governance experiences (*see overleaf*).

OUR TRUSTEES

BOARD OF TRUSTEES (as of February 2024)



G V Prasad *Chairman*

Mr Prasad is the Co-Chairman and Managing Director of Dr Reddy's Laboratories Ltd. He has also been the Chairman of the CII National Committee on Pharmaceuticals and the CII National Committee on Environment, and is currently on the Board of Ashoka University.



Vivek Menon *Founder, Trustee & Executive Director*

Mr Menon is a wildlife conservationist, environmental commentator, author and photographer. He is a Senior Advisor to IFAW, the Chair of the IUCN SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group and Regional Councillor of IUCN. He has authored more than 10 wildlife books and 150 articles and has been honoured with several awards for his service to nature.



Tara Gandhi *Founder & Trustee*

A conservationist and ornithologist, Mrs Gandhi headed the Community Biodiversity Conservation Movement programme at WWF-India and later worked with the biodiversity programme of the Commonwealth Secretariat in London. Her interest in involving communities in conservation action and her extensive field experience bring inclusivity and sustained outcomes in favour of nature.



Dr. Raman Sukumar *Trustee*

Well known as the elephant expert of Asia, Dr Sukumar is a professor at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. A former Chairman of the IUCN SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group, he is currently a Steering Committee member of Project Elephant and a member of the National Board for Wildlife.



Elias George *Trustee*

Mr George was the Managing Director, Director and Additional Chief Secretary of Transport of Kochi Metro Rail Limited. As a senior IAS officer he held positions in several departments in the state as well as in central ministries. He is currently Partner and National Head of Infrastructure, Government and Healthcare at KPMG.



Mrinal Pande *Trustee*

An eminent media personality, Mrs Pande is India's first woman Chief Editor of a multi-edition Hindi daily (Hindustan, Hindustan Times Group) and is the former Chairman of India's national broadcaster – Prasar Bharati. She was awarded the Padma Shree in 2006 for her services in the field of journalism.



Punit Lalbhai *Trustee*

Mr Lalbhai is the Executive Director of Arvind Ltd, spearheading the organisation's initiatives in CSR, Sustainability and Innovation. His corporate life is driven by nature conservation. His Bachelor's Degree in Conservation Biology from the University of California and a Masters in Environmental Sciences from Yale University are invaluable as he spearheads initiatives in CSR, Sustainability and Innovation at Arvind.



Prof. Mahesh Rangarajan *Trustee*

Mr Rangarajan is an environmental historian with a special interest in human-wildlife relations in colonial and contemporary India. He chaired the Elephant Task Force in 2010. He formerly taught at the Universities of Cornell, Delhi and Jadavpur and is a Professor of History and Environmental Studies at Ashoka University.



Kaushik Barua *Trustee*

Mr Barua is a well-known entrepreneur and wildlife conservationist based in Guwahati, Assam. Besides enterprises that range from manufacturing to construction and investments, he has founded the Assam Elephant Foundation which works towards the conservation of Asian elephants.



Dr. G S Rawat *Trustee*

Dr. Gopal Singh Rawat, formerly Dean and Director at the Wildlife Institute of India Dehradun, has been actively engaged in teaching, research and academic activities since last 40 years. He has over 300 publications including peer reviewed papers, books, reports and popular articles on a wide range of topics including plant systematics, habitat ecology and management of wildlife habitats in India.

BOARD – EMERITUS



Dr. M K Ranjitsinh *Emeritus Member of the Board & former Chairman*

Dr Ranjitsinh has been at the forefront of shaping conservation strategies for flagship species and key habitats in India. He framed the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, which laid the foundation for India's wildlife movement. He was also the Member Secretary of the task force that put together Project Tiger.



Ajay Balram *Emeritus Member of the Board & Honorary Treasurer*

Formerly the Director of Tate & Lyle Investments (India) Pvt Ltd, Mr Balram brings a vast expertise in management and finance to WTI. He was also an Olympic judge in yachting and a well-known theatre personality. He has had a long-term interest in wildlife conservation.



Prof. Parimal C Bhattacharjee *Emeritus Member of the Board*

A respected academic and a retired Professor of Gauhati University, Dr Bhattacharjee pioneered wetland studies, primatology and biodiversity studies in north-east India. He is a member of several governmental and state committees on wildlife conservation, including the National Biodiversity Authority and the State Wildlife Board (Assam).



Dr. Erach Bharucha *Emeritus Member of the Board*





Dr Bharucha is a renowned surgeon by profession. His passion for nature conservation led him to establish the Bharati Vidyapeeth Institute of Environmental Education and Research (BVIEER), Pune. His leadership as Director of the institute has led to the environment education course that is today taught to all graduate students.

Wildlife Trust of India

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India

Know more at www.wti.org.in

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