

Country Logo



Global Tiger Initiative

National Consultations—the Road to the Tiger Summit

**Proceedings and Outcomes
India**

June 29, 2010

Template to describe a Summary of National Tiger Recovery Program (NTRP)
(NTRP will feed into the Global Tiger Recovery Program—GTRP)

Country Name:	INDIA
<p>Long Term Strategic Goals. <i>Examine the implications of the global goal to double the numbers of wild tigers in your country and briefly describe appropriate national strategic tiger conservation goals by 2022.</i></p> <p>India is central to tiger conservation globally with almost half of the world's wild tigers in India and over 32,000 sq km area protected as tiger reserves. However, a wide range of geographic terrain, vegetation types, varied habitats, geo-climatic parameters and various anthropogenic challenges posed due to differing socio-economic environment around tiger reserves, determine the success of tiger conservation. There are biodiversity rich areas, well protected, but offer limited potential for increasing tiger numbers (for example, tropical climates of Periyar Tiger Reserves); on the other hand, there are habitats that could benefit from proactive tiger conservation efforts and could see increase in tiger numbers, if not doubling (for example Simlipal and Valmiki Tiger Reserves). Then there are protected areas from where tigers have been poached and these offer opportunities for reintroducing tigers in these habitats. Already efforts in this direction have been undertaken (for example, tiger reintroduction in Sariska and Panna Tiger Reserves). Further, the remaining wilderness areas of India are facing potential threats from an explosion of infrastructure development in the form of highways, rural roads, hydro-electric dams, special economic zones etc. In the backdrop of this complex conservation scenario, the national consultations emerged with the following goal, which would be refined through a series of consultations to be organized by the NTCA between now and the summit.</p> <p align="center">By 2022, adequate (how much?) critical tiger habitat be secured and made inviolate to provide total protection to the core breeding tiger populations and put in place a criteria for assessment of success that includes, extent and quality of habitat, increase in prey-base, number of tigers and reduction in human-wildlife conflict.</p> <p>Brief proceedings of this session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was acceptance that biologically defined clear goals are required. There is debate on what should constitute the long-term strategic goals for tiger conservation in India – absolute tiger numbers or extent of secured habitat? Numbers are important but controversial, could reintroduce malpractices in counting and projecting numbers. More important is securing inviolate spaces. • There was general consensus that doubling of tiger numbers may be appropriate as a global goal, but would not be a suitable goal for India. However, many experts felt that tiger numbers are also important; as they give a sense of urgency as well as overall direction conservation efforts are taking (measure of success). • Some experts opined that T x 1.5 could be a realistic goal for India; however this would vary across states. E.G. in Nagarhole or Bhadra the tigers are at saturation but can be increased in ??? • NTCA's view was that while number is a good indicator but instead of getting into the number game, the focus of the goal should be to ensure that adequate and inviolate area is set aside for tigers. • It was also expressed by conservation managers from the State that co-existence model has failed in many parts and inviolate area is a must to achieve long-term tiger conservation. Yet another view was that people are demanding development and any suggestion of increasing the area for conservation could face stiff resistance from the people. • Experts also felt that numbers tend to change with change in methodology for census, but there is a need to integrate extent of inviolate area with tiger numbers. • It was also felt that announcements of increasing tiger numbers may invite resistance from people living around the tiger reserves, as they will see this as increased chances of human-wildlife conflict. 	
<p>Baseline Status. Briefly describe the gap between each Long Term Strategic Goal described above and current situation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One of the main challenges for creating inviolate habitats for the tigers remains the relocation of nearly 80,000 households from the core tiger habitats. Voluntary relocation is riddled with unseen complexities, and is not successful if entire village is not relocated. Despite relocation being high on the national agenda for 	

NTCA, efforts have been limited due to lack of sufficient funds, poor mobilization of communities, no handholding support post relocation etc. Almost \$ 1.2 billion are required over the next 5 years to create inviolate areas for tigers.

2. Capacity building of frontline staff (forest guards and foresters) is another challenge. The average age of protection staff is high at 50 years with sparse recruitment of fresh staff (?). There are inadequate field training opportunities and capacities. Trained staff is often posted with responsibilities not aligned with skills and training. Staff engaged in patrolling and protection is ill-equipped, without modern arms and ammunition, poor communication infrastructure and limited mobility. In some protected areas, frontline staff depends on equipments provided by vigilant civil society organizations.
3. Socio-economic development of buffer and fringe areas of the tiger reserves is also a limiting factor in soliciting the support of communities that depend on the forest resources. There are limited livelihood options for these communities and their close proximity and dependence on habitats creates many volatile human-wildlife conflict situations. Yet these are powerful approaches that can positively contribute to tiger conservation, as was highlighted from the field experience of KMTR, where in support solicited from local communities resulted in prevention of forest fires and reduction in grazing by domestic cattle inside the forest.

Priority Actions to achieve Long Term Strategic Goals. Identify 4-5 most critical NATIONAL and TRANS-BOUNDARY actions.

Participants strongly felt that India has a strong political support for tiger conservation with the Prime Minister chairing the National Wildlife Board. Further the political support is also expressed in terms of establishing new tiger reserves (there are 39 tiger reserves in India) thereby bringing additional area under conservation management. India has also demonstrated its willingness in creating inviolate habitats by increasing the quantum of compensation to Rs 1 million. Overall, the country has a good legal and policy framework to deal with conservation issues. Yet, from the list of 12 priority actions from Hua Hin declaration, the participants in the National Consultation grouped actions of similar nature into 3 broad categories, namely, Securing Habitats, Improving Management and Community Centered. The prioritized actions are described below:

1. Securing Habitats: The first priority action is to *make critical tiger habitats/corridors inviolate from economic development*. The participants placed due emphasis that *ensuring buffer zones remain functional landscapes for conservation* and *protect tiger/prey base from poaching through smart patrolling* are closely linked with this priority action and these three should be tackled together.
2. Improving Management: The next set of priority actions center around management practices. The participants strongly felt that *professionalize and improve management practices by adopting best practice systems* is the priority action. They advocated strong linkages of this action with *implementing scientific adaptive management tools in tiger conservation* and *set up robust mechanisms for monitoring progress towards achieving goals*. Together these actions constitute the next set of priority actions.
3. The next priority action suggested by the participants is to *encourage communities around landscapes through sustainable livelihood support (through tiger conservation) to minimize tiger-human conflict*.
4. The final priority action highlighted is to *eliminate trade in tiger parts and derivatives and increase demand for tigers in the wild*.

Some of these priority actions are both national and trans-boundary in nature. For instance, creation of inviolate tiger habitat and corridors in the Terai Arc Landscape and Sunderbans assume trans-boundary character as well. Similarly, harmonizing management practices on trans-boundary contiguous habitats, for example, in Sunderbans is also a trans-boundary as well as national priority. Finally, tackling the illegal trade in tiger parts can be achieved only if trans-boundary cooperation and joint action is taken.

Brief proceedings of this session:

- There is a lack of institutional framework to provide training to frontline staff and build its capacity.
- Too much pumping of money into the system is also not good, as it could bring corruption into the system. The entire management system needs to be improved. At present, well-managed protected areas are a result of dynamic leadership in these, rather than a system based performance and management.
- Communities around protected areas, who receive benefits through ecodevelopment approaches should realize that these gains are due to the presence of forests around them.

- To demonstrate success of the approaches, category 2 areas should be selected, as these have the potential to show results both in terms of conservation outcomes and improved management of our parks.
- There is a need to prepare business plans that clearly outline what training(s) are required, who and how many needs to be trained, what kind of institutional structure is required, how to improve center-state coordination etc.
- Some experts also cautioned that World Bank should be cautious in approaching these issues. Experts from other international organizations should lead the GTI effort as well. Experts also felt that suggestions made as part of SMART Infrastructure study of conservation levying cess on should be considered.
- It was highlighted that priorities are dynamic and current set of priorities may change. It was also felt that for an important issue like establishing National Goals and Priorities, wider consultations are required. NTCA agreed to hold additional consultations between now and the summit.
- There is also a need to focus on enforcement of laws and follow up on wildlife crimes; conservation alone may not suffice. There is a need to sensitize the criminal justice system and improve trans-boundary collaboration on illegal wildlife trade issues.
- It was highlighted that India is following the IUCN system of rating/monitoring its tiger reserves and is likely to come up with a tiger score card system.
- In conclusion it was summarized that India can utilize the GTI platform by actively engaging with it in the following areas:
 - i. By undertaking technical studies for assessing/evaluating the economic value of tiger reserves, as this is an urgent need of the hour to convince policy makers against development plans that counter conservation measures.
 - ii. Extend the capacity building efforts undertaken through Smithsonian-WII relationship to frontline staff, including for NGOs.
 - iii. In bringing international experiences for improving harmonization and coordination between different sectors within the larger landscape with competing land uses.
 - iv. Identifying what are the Smart/best practices in infrastructure development, PA management, patrolling etc that could be adopted or customized and adopted in the Indian context.
 - v. How to improve field delivery system, wherein economic benefits from converging with other schemes/programs of other line departments yield maximum benefits to communities living around tiger forests.
 - vi. Encourage more regional interaction between tiger range countries through some regional workshops and roundtables.

Program Indicators (interim) to achieve country's Long Term Strategic Goals. Identify and describe measurable indicators that will demonstrate the progress by 2015.

1. Creation of inviolate habitats (with buffers and corridors)
2. Number of breeding females per 1000 sq km; reduction in poaching cases and increase in prey-base numbers
3. Introduction of improved PA Management and M&E tools (e.g. SMART Patrolling)
4. Assessment of economic value of tiger reserves (costing the ecological goods and services)

Program Indicators (final) to achieve country's Long Term Strategic Goals. Identify and describe measurable indicators that will demonstrate achieving the Long Term Strategic Goals by 2022.

1. Relocation of all households (approximately 80,000) from the core tiger reserve areas
2. Development of knowledge institutions that excel in providing cutting edge management training to frontline staff within the country and also serve as regional centers for other tiger range countries.

Template to describe a NTRP Component linked to the Priority Actions

1. Mapping. Describe HOW this Component is linked to respective Long Term Strategic Goals and Priority Actions.

Long Term Strategic Goal:

Priority Action(-s):

2. Description of Program Component. Briefly describe (i) Objectives, (ii) Activities, (iii) Expected Outcomes, (iv) duration and location of the Program Component.

3. Policy. Briefly describe what kind of policy or legislation is needed (amended or introduced) to achieve the Component's Objectives.

4. Capacity. Briefly describe what kind of capacity needs to be enhanced or created to achieve the Component's Objectives.

5. Stakeholders. Identify and briefly describe the roles of other critical actors, NGOs, organizations, or cooperating TRCs in achieving the Component's Objectives.

6. Performance Indicators. Identify key measurable indicators that will demonstrate progress towards achievement of the Component's Objectives.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

7. Indicative Costs in US\$ (order of magnitude only):

Activity	Costs
Activity 1	xx
Activity 2	xx
Activity n	xx
TOTAL	XXX

8. Financing Options. Explore the options to enhance potential government or national funding including GEF, Multilateral Development Banks, international NGOs, below.

Support needed from the GTI in US\$¹

Identify and indicate the amount of funding needed from the GTI to support the Component in the table below. The GTI can only support the following type of activities costing less than \$500,000:

Activity (provide brief description)	Costs
Pilot projects (for example, implementing a MIST-type system in one or a few PAs)	
Technical assistance to develop a project proposal for funding from the larger donors	
Training and capacity building, and building or strengthening local and national institutions	xxx
Workshops for knowledge exchange and cooperation (for example, cross-boundary meeting to enhance cooperation in law enforcement)	
Feasibility studies (for example, developing a particular community engagement strategy in one or a few locations)	
TOTAL	XXX

¹ The GTI is not a primary financing organization. Any funds directly raised by the GTI will be used by TRCs for catalytic and initial work required to bring best practices to full-scale projects. GTI support, in general, will be less than US\$500,000 in each case. For TRCs that may have already developed detailed plans for large scale projects costing more than \$500,000, the GTI will facilitate access to large funders if needed.