

JPAM UPDATE

News on Action Towards Joint Protected Area Management

No. 20

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UPCOMING

- 3rd Consultation on Wildlife Conservation and Livelihood Rights, Bhopal, India, May 1-3, 1999
- Conserving Biodiversity in the 21st Century, Mussoorie, India, June 28-30, 1999
- International symposium on Global Change and Protected Areas, Italy, September 9-19, 1999

WHAT'S AVAILABLE

- Community involvement in wildlife tourism
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EDITORIAL

This issue comes just before the 3rd National **Consultation on Wildlife Conservation and People's Livelihood Rights** (Bhopal, May 1-3, 1999; see UPCOMING below). This consultation is part of a series of national dialogues (dubbed 'Building Bridges') which has attempted to bridge the gap between the viewpoints and activities of urban conservationists on one side and social activists and local communities on the other. As repeatedly pointed out in the *Update*, and stressed at the first two Consultations, there is a commonality of interest amongst these various sectors, especially in their struggle against the dominant industrial and 'developmental' interests which are bent on destroying natural habitats and turning local communities into cheap labour. Unfortunately, in the past, inappropriate policies, severe distrust, and other factors have blinded many of us to this common interest.

The need to forge an alliance amongst all those interested in the protection of wildlife and the security of livelihoods of communities who depend on wildlife habitats, has been especially sharply highlighted in the last few months. In state after state, where the procedure for settlement of rights is going on as per Supreme Court orders (see Editorial in *Update* 15, and news items on the WWF case in *Update* 15, 18, 19), there is talk of **denotifying or deleting** substantial sections of national parks and sanctuaries. Some of these are well-intentioned, to relieve people of the shackles placed by wildlife laws; others seem to have hidden motives (e.g. in Great Himalayan National Park, Himachal Pradesh, where the existence of two tiny villages is being used as an excuse for deleting a whole valley from the Park, the real reason being a proposed hydel project). Whatever the motives, however, what is certain is that with some exceptions, such steps are not going to benefit either wildlife or local people, for industrial and commercial forces are just waiting for the opportunity to grab the area's resources. ***In the face of this threat, conservationists must see the need for strategies which integrate livelihood concerns within protected areas, and human rights advocates must see the need for protected areas (albeit more participatorily managed ones) and the Wild Life Act to keep destructive forces out.***

The 3rd Consultation will be a good forum to bring up these issues, assess follow-up in the case of specific actions which have been jointly taken by conservationists and human rights activists, and plan some more such actions. ***Pl. come for it!***

This issue has some items on **trans-border cooperation** in South Asia, between India and Nepal on one hand, and India and Pakistan on the other. These agreements are very significant. In particular, the Indo-Pak one could be a small but important step in showing that environmental conservation can be a powerful tool for forging peace. ***What better way to deal with our borders than to declare them no-war zones which are dedicated to the conservation of wildlife habitats?*** Congratulations to our officials who have had the vision to forge these trans-boundary partnerships, and we hope that their implementation will be enthusiastically followed up.

Denotification or not?

Kishore Rao, Addl. IGF (Wildlife), Ministry of Environment and Forests, has pointed out that the term 'denotification' is incorrect for the process we have described above. Since PAs where settlement process is going on are not finally notified, they cannot be 'denotified'. Mr. Rao is technically correct, for PAs are only "intended" until finally notified. However, given that in all PAs, even when only "intended": (a) the Wild Life Act's provisions fully apply to them; (b) people are usually restricted from exercising their traditional resource use practices even before settlement takes place; and (c) there is some immunity from industrial / commercial pressures; we think it is not wholly incorrect to call a process of knocking off portions of these PAs as denotification, or dereservation. His point, however, that the term should not be used loosely, is well-taken.

NEWS FROM INDIAN STATES

ANDHRA PRADESH

Lunch feast of migratory birds at Kolleru

Sixty two birds, many of them migratory, were served at a lunch feast hosted by MRD Balaram, a Telugu Desam party leader. The feast was held at Kolletikota village, an island on Kolleru lake (a bird sanctuary) in the Krishna district. The food served is supposed to have included the meat of 30 whistling teals and 25 spotted ducks along with other routine fare like chicken and mutton.

The Chief Minister of the state, Chandra Babu Naidu, immediately ordered the arrest of the

culprits and non-bailable warrants were issued for the arrest of Balaram and three others.

Source: Pushpa Iyengar. 'TDP leader hosts bird lunch for bigwigs'. *The Times of India*, 24/03/99.
'Eluru feast: CM orders arrest of culprits'. *The Hindu*, 24/03/99.
'Kolletikota feast: warrants issued against four'. *The Hindu*, 26/03/99.

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden** - Andhra Pradesh,
Aranya Bhavan, Hyderabad 500004. Tel: 91-40-
232668 / 230561. Fax: 237889.

ASSAM

Demand for new protected area

The Kakoijana reserve forest in Bongaigaon district of Lower Assam is under threat from indiscriminate tree felling, stone quarrying and poaching of wild animals. The reserve forest spread over an area of 2000 hectares is home to a number of species such as the golden langur, binturong, pangolin, flying squirrel, python, wild pig, civet cat and barking deer.

A local NGO, Appropriate Technology Mission, Assam (ATMA), is mobilising people in the 21 villages in and around Kakoijana to save the forest. It has also approached the government to declare the reserve forest a wildlife sanctuary under the Wildlife (Protection) Act.

Source: Samudra Gupta Kashyap, 'Poaching threatens reserve in Assam', *Indian Express*, 02/01/99.

Forest staff killed in Manas

A group of miscreants killed three staff members of the Forest Department on the night of 20th Dec. 1998 when they attacked the Kahitama beat of the Manas National Park. The three were Bimal Chandra Kalita, Forest Guard, Hav. Bentik Sangma, and Constable Chandra Keswar Gogoi.

A communication from Dr. SP Singh, the Field Director of the Manas Tiger Reserve, said that all the three were excellent workers and now their families are left with no source of income. An appeal has been made for financial help for the families and the contributions can be sent by cheque / draft to the Trust address given below.

Source: Email from Belinda Wright dated 19/02/99, on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.

Contact: Member Secretary, **Wildlife Areas Development and Welfare Trust**, Rehabari, Guwahati - 8, Assam. Also, **WPSI**, Thapar House, 124 Janpath, New Delhi 110 001 Tel: +91 11 6213864 / 6238710 Fax: 6464918. Email: blue@iasdl01.vsnl.net.in

New national parks in Assam

The Assam Government has decided to convert the Dibru-Saikhowa Sanctuary in the Tinsukhia district and Orang Sanctuary in the Darrang district into national parks. Forest Minister Nagen Sharma said that the Dibru- Saikhowa NP would be provided protection and maintenance in the style of the Kaziranga NP. Also a number of NGOs from foreign countries have come forward to assist in the protection of wildlife in the national parks.

Source: Jagdish Krishnaswamy on email dated 29/01/99 on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.

Tourism development plan for Kaziranga NP

The Assam government has planned for the promotion of tourism in the Kaziranga NP as part of a larger tourism development plan for the state. The plans for Kaziranga include the construction of a swimming pool and a children's park and the procurement of 10 more elephants to cater to the tourists. It is not known if an environmental impact assessment has been carried out of these proposals.

Source: 'Ropeway in city, swimming pool in KNP mooted as tourism schemes'. *The Sentinel*, 03/01/99.

BIHAR

Smuggling of *khair* trees in Palamau

The illicit and reckless trade of *khair* *Acacia catechu* in the Palamau Tiger Reserve has reached alarming proportions. Not only are the branches of the prized tree cut, the roots are also dug up destroying any chance of regeneration. The police allege that members of naxalite groups like the People's War Group (PWG) provide illicit cover to the traders and take a handsome levy for the *khair katha* that is smuggled out of Palamau. There are reports that the foresters, forest guards and range officers too accept a 2% levy from this operation. Even the core area of the tiger reserve is not free from this illegal activity.

The Saidoop block of the Reserve including Labhar naka, Kaer, Mundoo, Soorkumee, Maromar, Baresarn, Bendee, Lepda, Cher and Sarju are the havens for the illicit trade. Powerful transporters and politicians of Manika, Latehar, Chandwa and Balumath are also involved, as are the illegal operators of the Siknee colliery.

The rise of various chewing pouches in the last few years has seen a tremendous rise in the smuggling of *khair* from Palamau.

Source: 'Loot of green gold unabated in tiger project area.' *Hindustan Times*, Patna, 16/12/98.

Contact: **Field Director**, Palamau Tiger Reserve,
Daltonganj 822101, Bihar. Tel: 91-6562- 22650.

Migratory birds killed in Baraila

There have been reports of large scale trapping and killing of migratory birds in the Baraila Bird Sanctuary in the Vaishali district of Bihar. Significantly the lake falls in the Jandaha Assembly constituency, which is represented by the State Forest and Environment Minister Tulsi Das Mehta. Mr. Mehta has however pleaded ignorance of the reports of killing of birds.

The birds are trapped by nets and according to local villagers, poisoned insects are also thrown into the lake to attract the birds. Meanwhile the Vaishali district Samata Party has planned to launch an agitation against the illegal practice, which has jeopardised the prospects of the bird sanctuary.

Source: Subodh Mishra. 'Killing of migratory birds goes unchecked'. *Hindustan Times*, 19/01/99, quoted on email by Nalin M, dated 19/01/99, on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden**, Bihar, PO Hinoo, Ranchi 500237.

GUJARAT

Industries threaten blackbuck

The blackbuck in the district of Bhavnagar and the surrounding areas, including the Velavadar National Park, are being threatened by the setting up of industries and salt pans in the area. This has resulted in additional human activity like the construction of asphalt roads and increased flow of trucks for the transportation of raw materials and goods. Further details are not available.

Source: H.H. Sanghani. 'Mushrooming industries endanger black bucks', *The Times of India*, Ahmedabad, 05/12/98.

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden**, Gujarat, Block 14, Dr. Jivraj Mehta Bhavan, Old Sachivalaya, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Tel: 91- 2712-30007. Fax: 21097.

GUJARAT / MADHYA PRADESH

Lion reintroduction in jeopardy

The political leadership in Gujarat has refused to send lions to Madhya Pradesh for the proposed lion introduction programme in the Kuno Palpur Wildlife Sanctuary. Their argument is that the lions are a heritage bestowed only upon Gujarat.

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Gujarat, the Chief Minister of the state, Keshubhai Patel and the BJP MLA from Junagadh have all

expressed their opposition to the movement of lions outside the state.

It is also reported that the MP government is facing opposition to the project from those living around Kuno, the site for the relocation of the animals. Chief Minister Digvijay Singh is however taking a personal interest in the project and has even sent his ministers to persuade the people to accept the rehabilitation package.

Source: Bharat Desai, 'Lions for tigers deal may fall through', *The Times of India*, 15/03/99

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden**, Gujarat, (as above). For more information on the lion relocation project contact **Ravi Chellam**, Wildlife Institute of India, PO Box. Chandrabani, Dehradun 248001. For more information on the people's resettlement process contact **Arpan Sharma**, C/o College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan, 38 New Marine Lines, Mumbai 400020.

HARYANA

Plan to restore Sultanpur and Bhindawas lakes

A Rs. 50 lakh plan for the restoration of the Sultanpur National Park near Gurgaon is soon to be launched. The lake receives 250 species of migratory birds every year.

As a part of the plan five cusecs of water will be piped to the lake from the Gurgaon water supply scheme. The Union government has already sanctioned Rs. 43.05 lakh for the project which is to be completed before the onset of the monsoon.

Another plan for the biological control of water hyacinth in the Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary has also been approved by the State Wildlife Advisory Board. It has been proposed to release two American weevils in collaboration with the Directorate of Biological Control and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Bangalore for the purpose.

Source: 'Rs. 50-lakh plan to restore Sultanpur park's glory'. *The Times of India*, 22/01/99.

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden**, Haryana, C-18, Forest Complex, Sec- 6, Panchkula, Haryana 134109. Tel: 91-172-561224 / 561213.

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

State Wildlife Act to be amended

The J&K Wildlife Department (JKWD) has formulated a proposal envisaging amendments to the State Wildlife Protection Act 1978. The draft proposal aimed at amending the act has been prepared in consultation with environmentalists and

lawyers and would be soon introduced in the state assembly and legislative council.

Presently J&K is the only state in the country where killing of endangered species is still allowed. According to the present Act, a royalty of only Rs. 200 needs to be paid to shoot a Himalayan brown bear, and Rs. 50 for a Tibetan wolf. The hunting license for species like the Tibetan antelope, Ibex and Tibetan wolf for an Indian citizen is only Rs. 500 (Rs. 1500 for a foreigner). Also traders dealing in 'shahtoosh' shawls can continue their business by paying an amount of Rs. 25,000, though shahtoosh trade is banned all over the world.

In response to the proposed amendments, the America based Kashmir Environmental Watch Association (KEWA) has termed the amendments as a far cry from what is needed to save J&K's endangered wildlife. The organisation has said that the amendments seek only to increase the hunting and license fees, and as a result the official tolerance and endorsement of hunting continues.

Source: 'Proposal to amend J&K Wildlife Act', *The Hindu*, 29/03/99
Email from KEWA kewa_com@yahoo.com
dated 01/04/99 on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden - J&K**, T.R.C., Srinagar 190001. Tel: 91-191-544575, 91-194-452469.
KEWA, C/o Nasir Tak, 1164 Templeton Place, St. Louis, Mo. 63017, USA.

KARNATAKA

Ecodevelopment project in Nagarhole opposed

A group representing the local inhabitants of the Rajiv Gandhi National Park in Nagarhole had filed a complaint alleging the failure of the World Bank's management to comply with its policy and guidelines with respect to indigenous people and involuntary resettlement.

The World Bank has however ruled out for the time being any further investigation into complaints, following a recommendation to this effect by its Board. This decision followed a comprehensive assessment by the Bank's Inspection Panel as well as the clarifications of the Karnataka government in response to the above mentioned complaint.

The three tribal organisations in Kodagu – the Nagarhole Budakattu Janara Hakkus Sthapana Samithi, the Karnataka Rajya Moolanivasi Vedike and the Budakattu Krishikara Sangha have been in the forefront of the movement for sometime.

On the other hand the Indian Institute of Tribal Education (IITE), at Thithimathi in Kodagu, and Living Inspiration for Tribals (LIFT), also in Kodagu have advocated that the tribals be moved out

of the Nagarhole National Park. The IITE has proposed a three year plan for the rehabilitation of the tribals outside the park.

Source: 'World Bank not to probe Karnataka's eco-project'. *Financial Express*, 27/12/98.
K Jeevan Chinnappa, 'Adivasi's crusade gains momentum'. *The Hindu*, 25/01/99.

Contact: **Nagarhole Budakattu Janara Hakkustapana Samithi**, Nagarhole, Virajpet Taluk, Kodagu District, Karnataka. Tel: 91-8276-74 487; Fax: 74 091. (see also, *JPAM Update 17*)

Mining in Kudremukh National Park

The future of the Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited (KIOCL) is uncertain as its mining lease is getting over in July 1999 and the government has shown no signs of extending it.

The Union Ministry is of the opinion that the open cast mining is damaging the flora and fauna of the region and the afforestation programme taken up by the company is not up to the mark. While the project has destroyed rosewood and sandalwood trees, acacia has been planted as compensation.

Though the company is hopeful that the lease which was started in 1969 will be extended, the state government's stand is that the matter is being examined. Meanwhile a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) has been filed in the Karnataka high court by local environmental groups (see *JPAM Update 18*). This is also expected to determine the fate of the company.

Source: Kingshuk Nag. 'Govt. dilly-dallying on mining lease extension worries KIOCL'. *The Times of India*.

Contact: **Environment Support Group (ESG)**, Reservoir road, Basavanagudi, Bangalore 560004. Telefax: 91-80-6657995. Email: admin@leo.ilban.ernet.in; esg@bgl.vsnl.net.in; Website: <http://www.cfar.umd.edu/~venu>.

KERALA

Alternate route for Sabrimala pilgrimage

In light of the tragedy on Makaravilakku day at the Sabrimala shrine where over 50 people were killed, an alternative route is being suggested. The present one passes through the grasslands of the Periyar Tiger Reserve and is narrow and unpaved.

The alternate routes suggested also pass through the Tiger Reserve. However, under the Forest Conservation Act the sanction of the Central Government will be needed to develop it.

Source: P.P. Mathai. 'Alternative route can make Sabrimala pilgrimage safer'. *The Times of India*, 03/02/99.

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden**, Kerala, Vazhuda, Trivandram 695014. Tel: 91- 471-322217 / 204896. Fax: 325804.

MAHARASHTRA

Poaching, tree cutting inside Sanjay Gandhi National Park

Forest officials in Mumbai recently arrested a *swami* from his hideout inside the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Borivli. He was found to be in possession of a tiger skin and two cheetal (Spotted deer) skins. The *ashram* of the *swami* was located in the forest area near the Kanheri caves, and officials suspect that it was being used as a shelter by criminals operating in the area.

There are already three *ashrams* in the park, which house more than 20 *swamis*. The *ashrams* flourish despite a Bombay High Court order of 1997 banning all constructions within the park.

In another development a conflict has arisen between the Forest Department and the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), over the cutting of over 100 trees by the FD inside the park. The FD recently cleared a large patch of land near the entrance of the park to make way for a park-cum-botanical garden. The BMC maintains that any tree in the urban area comes within the jurisdiction of the Maharashtra (Urban Areas) Preservation of Trees Act 1975. Accordingly the BMC Tree Authority has the sole power to sanction the cutting of trees in the urban area. Since Borivli Park is within the city limits, the FD should have taken the permission of the BMC. The FD says that the forest office itself is a tree authority and therefore does not need any permission from the BMC. It points out that the plot of cleared land was falling prey to encroachers and was being used as a public toilet.

Source: 'Forest Officials nab swami for poaching', *Indian Express* quoted on email from Chetan Agarwal dated 18/02/99 on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu. Swati Deshpande-Aguiar. 'BMC, forest department at loggerheads over tree felling'. *Indian Express*, 26/01/99.

Contact: **DFO**, Sanjay Gandhi Rashtriya Udyan, Borivli (E), Mumbai 400066, Maharashtra.

New entry to Sanjay Gandhi National Park

Faced with the problem of handling 25 lakh visitors a year, the Sanjay Gandhi National Park has decided to open a new entry point at Mulund. Local MLA Kirit Somayya will provide RS. 3 lakh from the MLA's fund for the project. The blueprint for the 50 acre project which would cover the north-west range of the hills has been prepared by the Chief Conservator of Forests, M.G. Gogate and Asst. Conservator Satish Phale.

However, various environmentalists including the WWF have raised objections to this project, saying that it is not in the interest of national park and the wildlife here.

Source: 'National park will open entry point in Mulund', *The Times of India*, 11/02/99. Vaishnavi C. Sekhar. 'Greens voice concern over Nisarga Vihar project', *The Times of India*, 15/03/99

Contact: **DFO**, Sanjay Gandhi Rashtriya Udyan (as above)

Noise pollution affecting birds in Karnala

According to the Conservator of Forests incharge of Karnala Bird Sanctuary, the bird population has been affected by noise pollution and habitat destruction. Traffic on the highway nearby has trebled in the last ten years. Recent studies in Europe have shown that the noise of highway traffic drowns the mating calls of birds, resulting in less mating success.

Additionally the habitat of the 4.8 sq. kms. sanctuary, which was notified in 1971, is being degraded by local headloaders who cut down branches to feed fuelwood to the farmhouses and *dhabas* that have mushroomed in the vicinity. Tourists are also extremely noisy, and litter the place. Many areas in the sanctuary are covered with plastic litter and shards of broken beer bottles.

Source: Gunvanthi Balam. 'Noise pollution drives away birds from Karnala sanctuary'. *The Times of India*, 18/01/99.

Contact: **Mr. Nitin Kakodkar**, DCF (Wildlife), LBS Road, Naupada, Thane (W) – 61, Maharashtra.

Meeting on Joint Management of Koyna Sanctuary

The Koyna Jivan Hakka Sanrakshana Sanghatana organised a three-day meeting on 'Forests, People, and the State', at Koregaon in Satara district, on 19-21 February, 1999. The main focus of the meeting was on how to work towards a joint management system for Koyna Sanctuary which contains many villages, inhabited primarily by Marathas and Dhangars.

The meeting was attended by villagers of Koyna and Bhimashankar Sanctuaries, representatives of the NGOs Satyashodh, Vrikshmitra, RANWA, Kalpavriksh, Parisar, YUVA, and Shaswat, and the Assistant Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) and Range Officer (Wildlife), Koyna Sanctuary. Discussions included the ongoing process of settlement of people's rights in PAs, and the impact of people's traditional resource use activities. Special focus was on how to move towards a more participatory system of management, for both the Sanctuary and its surrounds. Joint Protected Area Management, Joint Forest Management, Ecodevelopment, and other possible paths to this were examined. Threats due to proposed mining along the boundary, and the possible connection of this with proposed denotification of a part of Koyna Sanctuary, were also discussed.

Contact: **B.J. Avinash**, Satyashodh, Koregaon, Satara 415501 Tel: +91 2163 20020
Neeraj Vagholikar, Kalpavriksh (at editorial address).

Towards JPAM in Gnyanganga Sanctuary?

Botha is a small village in the Buldhana District of Maharashtra, which has done exemplary work in Joint Forest Management. In May 1997, out the 1486 ha land given to the Van Sanrakshan Samiti, Botha, 1471 ha area came to be included in the newly declared Gnyanganga Sanctuary (total area – 32,282.38 ha). Thus the control of the area shifted from the territorial to the wildlife wing of the Forest Department. But in accordance with their MOU with the Govt. of Maharashtra, the villagers continue their forest protection work. Interestingly, the Chief Wildlife Warden has indicated that there should be harmony between JFM and the Sanctuary's objectives.

On August 10, 1998, when the villagers of Botha, had accompanied the wildlife division staff for patrolling and confiscation of cattle, they were beaten up by the illegal graziers, the wildlife staff being mute witnesses to this. Several villagers were severely injured, and their faith in the JFM process was shaken. A team consisting of members of NGOs from Vidarbha and Pune visited the area to investigate the incident. The team has filed a report and has asked the Chief Wildlife Warden to look into this matter urgently. They also interacted with various officials, NGOs, villagers etc. to explore possibilities of JPAM being initiated in the sanctuary, since it is surrounded by 28 villages, a large number of which are already under JFM. The JFM work done here in the past 2 1/2 years has already resulted in the improvement of habitat as the area was considerably degraded earlier.

Contact: **JFM Network**, Maharashtra, c/o **Mohan Hirabai Hiralal**, Vrikshmitra, Tandon Wada, Gandhi Chowk, Chandrapur 442402. Tel: +91 7172-58134.
Neeraj Vagholikar, Kalpavriksh (at editorial address).

ORISSA

Plan to save Chilka lake

A Rs. 27 crore project is being implemented to revive and restore the ecosystem of the Chilka lake, the largest brackish water lake in India. The 10th Finance Commission has sanctioned this amount. This was disclosed by the Chief Minister of the state at a workshop held in Bhubaneswar in Dec. 1998. The Workshop was organised by the Chilka Development Authority and the Department of Water Resources of Orissa, in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management, Orissa Environmental Society and Wetlands International, South Asia.

The government is also reported to have taken a policy decision not to locate any polluting industry in and around the lagoon and to stop the expansion of agricultural land along the lake's periphery. Other measures to revive the lake include the treatment of the catchment areas, diversion of the early monsoon flow in the Mahanadi arm of the Mahanadi river system, and the desiltation of the channel linking the lake to the sea. Improvement of the Nalaban Bird Sanctuary, and the uplift of the socio-economic condition of the villages located on the periphery of the lake have also been planned.

However, poaching in the lake is on the increase. The railway station in the sleepy town of Bhusandpur, the gateway to the lake, has become a thriving market for poached birds. The high demand for bird meat, a delicacy in places like Bhubaneswar and Balugaon, has given a boost to the poaching. A forest official at the Nalaban Sanctuary said that the poaching operations happened largely at night, by the spreading of nets on the water. The birds are forced to fly in panic by firing a couple of shots. The birds then settle down only to be enmeshed in the net.

Source: 'Rs 27-cr. Action plan comes to the rescue of Chilka Lake'. *The Times of India*, 14/12/98.
'Poaching in Chilka'. *Down to Earth*, March 15, 1999.
Rajaram Satapathy. 'Poachers rule the roost at Chilka lake'. *The Times of India*, 22/01/99.

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden**, Orissa, Plot No. 8, Shahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar 751007. Tel: 91-674-513134 / 515840. Fax: 512502.

Project to save the crocodile successful

The Crocodile Research Centre at Dangamal in the Bhitarkanika Sanctuary has successfully ensured the protection of the endangered saltwater crocodile. The project which was started in 1975 was taken up after a survey in 1974 found that only 24 crocodiles were left in the area. The recent census has shown that the population of the reptile is rising. 75 of the young bred in the centre have also been supplied to other projects in the state.

Source: Ashis Senapati. 'Orissa project saves crocodiles from the jaws of death'. *Indian Express*, 26/12/98.

Mass nesting of turtles on the Orissa coast

Tens of thousands of Olive Ridley turtles began nesting on the beaches of eastern India in the last week of march. The nesting has commenced after an absence of three years.

Meanwhile 'Operation Kachappa', a joint programme of the Orissa Forest department, the Wildlife Society of India, the Wildlife Institute of India and others, has been started to ensure the protection of the turtles. This programme is funded by the Barbara Delano foundation.

Operation Kachappa will provide the Forest Department with resources such as boats to help them enforce the near shore ban on trawl fishing. A newsletter for sea turtle conservation is also being brought out, the first issue of which has been published.

Earlier reports indicated that researchers found a marked increase in papillomas, a potentially fatal disease causing tumour like growths on the soft tissues of sea turtles. The growth often covers the eyes, causing blindness, leading to starvation and death. There is strong evidence to suggest that the disease is related to the toxic algae in waters polluted by chemicals from prawn farms nearby.

Source: Kartik Shanker on email dated 09/01/99, on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.
Belinda Wright on email dated 26/03/99, on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.

Contact: **Kartik Shanker**, A1/4/4, 3rd Main Rd, Besant Nagar, Chennai 600090
Tel: + 91 44 4952655 Fax: 4934862 email: kachhapa@vsnl.com; mcg.shankar@vsnl.com
Belinda Wright, Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI) (as above).

RAJASTHAN

Wild animal diseases in Sariska

Wildlife in the Sariska Tiger Reserve is facing

serious health problems. In the last two years there have been three casualties, according to official figures. Unofficially the figure is placed much higher, at 12. Some animals, including tigers and leopards, which were killed in road accidents or were found dead, were found to be suffering from tuberculosis (TB) or liver infection.

Experts are now debating the origin of the infection. Some believe that the infection was brought to the sanctuary by monkeys and langurs who return to the forests after making forays into towns. Some say that diseases of domestic cattle are being contracted by the wild animals as they share the same water holes in the park.

Source: 'Sick in sanctuary'. *Down to Earth*, March 15, 1999.

Sonu Jain. 'Stray cattle may be behind TB cases in Sariska National Park'. *Indian Express*, 30/03/99.

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden**, Rajasthan, Van Bhawan, Vaniki Path, Deorali, Jaipur 302005, Rajasthan.
Tel: 91-141-380832. Fax: 380496.

Package for relocation of 'Project Tiger' villages

A package is being prepared for the relocation of villages inside the Ranthambore and Sariska Tiger reserves in Rajasthan. The package, to be carried out with the assistance of the World Bank, would include the rehabilitation of the villagers and compensation for their land. At a recent public hearing at Sariska, the Deputy Field Director had declared that only the villages from the national park (and not the entire Tiger Reserve) would be relocated, and the FD was considering rehabilitation sites within the same forest blocks (see *JPAM Update 19*)

Source: *The Hindu* dated 13/01/99 quoted by Nalin M on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.
'A long wait for Sariska Tiger sanctuary'. *The Hindu*, 27/01/99.

Bharatpur vultures on the decline

A recent study by Dr. Asad Rahmani, Director of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), has revealed that the number of vultures in the Keoladeo Ghana National Park in Bharatpur has fallen drastically from 2000 in the 1980s to only 4 in 1998. The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi, collected samples of the carrion that the vultures feed on. Tests conducted by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) confirmed that the carrion samples contained high levels of chemical pesticides such as DDT, HCH and dieldrin.

There is conclusive proof from studies in many countries, that these chemicals severely disrupt reproductive, developmental and hormonal functions

in birds, leading to thinner eggshells and erratic mating behaviour.

This could have serious implications for humans too, because like vultures, they too are at the top of the food chain where there is the greatest accumulation of these chemicals.

Source: 'What's eating the vultures'. *Down To Earth*, 15/01/99.

Contact: **Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)**, 41, Tughlakabad Institutional area, New Delhi 110062. Tel: 91-11-6981110/24, 6986399. Email: cse@caseindia.org

Dr. Asad Rahmani, Director, BNHS, Hornbill House, Shahid Bhagat Singh Marg, Mumbai 400023. Tel: 91-22-2821811. Fax: 2837615. Email: bnhs@giasbm01.vsnl.net.in.

TAMIL NADU

Ecodevelopment in Kalakad Mundanthurai

The Forest Department has reported that the implementation of the Ecodevelopment Project (EDP) in villages within a 5 kms radius of the Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve (KMTG) has helped reduce the pressures on the protected area. The EDP was launched with the help of the villagers in November 1994 under the Forestry Research Education and Extension Project (FREEP). The other protected area covered under this project is the Great Himalayan National Park in Himachal Pradesh. Funded by the World Bank, the financial outlay of the project is Rs. 9.14 crore, with the state government contributing 20%.

Village Forest Committees were formed in all the 113 villages and micro-plans were drawn to provide employment opportunities to the villagers. Various income generating schemes were introduced: setting up of small hotels, wig business, plastic and aluminium utensil shops, selling of tea by bicycle, selling vegetables by pushcarts, tea shops, poultry business, fodder farm, cement brick manufacturing, tailoring and cobbling.

With the formation of the committees it is reported that the number of villagers entering the forests had come down. Before the launch of the EDP, more than 1500 people used to enter the protected area and collect 400 tonnes of fuelwood. Under the EDP, 1200 of these have been provided assistance for alternative income generating activities. A few months ago, members of a World Bank team that visited the area expressed satisfaction at the implementation of the project.

Source: P. Oppili. 'EDP helps preserve natural resources'. *The Hindu*, Madras, 03/12/98.

Contact: **Field Director, KMTR**, Project Tiger, NGO 'A' Colony, Tirunelveli – 7, Tamil Nadu. Tel: 91-462-552663; Fax: 580115

Current Science special on KMTR

Current Science Journal has decided to bring out a special section on research on animal behaviour and ecology, biodiversity conservation, sustainable natural resource use, and social and management policies. The editors have invited papers for this special section based on original research/conservation work in the Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve. Last date for the receipt of manuscripts is 15th April 1999. Papers received after this date will still be eligible for publication in *Current Science* as regular papers.

Contact: **Dr. Madhusan Katti**, Lecturer and Research Associate, Dept. of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544 – 1003 USA. Tel: +1 609 258 1935 Fax. +1 609 258 1712. Email: mkatti@princeton.edu
Prof. P. Balaram, Editor, *Current Science*, PB No. 8001, CV Raman Avenue, Bangalore 560080. Tel: +91 80 334 2546 Fax. 334 6094 Email: currsci@ias.ernet.in

UTTAR PRADESH

Human Rights commission ruling on Rajaji Gujjars

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has ruled that the tribal Van Gujjars living in the proposed Rajaji National Park cannot be forced to move by the Forest Department. The Commission also held that they cannot be deprived of their traditional grazing and lopping rights and their cattle too cannot be removed from the forest.

The ruling was the result of an inquiry by the NHRC following complaints by the Dehradun based NGO, Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra (RLEK).

The commission also directed the UP government to appoint a retired district judge to undertake the task of independently ascertaining the willingness of the Van Gujjars to move out.

There are also reports of the successful relocation of around 150 Rajaji Gujjars at Pathri near Hardwar. The Gujjars reportedly are happy with their decision to move to this relocation site. The Dehradun based NGO, Friends of Doon (FOD), is funding a primary school, which has become the focus of the developmental activity at Pathri. PARAG, the UP government dairy agency has opened a milk collection centre. It operates daily and is making payments in cash, foodgrains or fodder as wanted. The Hardwar chapter of the Indian Medical

Association (IMA) has also initiated regular check-ups for the women there. An appeal has been made by the FOD for funds for the continuation of their educational and animal husbandry activities.

Source: 'Van Gujjars cannot be forced to leave habitat', *The Hindu*, 23/03/99
Email from Nirmal Ghosh dated 15/01/99 on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.

Contact: **Friends of Doon Society**, EBD Business Centre, 49 Rajpur Road, Dehradun 248001, Uttar Pradesh. Tel: +91-135-654487.
Avdesh Kaushal, Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra, (RLEK), PO Box. 10, 21, East Canal Road, Dehradun 248001
Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission, (NHRC), 1st Floor, Sardar Patel Bhawan, Parliament Street, New Delhi 110001. Tel: +91 11 3340891/ 3347065. Fax: 3340016/ 3366537.

Speeding train kills another elephant killed in Rajaji

One more adult elephant was killed by a speeding train at Raiwala in the Motichur range of the Rajaji National Park. Another was also injured. This is the fifth such incident in the last few years.

The last accident occurred in September 1998 when three elephants, a calf its mother and 'aunt' were killed. Scientists of the WII along with the National Park authorities had petitioned the railway authorities to take two simple steps to avoid accidents of this nature: reschedule the night running trains on the section and issue strict orders to the railway drivers to slow down to a crawl in the forested section that is also used by the elephants. Reportedly the railway authorities had been positive about these suggestions, but this latest accident has shown that no action has been taken.

Source: Email dated 04/04/99 from A Christy Williams on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.

Contact: **A William Christy**, Wildlife Institute of India (as above) Email: acwill69@hotmail.com.
Sushil Kumar Dubey, Director, Rajaji National Park, Shivalik House, Dehradun 248001.

Sal borer epidemic likely to spread

Forest officials fear that lakhs of sal *Shorea robusta* trees from Hardwar to Yamuna in Haryana on the one side and the Sirmour area of Himachal Pradesh may have been affected.

It is estimated that about 10,000 sal trees are being annually affected in the Doon valley and the Rajaji National Park. The traditional tree trap method to contain the insect has failed to control the spread

of the problem, and fresh solutions are being urgently sought.

Source: R.P. Nailwal. 'Doon sal borer epidemic may spread to more areas'. *The Times of India*, 09/01/99.

Threats to wildlife in Dudhwa and Katerniaghat

The line of the North East Railway that connects Lucknow, Sitapur and Lakhimpur with Gola, Mailani, Palia, Dudhwa and Gonda, passes through the heart of the Dudhwa National Park. Many animals including a tigress, an elephant, a bear, a crocodile and fishing cats have been killed inside the park by speeding trains.

Further, instances of the enterprising timber mafia felling trees during the time a train takes to cross is not uncommon. Around 12 to 14 goods and passenger trains pass through the park everyday and more deaths have been reported after dusk when the movement of wild animals is relatively higher. Though the dismantling of the line may not be possible, the Forest Department has suggested that the trains should at least run at a safe speed, which will reduce the number of such accidents.

There have also been reports of increased poaching in the protected areas in the region. In 1998 alone, at least 15 cases of poaching were registered in Dudhwa and Katerniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary. Equipped with sophisticated weapons, the poachers are alleged to be ex-servicemen of the Gorkha regiment of the Indian army, resettled in Nepal. According to the DFO, poaching in the area is rampant as the forest area spread over an area of 500 sq. kms. is teeming with wildlife.

Simultaneously there is a growing threat from the conversion of forestland to farms. In Katerniaghat, 3800 acres have been occupied by the central seed farm, where improvised varieties of agricultural seeds are produced. According to the forest officials, the activities of the seed farm and the large-scale use of chemical fertilisers and insecticides is detrimental to wildlife.

Source: Anupam Shashank and Ramesh Ramachandran 'Hapless forest dept. looks on while wild animals pay with their lives'. *The Times of India*, 04/12/98.
'Encroaching farms strangle UP wildlife'. *Hindustan Times*, 30/01/99.

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden**, Uttar Pradesh, 17, Rana Pratap Marg, Lucknow 226001, Uttar Pradesh. Tel: 91-522-283864. Fax: 283868.

Poaching in Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary

Recently two tiger cubs were found dead in mysterious circumstances in the Suhelwa Wildlife

Sanctuary. According to Forest officials the cubs had been picked up stealthily from the sanctuary and were later found dead in the nearby farmhouse of former MP from the Samajwadi party, Anand Singh. Three workers employed at the farmhouse were taken into custody and have reportedly admitted that they captured the cubs from inside the sanctuary to the farm house. The cubs were said to have died of starvation.

Last year four tigers died due to poisoning in Suhelwa. The skin market of Biratnagar in adjoining Nepal is supposed to be completely dependent on the illegal hunting being carried out inside Indian borders.

Source: Anuradha Raman, 'Ex-servicemen turn wildlife poachers'. *Pioneer*, New Delhi, 14/12/98.
The Times of India, quoted on email from Nalin M dated 21/01/99 on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.
Anita Katyal, 'Tigers continue to be poachers' dream catch'. *The Times of India*, 02/03/99.

Contact: **CWLW**, Uttar Pradesh (as above).

New road may threaten Valley of Flowers

The proposed road from Govind Ghat to Hemkunt Sahib in the Chamoli district in the Garhwal hills may adversely affect the Valley of Flowers National Park. Many environmentalists and activists in the region are opposing the road on the grounds that it will have a telling effect on the environment of the area.

Former Chief minister of Punjab, Rajinder Kaur Bhattal had laid the foundation of the road in January. The road is to be built by the International Khalsa Foundation at a cost of Rs. 50 crore. The project also involves the construction of a 500 room *sarai* and a bus terminal to accommodate 500 buses. The main purpose behind the road is to facilitate pilgrims from overcoming the present arduous foot journey to the famous Sikh shrine of Hemkunt Sahib.

Source: 'Environmentalists oppose road plan to Hemkunt'. *The Times of India*, Mumbai, 22/02/99

Contact: **Om Prakash Bhatt**, Dasholi Gram Swarajya Mandal, Gopeshwar, Dist. Chamoli 246401, Uttar Pradesh.

Nawabganj Sanctuary in trouble

Migratory birds that flock to the Nawabganj Sanctuary in UP now seem to be deserting the place. On an average 20,000 to 25,000 birds visit the sanctuary every year, whereas this year only about a 1000 have been reported. *Jal Kumbi*, a particular kind of grass has engulfed the lake, making it impossible for the birds to feed and rest here.

Financial constraints have resulted in the late clearing of the grass from the lake, which has also affected the migratory bird population this year.

The other threats faced by the lake includes its drying up because of the denial of water to the lake by the Sharda Sahayak canal authorities, for the non-payment of the of an old bill by the Forest Dept., and the noise pollution caused by the hundreds of vehicles plying round the clock on the Kanpur – Lucknow highway.

Source: Raj Saran Varma. 'Nawabganj sanctuary is gasping for breath'. *The Times of India*, 29/01/99.

Contact: **CWLW**, Uttar Pradesh (as above)

Conservation action plan for the *terai* tiger

The Tiger Trust Society, an NGO established in 1997, has proposed to launch an international campaign for the conservation of the tiger in the *terai* belt. A conservation action plan (CAP) has been chalked out for implementation in selected buffer areas of Corbett and Dudhwa National Parks. It would also bring under its coverage contiguous tiger range areas of other reserve forests adjoining the Nepalese border.

CAP will emphasise on educating local and tribal communities and the general masses. It will also evolve methods to resolve the on-going conflict between humans and the big cats and address the grievances of the local communities residing in the periphery tiger reserves and sanctuaries

Source: Email from BNHS dated 22/03/99 on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.

Contact: **Irfan Hussain**, Field Director, Tiger Trust Society, 14 Civil Lines, Faizabad 224001, Uttar Pradesh. Tel. 91-5278-23872.
Email: aquiline@indiasite.com
cybercaf@lw1.vsnl.net.in.

WEST BENGAL

Attack on Wildlife Cameraman in Sundarbans

Mike Herd, a cameraman with the Discovery Channel, and his assistant, were allegedly assaulted by armed hoodlums in the Sundarbans. Herd had earlier objected to the dumping of garbage in the waters of the Katka canal by another tourist boat.

In a letter to the British High Commission, Herd reported that several members of the crew as well as tourists aboard the boat were injured. It is also reported that the person responsible for the attacks is backed by some powerful people in Khulna and that a few months ago he was allegedly caught red-handed while trying to shoot a deer.

Source: Email from Nirmal Ghosh dated 04/03/99 on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.

NATIONAL NEWS FROM INDIA

Opposition to World Bank Ecodevelopment Plan

The Rs. 264 crore World Bank funded Ecodevelopment project, in seven protected areas of the country, is being opposed by tribal and other communities living in the buffer zones of these protected areas. These include Nagarhole in Karnataka, Pench and Kanha in MP, Gir in Gujarat, Ranthambore in Rajasthan and Palamau in Bihar.

The first three day conclave of Adivasi organisations opposing the WB project was held recently in Hunsur, and was attended by over 50 tribal organisations and NGOs. The tribal's groups and the NGOs also demanded that the state governments declare all the tribal areas as 'scheduled areas' for ushering in tribal self-rule, under the new constitutional provisions.

Source: 'Tribal storm brews over parks project'.
Telegraph, 19/01/99.

Contact: **Kusum Karnik**, Shaswat, AT & PO Manchar,
Dist. Pune 410503
V.S. Roy David, Coorg Organisation for Rural
Development (CORD), 119/ 1, 4th Block,
Kushalnagar 571234, Karnataka.
Tel: +91 8276 74487 / 73287; Fax: 74091
Email: david@giasbg01.vsnl.net.in

India's Ramsar sites under threat

Problems of various kinds seriously affect the wetlands in the country that have been designated as Ramsar sites. These include Chilka (Orissa), Harike (Punjab), Sambhar (Rajasthan), Wular (J&K), Bharatpur (Rajasthan) and Loktak (Manipur). The condition of Bharatpur has worsened so much that the Ramsar secretariat at its recent meeting in Kusiru, Japan reportedly threatened to delist it. While weeds, particularly hyacinth, have reduced the 108 sq. kms. Harike Lake to a mere 48 sq.kms., construction of a barrage by the National Hydro Electric Power Corporation is likely to wipe out the world's only floating sanctuary of Loktak Lake. Poaching and deforestation on its edges are affecting the Wular lake, and Sambhar lake is threatened by an express highway and salt pans all around.

Source: Rajaram Satapathy, *The Times of India*, 12/01/99, quoted by Nalin M on email dated 13/01/99, on nathistory-india@lists.princeton.edu.

Tiger Millenium conference

A three day Tiger Millenium Conference was held in New Delhi on 3-5th of March. Those who attended the meeting included members of the Tiger

range countries: Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Indonesia, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. China was however not represented.

The WWF tiger conservation awards for 1997-98 was were also given on the occasion. One went to Kaziranga National Park. The Field Director of the Kanha National Park, Rajesh Gopal, was awarded for outstanding management of a tiger area.

Earlier it was reported that the Union environment minister Suresh Prabhu would use the oppurtunity of the conference to request Western and European countries who have been voicing concern over the dwindling tiger population of the country 'to adopt tiger reserves and help in the reversal of statistics'.

Source: "Tiger reserves: Minister plans 'adoption' by the west". *The Hindu*, 27/01/99
'Conservation of tiger is high on govt's agenda'.
The Times of India, 04/03/99

NEWS FROM SOUTH ASIA

BANGLADESH

Sundarbans to be declared a World Heritage Site

The world's largest mangrove, the Sundarbans, is to be declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. This was decided at a meeting held in Bangladesh in November 1998, which was attended by officials of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, UNESCO and the World Conservation Union (IUCN). It is not known if the Indian part of the Sundarbans is also to be similarly designated.

Source: 'Sundarbans to be declared world heritage site by Dec.'. *Bangladesh Observer*, Bangladesh, 13/11/98.

INDO-NEPAL

Cross border migration of wild animals

Recently a meeting was held between Indian and Nepalese officials to discuss the issues of trans-border wildlife migration. Nepal has five protected areas on its border with India: Royal Chitwan National Park, Parsa Wildlife Reserve, Royal Bardia National Park, Royal Sukhlaphanta Wildlife Reserve and Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve. India has along its border with Nepal, Dudhwa National Park, Katerniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary, Suhelwa Sanctuary, Sobearwa Sanctuary (all in UP), Valmiki Tiger Reserve in Bihar, and the Singhalila National Park in

West Bengal. Though these are not back to back, there is still a large migration of animals including endangered ones like the elephant, rhino, tiger, and leopard. In 1995, 45 elephants reportedly crossed from Dudhwa to Royal Bardia, and a rhino moved from India into Sukhlaphanta. Tigers too are believed to move between Royal Bardia and Suhelwa.

The meeting also resolved to construct fish ladders or alternate passways for free movement of aquatic fauna in trans-border rivers that are affected by dams and barrages. It was also agreed to control illegal trade in fauna and flora, for which funds will be made available. The Indo-Nepalese treaty of 1996 will be harmonised with the requirements of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES).

Quarterly meetings between the field level staff, and annual meetings of ministry officials are on the cards. Wildlife enumeration between the two countries is to be synchronised and linkages are to be developed between the protected areas of Royal Bardia and Katarniaghat, Chitwan, Parsa and Valmiki Tiger Reserve. The Koshi Tappu Wildlife reserve is to be extended to the Koshi Barrage.

WWF Nepal has been asked to provide compensation for cattle killed by tigers. The meeting also resolved not to allow saw-mills to come up adjacent to forests on both sides of the border.

Similar meetings have also been planned for between India, Bhutan, and Bangladesh.

Source: Usha Rai. 'Wildlife ambassadors of the subcontinent'. *The Times of India*. 22/03/99.

Contact: **S.C. Sharma**, Addl. IGF (Wildlife), MoEF, Paryavaran Bhavan, CGO Complex, Lodi Estate, New Delhi 110003.
T. M. Maskey, Director, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, PO Box 860, Babarmahal, Kathmandu, Nepal. Tel: + 977 1 227675; Fax: 250850

NEPAL

Elephants create havoc around Sukhlaphanta

A herd of elephants that migrated from the lower grounds of UP in India in October 1998 has reportedly caused a lot of damage around Sukhlaphanta Wildlife Reserve in the Kanchanpur district of the terai in Nepal.

According to the farmers of the area, the elephants migrate towards the upper grounds of Nepal along the Karnali river and destroy crops and houses in villages like Malakheti and Godavari.

Source: 'Elephants create havoc around Sukhlaphanta'. *Kathmandu Post*, Nepal, 08/10/98.

Indigenous people affected by Royal Chitwan National Park

About 400 families of Parasis, who had been earning their livelihood from fishing for decades, have been deprived of their livelihood by the Royal Chitwan National Park. These families of the Majhi, Bote and Musahar communities have been banned from fishing in the area including the Narayani river in the name of wildlife protection.

The communities have now organised themselves with the cooperation of an NGO named the Community Development Organisation (CDO) and have formed the Majhi, Bote, and Musahar Welfare Service Committee. They have appealed to the Chief District officer for land and have submitted the list of families of these communities and the land required for them. The Member of Parliament of the region has said that these people will get land and search for alternative jobs in the near future.

Source: 'Indigenous people of Parasi fighting for survival', *Kathmandu Post*, 03/01/99.

No new tourist resorts inside Chitwan

Forest officials in Nepal have decided that no new tourist resorts are to be allowed inside wildlife reserves, including the Royal Chitwan National Park. However the 8 resorts already operating inside Chitwan will be allowed to continue as they are operating under a 16 year contract that runs till 2009.

Tourist operators however fear, that the government plans to remove them from Chitwan in the near future, and has already initiated measures to that end.

Source: Amar Pradhan. 'No-entry to new resorts inside Chitwan Park'. *Kathmandu Post*, 28/01/99.

PAKISTAN

Proposal for trans-border protected area with India

It has been proposed to declare the Sir Creek Trans-border Area between India and Pakistan a part of a protected wetland. One of the issues in the Indo-Pak talks that began in September 1998 has been the defining of the international boundary along Sir Creek, a 60 mile long estuary in the salty marshlands of the Rann of Kutch between Gujarat in India and Sindh in Pakistan.

Sir Creek has been a part of the conflict on the definition of the boundary between the two countries. One approach to reaching agreement was under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands that has been ratified and signed by both India and Pakistan. It has been said that Sir Creek has all the criteria to be declared a Ramsar Site.

Source: *Disarmament Forum*, Vol. 1 No. 1, 1999 quoted on email from Gaurav Rajen dated 13/01/99, to ramsar-forum-owner@hq.iucn.org

SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka approves Global Environmental Facility Plan

The Government of Sri Lanka has approved the implementation of the management plan for wildlife conservation, prepared under a Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Project. Rs 55 million will be spent on this plan.

The overall objective includes preparation of management plans for 6 main protected area clusters, establishing of new protected areas and training of departmental staff. So far management plans have been prepared for Uda Walawe, Yala and Wasgomuwa PAs. Plans for Lunugamvehera, Minneriya, Horton Plains, Bundala and Victoria – Randeligala-Rantambe PAs are under preparation. The plans are expected to be completed by May 1999.

Source: Ramani Kangaraarachchi. 'Government approves Global Environmental Facility Plan'. *Sunday Observer*. 15/11/98.
Pancetha Ameresekere. 'Rs. 55m to develop national parks'. *Daily News*, 05/01/99.

UPCOMING

3rd Consultation on Wildlife Conservation and People's Livelihood Rights, Bhopal, 1-3 May, 1999

A series of national consultations on wildlife conservation and people's livelihood rights (called Building Bridges) was started in 1997. The 3rd consultation is being organised on 1-3rd May, and will be hosted by the Ekta Parishad in Bhopal. The proposed agenda for the meeting includes reports

from specific PAs, issues of settlements of rights, displacement of people from PAs, commercial threats to PAs (in particular, mining), recent changes in laws and policies, and ecodevelopment. A major focus will be on developing the modalities and functions of a proposed network on conservation and livelihoods, dealing primarily (though not only) with protected areas. The meeting is being called by Ekta Parishad, Tarun Bharat Sangh, and Kalpavriksh.

Venue: Gandhi Bhavan, Bhopal.

Contact: **Gautam Bandopadhyay**, Ekta Parishad, O/3, Anupam Nagar, PO Shankar Nagar, Raipur, Madhya Pradesh. Telefax: 91-771-421926.

Ashish Kothari / Pankaj Sekhsaria
(at the editorial address)

Conserving Biodiversity in the 21st Century through Integrated Conservation and Development Planning on a Regional Scale, Mussoorie, June 28-30, 1999

This workshop targeting senior policy makers will be held at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie from June 28-30, 1999. It is being held in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun.

Contact: **S.K. Mukherjee**, Director, WII, PB 18, Chandrabani, Dehradun 248001. Tel: +91 135 640111 – 15; Fax: 640117. Email: wii@wii.gov.in

International symposium on Global Changes and Protected Areas, Italy, 9-19 September, 1999

A symposium is being organised from 9-19th of September 1999 in L'Aquila, Italy to discuss the effect of Global Change on Protected Areas. The symposium is being organised in the Abruzzo region of Italy, which has devoted one third of its territory to natural reserves.

Contact: **Guido Visconti**, Convenor, Dipartimento di Fisica, Universita degli Studi di L'Aquila Via Vetoio, Coppito, 67010 L'Aquila, Italy.
Email: guido.visconti@aquila.infn.it

WHAT'S AVAILABLE?

- Ashley, C., and Roe, D. 1998. *Enhancing Community Involvement in Wildlife Tourism: Issues and Challenges*. IIED Wildlife and Development Series no. 11. , London

In many countries, efforts are being made to involve local communities and the poor in the tourism

industry. Community involvement offers the prospect of enhanced rural development, conservation and a more broadly based tourism industry. This paper explores some of the challenges and identifies strategies in this context, based on experience in a range of countries.

Contact: **International Institute for Environment and Development**, Endsleigh street, London WC1H 0DD. Tel: 44-171-3882117. Fax: 3882826. Email: mailbox@iied.org Website: <http://www.iied.org>.

- Goodwin, H., Kent, I., Parker, K., Walpole, M., 1998. *Tourism, Conservation and Sustainable Development*, Case studies from Asia and Africa, London.

This report draws together the main findings from a three year research project, funded by the British aid agency DFID, comparing nature based tourism at sites in India, Indonesia and Zimbabwe. It explores the complex relationship, at a local level, between tourists, 'host communities', the tourism industry and the nature reserves where wildlife tourism takes place. The research reveals that local stakeholders have little control over the form or magnitude of the tourism occurring around them, and remain vulnerable to external events and decision making. Further, communities and protected areas are realising few benefits from tourism, which also threatens to undermine the resource base upon which the industry depends.

Contact: **IIED** (as above)

- '*Abhayaranya Baithak Vrutant*', Report of the meeting of people affected by protected areas in western Maharashtra, organised in Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), in Sept 1998.

The report, in Marathi, has a detailed account of a one day meeting that was held in September 1998. Participants included community representatives and NGO members, and one forest official, from PAs of Maharashtra (see *JPAM Update* 18). It also has a list of the resolutions that were passed in the meeting.

Contact: **Kusum Karnik**, Shaswat (as above)

- Arjumand, H. 1998. '*Sonchiriya ka Atank*', Gwalior

A report in Hindi on the issues related to the Ghatigaon Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary in Gwalior district, Madhya Pradesh. The report forcefully argues that the declaration of the sanctuary has adversely affected the lives of the people living in the area.

Contact: **Hasrat Arjumand**, Visthapan Roko Andolan, Jankidas Baba ki Bagia, Gospural, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.

- Kushwah, R.B.S., and Kumar, Vijay. 1998. Cost Benefit Analysis of Protected Areas, A case study of Satpuda National Park, Madhya Pradesh, *Journal of Tropical Forestry*, April – June, 1998, Vol. 14 (II).

The study was conducted under the research project 'Integrated Forest Planning and Management of Protected Areas of MP with special reference to Central Madhya Pradesh'. The economic indicators – Net Present Value (NPV) and Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) have been computed.

Contact: **R.B.S. Kushwah**, ACF, Sanjay National Park, Sidhi 486661. Tel: +91 9822 51397

- Environmental Investigation Agency. 1999. *The State of the Tiger, India's Tiger Crisis*, London

The report focus on Madhya Pradesh, the self proclaimed Tiger State, as an example of the problems facing tigers countrywide. With almost 1000 tigers, MP alone accounts for 15-20% of the world's population. The report is a strong indictment of the state of the tiger in MP; broken promises, good ideas destroyed, good staff removed, tiger habitats destroyed, and tigers and their prey poached. This is

the 2nd report of the EIA of the crisis facing the tiger. The first was titled *The Political Wilderness, India's Tiger Crisis*, published in 1996.

Contact: **EIA**, 69 Old Street, London EC1V 9HX, UK, Tel: +41 (0) 171 4907040. Fax: +41 (0) 171 4900436. Email: eiauk@gn.apc.org

- Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam and Corbett Tiger Reserve. 1998. Workshop on Stakeholder Participation in Ecotourism in Corbett Country and Binsar Sanctuary, 23-24 September, 1998.

Background papers for a workshop involving various agencies and individuals with an interest in tourism in these protected areas. Includes interesting statistics on tourism in Corbett, guidelines for tourism in PAs, the draft National Tourism Policy (1997), and Policy and Guidelines for Ecotourism in India (1998).

Contact: **Director**, Corbett Tiger Reserve, Ramnagar 244715, Dist. Nainital, Uttar Pradesh. Tel: 91-

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