

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Tiger Conservation Plan for Namdapha Tiger Reserve is for the period 2014-2024. Namdapha Tiger Reserve is located in the Changlang District of Arunachal Pradesh in the north eastern part of India, between 27°15' N and 27°39' N Latitude and 96° 15' E and 96° 58' E Longitude. The total proposed area of the reserve is 2230.235 Km² of which the Core area is 1985.235 Km² and the current buffer area is 245 Km². However, the Kamlang Wildlife Sanctuary admeasuring an area of 783 Km² and the eastern part of the Nampong Forest Division has been proposed to be added as Buffer area. Since the jurisdiction is not with the Field Director, Namdapha and it would need a coordinated effort at high level, the buffer area has not been appended with the proposed area. The tourism zone admeasuring 110 Km² is carved out of the Core and the Buffer Zone.

The Namdapha Tiger Reserve is blessed with many attributes namely Biological, Ecological, Hydrological, Cultural, Research and Educational. The area has a rich biodiversity element. Some of the unique features are that, it is probably the only Protected Area in the world that harbours four big cats i.e. Tiger, Leopard, Clouded leopard and Snow leopard. The Park also assumes significance because of its location being at the tri-junction point of India, Myanmar and China. Bio-geographically, it falls within the Eastern Himalayas (2D) Bio-geographic province of the Himalayan Bio-geographic Zone in Indian Bio-geographic region, which covers the Palaeoartic Realm, Indo-Malayan Realm (Oriental) and Indo-Chinese Realm (Rodgers & Panwar, 1988). As per Dinerstein et al. (1997) it is located at the junction of the Indian sub-continental Bio-geographic Region and Indo-China Bio-geographic Region.

Objectives

The Objectives of the Tiger Conservation Plan are to ensure:

1. Protection of Tiger Reserve and providing site specific habitat inputs for a viable population of tigers, co-predator and prey animals without distorting the natural prey-predator ecological cycle in the habitat;
2. Ecologically compatible land-uses in the Tiger Reserve and areas linking one protected area of Tiger Reserve to another for addressing the livelihood concerns of local people, so as to provide dispersal habitats and corridors for spill over population of wild animals from the designated core areas of Tiger Reserves or from Tiger breeding habitats within other protected areas;
3. Forestry operations of regular forest divisions and those adjoining Tiger Reserves are not incompatible with the needs of Tiger conservation;

Methodology

The methodology used is as follows-

- i. Conduction of Extended SWOT- This method is one step further to just conducting a simple SWOT. The later may not take things to logical conclusion and synthesis stage. Thus, Extended SWOT has been done for Core, Buffer and Adjoining Areas.
- ii. Review of literature
- iii. Incorporation of Field Experience of the staff.
- iv. Sharing of experience with Senior Level Officers and
- v. Time to time guidance from the National Tiger Conservation Authorities and Protocols developed by it.
- vi. Field Observations

Salient Features

The Salient Features of the Tiger Conservation Plan are –

1. It proposes the Reserved Forest Area declared vide notification No. FOR/119/62 dated 2nd February 1985, admeasuring 117.45 Km² which was called as the 'Visitation Area' earlier to be included in the Core Area. This would make the core area more compact and intact. This would make the proposed core area as 1985.235 km².
2. It has been proposed to increase the Buffer Zone by adding the Kamlang Wildlife Sanctuary and the eastern flank of the Nampong division. This would secure the core area more effectively than it is today.
3. The Tiger Reserve shares considerable length of its boundary with Myanmar. On the other side, in Myanmar, the world's largest Tiger Reserve, the Hukwang Valley, has been declared. The Namdapha Tiger Reserve Management would like to leverage its effort to develop a Trans- Boundary Park to facilitate long term conservation. For this purpose facilitation and intervention of the NTCA and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India will be requested.
4. The method of 'Extended SWOT Analysis' used for core , buffer and adjoining areas, has been very helpful in deriving the final synthesis, so that it could guide the planning process for the Tiger Conservation Plan.
5. A sizeable amount of Digital Spatial Database has been generated and the maps have been included in the TCP.
6. A serious and a detailed thought have been given to the corridors (adjoining areas) and detailed prescriptions have been attempted.
7. Due importance has been given in the TCP to promote strong linkages with the local communities by spelling out various livelihood options.
8. The plan proposes additional Ranges and Beats and additional staff for effective protection of the area.

9. Field Infrastructure Development will be prioritised to provide motorable road, camping sites and suspension bridges to improve staff accessibility and handle emergencies.
10. A Tiger Safari has been proposed in the Buffer Zone to attempt augmentation of the population of tigers in the area
11. Four Prey Augmentation Areas have been proposed in the Cores Zone.

Zone and Theme Plans for the Core, Buffer and Adjoining Areas (Corridors)

The strategy for achievement of objectives is proposing Zone and Theme Plans for the Core, Buffer and Adjoining Areas (Corridors).

Core Zone

The Management Objectives for Core Zone are:

- i. To ensure total protection to Namdapha Tiger Reserve against negative anthropogenic influences,
- ii. To ensure maintenance of viable population of tiger in the protected area for scientific, economic, aesthetic, cultural and ecological values,
- iii. Increasing ungulate population by decreasing the hunting pressures through effective patrolling and restoring degraded habitats in the Reserve.
- iv. To conserve Namdapha Tiger Reserve for scientific, economic, aesthetic, cultural and ecological values,
- v. To ensure scientific management of the Reserve on the basis of continued in-situ and ex-situ research activities,
- vi. To educate people against the violations of wildlife laws as per the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and other related laws, rules and regulations relevant to the area.
- vii. To carry out conservation education activities to inculcate a better understanding of the Namdapha ecosystem and importance of tiger conservation among people living around the tiger reserve.

The Zone Plans prescribed for Core zone are – Core Zone, Restoration Zone, Relocation of Lisus, Administrative Zone, Ecotourism Zone, Research and Monitoring Zone, Protection Zone, and Accessibility or Approach Zone. The Theme Plans prescribed are Development of Water Source, Habitat Management, Control of Invasive Species, Preybase Augmentation Areas. Wetland and Waterfowl Management Zone, Research Monitoring and Training.

Buffer Zone

Management Objectives of Buffer Zone:

- i. Ensure the contiguity of wildlife habitat to maintain viable wildlife populations.
- ii. Ensure peaceful co-occurrence of wildlife and people living in the buffer.
- iii. Restore degraded habitats by undertaking habitat improvement activities.
- iv. To encourage scientific research.

- v. To protect the buffer from external developmental threats and poaching pressures.
- vi. To restore wildlife corridors and facilitate movement of wildlife across the landscape.
- vii. Decrease dependence of resources in core area by providing alternative livelihood opportunities and initiatives.
- viii. Create employment opportunities for people in the buffer zone.
- ix. To establish eco-development committees.
- x. To promote responsible eco-tourism.
- xi. To increase awareness within locals about the importance of ecosystem services thereby getting them involved with conservation of the ecosystems.

In case of Buffer Zone the Zone Plans prescribed are Forested Zone and Multiple Use Zone. The Theme Plans prescribed are Ecotourism Theme Plan, Habitat Development, Management Amelioration Theme Plan, Community Capacity and Competency Building Theme Plan, Education for Sustainable Development Theme Plan, Health Care Issues Theme Plan and Communications Theme Plan.

Adjoining Areas

Management Objectives for Adjoining Areas:

- i. To ascertain the functionality of the corridor
- ii. To involve local communities through JFMs and FPCs in day to day management of forest and wildlife in the corridor
- iii. To implement wildlife management prescriptions without sacrificing the objectives of the Working Plan
- iv. To explore the possibilities of declaration of certain areas as ‘Conservation Reserve (WPA 1972) and Community Reserve (FRA)’.
- v. To develop a regular Monitoring and Evaluation protocol through involvement of the communities.

The adjoining areas and corridors have been assessed and analysed broadly for the first time for the purpose of this plan. In Adjoining Areas Plan- Only Theme Plans have been proposed for these areas. The Theme Plans are- Protection Theme Plan, Habitat Management and Habitat Restoration, Supplementing Declining Local Populations and Facilitating their Re-colonisation, Special Category Areas Theme Plan, Ecotourism Theme Plan, Declaration of other Conservation Areas, Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment of Corridors.

In case of Corridors more emphasis has been placed on Eco-development Activities and role of Joint Forest Management Committees and Forest Protection Committees in protection of the forests and economic empowerment of the local communities.

In the end Budgets are specified for each zone.