

guards managed to catch the attackers.

Noting that BTR is gradually being denuded by the timber mafia, Ray writes, "forest officials posted here also find themselves helpless in stopping illegal felling because of constant death threats from armed groups."

It is believed that not only are forest department staff involved but also officers and staff of a local Air Force Base and Defence Estate Office in Hashirmaru. The Forest Secretary, West Bengal, in his letter referring the matter to the **Vigilance Commission** for further action, states that their involvement "cannot be ruled out and needs investigation". The Forest Department is awaiting recommendation from the Vigilance Commission before charge sheets are framed against the suspended officials and formal FIRs are lodged.

Source: 'Illegal deforestation in BTR' by Anne Wright 20 May 1999; *Sunday Statesman* 22 August 1999; letter from Forest Secretary to Vigilance Commission

• **Sunderbans tigers in trouble**

The tiger skins being recovered from traders in Calcutta (see 'Poaching and Trade', this issue) are believed to originate from the **Sunderbans Tiger Reserve** and it is alleged that not enough is being done to curb the **poaching** activities there. **Basirhat Range** is identified as one of the worst hit and the one from where skins are being transported through Bangladesh and also Dhamakhali/Basanti points. The Matla River banks are identified as another problematic zone where there is inadequate protection. It is suggested that without the deployment of a **Special Police Force**, it will be extremely difficult to control the criminal activities in the reserve. These basic problems need to be taken up on a "war-footing basis"

otherwise "the Sunderbans tiger will be wiped out forever".

Source: *Institute of Climbers and Nature Lovers*, 17 New Santoshpur Main Road, Santoshpur, Calcutta 700075 Tel: (033) 4165994 Fax: 4191101

• **Sundarbans piracy**

Conflict with tigers may have reduced in recent years for inhabitants of the Sunderbans but another danger has increased. It is reported that in the last decade **2,000 cases of piracy** have been recorded—five major cases in the last year alone. Abhijit Dasgupta writing in 'The Pioneer' reports that "the fisherfolk of the villages in South 24 Parganas, Sunderbans, have more to fear from pirates than from tigers and other natural enemies." Fishermen report that they live in terror and are being "reduced to paupers because of the pirates. The ransom they demand is out of our reach..." Their fear is so great that most of the incidents are not reported to the authorities.

The state government is reported to earn around Rs 500 crore (US\$ 119 million) annually from fish exports and the Fisheries Minister is quoted as declaring that the "delta is our main asset. It is the richest land for marine fish. But the problem of piracy is indeed irksome." It is said that many second generation fishermen are now opting for studies and moving away from what has become an even more hazardous occupation.

Source: Abhijit Dasgupta, *The Pioneer* 27 June 1999

• **Tiger seminar in Calcutta**

NEWS, the *Nature Environment and Wildlife Society*, an NGO based in Calcutta, and the Wildlife Wing of the West Bengal Forest Department organised an international seminar on 20 November 1999 on the theme of 'Royal Ben-

gal Tiger in the 21st Century'. Experts from India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan were invited to attend. "As the year 1999 marks the completion of 25 years of effort at tiger conservation through Project Tiger, we felt it would be appropriate to not only study the steps taken by different governmental agencies to preserve the Royal Bengal Tiger but also to look into the future prospects, in the light of field experience." The objective is "to formulate an action plan towards the conservation of the tiger and its habitat in India and our neighbouring countries." A 'Calcutta Declaration' is being formulated.

Around 250 people attended the meeting, including an "impressive" delegation from Bangladesh. It would appear that the number of deaths caused by tigers and crocodiles in the Sunderbans, on both sides of the border, is not as low as official figures would indicate. A detailed survey needs to be done to ascertain the true situation of the recorded and unrecorded deaths.

Source: Prasun Mukherjee, President, NEWS, 117 Karnani Mansion, 25A Park Street, Calcutta 700016 Tel: (033) 2290079 Tel/Fax: 2290429

• **Kitchen tiger**

An aged and injured tiger is reported to have been captured from an army outpost kitchen on the Sevoke road about 8 km from **Siliguri**. Wildlife personnel tranquillised it and moved it to a rescue centre in Sukna. It is believed to have strayed from the Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary or the adjacent Baikanthapur forest into the human settlement in search of food when its injuries and age prevented it from being able to successfully hunt in the jungles.

Source: *The Statesman*, 24 June 1999 sent by Arunayan Sharma, *Green Peoples India*

• *MEF changes*

Since the last newsletter, India has had a general election. The **new Minister**, Environment and Forests is **Shri T. R. Baalu**, M.P. for Chennai West, who comes from an industrial background. We await his first decision-making process in the interest of forests and wildlife. The **Prime Minister** is again **Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee**.

• *Dams are not for wildlife*

A significant amount of **forest**, even within Protected Areas, is **lost to submergence** from river valley projects. At times such proposals come to the MoEF's expert committees for clearance with comments from Forest Officials indicating that the creation of the waterbody is beneficial to wildlife.

In relation to one such case the **Addl. Inspector General Forest (Wildlife)**, Mr S. C. Sharma has given the following **comments**:

"By no stretch of imagination, construction of reservoir can be treated as a part of activities for betterment of wildlife, that are permissible under section 29 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act." (Section 29 prevents any destruction or exploitation of a sanctuary except in accordance with a permit granted by the Chief Wildlife Warden where the State Government is satisfied that such damage is necessary for the improvement and better management of the wildlife.) *"You will agree that the objective of setting up of National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries is in situ conservation of the fauna and flora found in the area through protection of wildlife and proper management of its habitat. Habitat management involves plantation of suitable species and improvement of the water regime through construction of waterholes, annicuts and check dams etc. Government of India even provides financial assistance for carrying out these works."*

Construction of reservoir, in the first instance, deprive the wild animals of their habitat by way of diversion. Accumulation of water within the submergence area affects the vegetation therein and in the adjoining area. Large-scale disturbance in the construction phase of the reservoir also has as adverse impact on the wildlife of the National Park/Sanctuary."

May we hope that Chief Wildlife Wardens stop stretching this clause beyond meaning and instead staunchly protect India's parks and sanctuaries as intended by the WPA.

Source: Letter of Addl. IGF (Wildlife) 5 July 1999

• *Project Tiger news*

In an attempt to mitigate the number of vacancies in Project Tiger areas, all **field staff** in the Reserves will receive a special '**project allowance**'. Depending on rank, this will vary between Rs 350 to Rs 1,500 per month.

The mechanism for setting up '**Strike Forces**' for Project Tiger Reserves has been instituted and information forwarded to the states to enable them to formulate proposals. The Strike Force will draw staff from the state or can hire personnel from the paramilitary agencies. Money for this and for a vehicle is available under Project Tiger.

Files are moving on the declaration of **new tiger reserves** areas—**Pakui-Nameri**, a trans-State reserve on the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border and extensions to **Ranthambhore** and **Sariska** (see News from the States). The **Bori-Satpura-Pachmarhi** area is also in the pipeline for declaration as a tiger reserve but boundary and other details are still awaited from Madhya Pradesh.

Source: Project Tiger Directorate, New Delhi (011) 3389645

• *MoEF planning 'mega tiger reserve'*

The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) is discussing the possibility of creating a "*mega tiger reserve*" covering 5,000 km² of central India. This would be created by declaring new tiger reserves and including areas that link existing ones such as Kanha, Pench and Melghat. One of the new areas awaiting declaration as a Tiger Reserve is the Satpura region covering Pachmarhi and Bori Wildlife Sanctuaries and the Satpura National Park.

At present around **30,000 km²** comes **under Project Tiger** and protects under **50% of India's tiger population**. Addl. IGF (W/L), Mr S. C. Sharma is quoted as saying, "*experts feel that if we want to have about 4,000 tigers in India ... on a sustainable basis, then we should have at least 60,000 km² under Project Tiger.*"

Mr Sharma pointed out that the "*Expenditure and Finance Committee for the Project agreed to more or less double the allocation as compared to the Eighth Plan*". Under the Ninth Plan, Rs 75 crore has been allocated of which Rs 17 crore (approx. US\$ 400,000) is the allocation for the present year, compared with Rs 8 crore in the previous year.

The Ministry is also proposing to add Nagarahole National Park in Karnataka to Project Tiger.

Source: Satyen Mohapatra, *Hindustan Times*, 11 August 1999

• *Building a common future*

On 9 October 1999, the *Tarun Bharat Sangh* (TBS) launched a new campaign, *Sanjha bhavishya banavo parivar*—‘Build a common future’—to give a new thrust to the protection and conservation of tigers and other wildlife by local forest-dwelling communities. The aim is to bring together wildlife conservationists, forest officials and human rights activists on a **common platform** through a number of measures. These include setting up an ‘expert group’ (Valmik Thapar, Bittu Sahgal and Fateh Singh Rathore), ‘action groups’ comprised of forest community members, coordinated by Shri Kanhaiyalal Gujar, and a ‘coordination group’ to ensure regular coordination between the different philosophies represented. ‘Working groups’ will be set up all over the country in all the tiger reserves and other protected areas with a view to strengthening wildlife protection and conservation initiatives and it is proposed to set up ‘legal aid groups’ for all the PAs that are facing serious threat from mining and other industries.

“The success in wildlife conservation can be achieved only by bringing together government officials, human rights activists and development activists on a common platform and by undertaking joint action in the field.” Recognising that every forest requires an **inviolable area for wildlife** where human disturbance is absent or minimal, TBS has offered to play *“an active part wherever necessary to help and facilitate the process of voluntary resettlement of people from wildlife areas when they wish to move out.”*

They propose that ‘Awareness creation programmes’ be undertaken to include: (i) education of children—encouraging wildlife education in schools as well as imparting the importance of forests and wildlife and the issues and methods of conservation to children; (ii) education of society looking at traditional lifestyles that emphasise the need of conservation and, through dialogues, meetings and workshops, create awareness of the necessity of protecting wildlife for its effective impact on agriculture and animal husbandry practices and of the importance of nature conservation in the life of each individual; (iii) organising group visits to areas where forests are being effectively protected by local communities so as to impart an awareness of the direct benefits to be reaped by both the community and wildlife as a result of such community initiatives (eg. in Sariska); and (iv) provision of training and education to forest staff and local communities

together, to help make both parties more sensitive to each other’s problems and hardships and enable them to work jointly for the conservation of forests and wildlife.

Nearly five years ago TBS took out the *Jungle Jeevan Bachao Yatra* which travelled through nine states and met forest dwellers and forest officers. However, while uniting forest dwellers from different parts of the country, the full aims were not realised. The villagers living around the Sariska Tiger Reserve, those within the reserve and forest officials feel that it is time to take out another Yatra in order to reach out to others in different parts of the country. The aim is to assimilate the positive points of other communities, while encouraging them to stop destructive practices. **Contact TBS** with your **ideas** of how you can help to make this a success. They call on everyone to join them in putting *“the conservation of forests, the people and animals within, on the top of the national agenda for the next century.”*

Source: Rajendra Singh, *Tarun Bharat Sangh*, Bheekampura-Kishori, via Thanagazi 301022, Alwar, Rajasthan Tel: (01465) 25043 (translated from Hindi)

• *Cattle compensation*

The WWF-*Tiger Conservation Programme* continues its cattle compensation scheme, providing funds through local NGOs working around selected PAs. The aim of the rapid settlement of compensation claims is to reduce the number of tigers killed in retaliation for lost cattle. Since its inception in January 1998 until September 1999, **Rs 12,18,019** (approx. US \$ 29,000) has been **utilised** in compensation for **1,225 kills**—1,050 around Corbett Tiger Reserve, 24 at Dudhwa T.R., 114 at Palamu T.R., 27 around 5 protected areas of Andhra Pradesh and 10 at Ranthambhore.

The TCP has also **provided a jeep and wireless sets** to the *Corbett Foundation*, its NGO partner for cattle compensation, for speedier paying of compensation.

Source: *Tiger Update* October 1999

• *EC recognises conservation importance*

In a most welcome decision, the **Election Commission** of India (EC) **exempted** from being requisitioned for **election duty** all the **vehicles and staff of Protected Areas**. In response to a letter from Valmik Thapar, **Dr. M.S. Gill**, Chief Election Commissioner of India wrote: *“Last year for the National Elections, the Commission had issued strict and clear instructions that the staff and vehicles of Wildlife*

Sanctuaries, National Sanctuaries and National Game Parks will be exempted from election duty, and will be allowed to continue with their prime duty of protecting the diminishing wildlife of the country. I have given instruction that this instruction will be reaffirmed for very strict compliance for all concerned."

Source: CEC's letter to VT of 2 July 1999

• *From disputes to displacements*

Since the last issue of the *TigerLink News*, an inordinate amount of press interest and coverage has been given to the severe management crisis of WWF. A spate of articles appeared, starting in July and reaching a crescendo in September 1999, drawing the public's notice to the fact that some publications of WWF International contained maps of the subcontinent with incorrect boundaries of India and to the repercussion of this which was that in August 1999, the Ministry of Environment and Forests withdrew the 'No Objection Certificate' that had been issued to WWF International to operate a separate FCRA account. In its exposition of "facts" and its attempt to present more in-depth analysis of what was going on, the reporting, for the most part, presented a confused situation. Headlines claiming "Government scraps WWF tiger programme" (*The Asian Age*) and "WWF-India threatened with closure" (*The Hindustan Times*) were some of the more extreme presentations, misreporting that the MoEF had "closed down" the TCP. (An exception to the somewhat mixed reporting is Poornima Joshi's detailed and researched piece 'Give him a break' which appeared in the *Hindustan Times on Sunday's* magazine section 19 September 1999.)

In fact the **WWF-Tiger Conservation Programme** continued, and continues, as it has been since its inception in January 1997, within WWF-India. Originally 1.8 million Swiss Francs (approximately US \$ 1 million) were committed for a three year period, the funds coming mainly from WWF International, WWF-U.K. and WWF Netherlands. The WWF-TCP operates under a steering committee comprised of some members from the donor organisations and some from WWF-India and its trustees. The finances come to WWF-India and are operated through a separate 'tiger' account. Members of WWF-TCP are employees of WWF-India except for the Director whose salary has been paid directly by WWF-International.

The existence of the WWF-TCP came as a result of perceived deficiencies within WWF-India which led tiger conservationists and, more pertinently, potential donors, to doubt its ability to rise to the tiger crisis and play the role required of such a prestigious and potentially well-funded NGO. WWF was being criticised internationally for raising money on behalf of the tiger, yet not pursuing activities commensurate to the amount raised towards saving it from extinction, particularly in India (see *TL News* December 1996). A report, 'The Big Cat Cover Up' was published in September 1996 and this generated some media commotion against WWF. Members of the WWF family were finally constrained to create improved mechanisms and organisation through which to channel the funds. This evolved into the WWF-TCP as described above and may have evolved to more independence, to further increase its effectiveness, had the NOC not been withdrawn.

A sad aspect of the whole "map affair" was the way it was engineered, reportedly by members of WWF-India, in the ongoing "quarrel" between WWF-India and WWF-International and how the media was used to air grievances and issue threats. The interests of the tiger and conservation seem not to have been considered in the way the disagreements between them were made so public. Particularly shocking was the timing of the issue—during the Kargil crisis—and the unpleasant communal innuendo of connecting the Pakistan nationality of the WWF President to the map issue. Even political parties were brought into the controversy.

However it seems that one outcome of the somewhat unsavoury affair, which one can only hope will be positive in the long run, is that a **new Secretary-General of WWF-India** is being appointed. **Advertisements** requesting applications for this position and that of the **Director, WWF-TCP**, have been published and applicants advised that they should be available for joining from **January 2000**. The initial selections are expected to begin mid-November.

It is sincerely hoped that lessons may be learnt, both nationally and internationally, that allow WWF as a family, and particularly WWF-India, to finally move some way towards fulfilling their potential as a major force within the NGO community in the battle to save the tiger and to conserve India's rich biodiversity. It is most unfortunate that it invariably seems to take disparaging exposure in the media to

rouse the WWF to action. Adverse publicity concerning such a well-known organisation does nothing to forward the interests of wildlife and indeed may contribute not only to a reduction in funds available for wildlife in India, but also negative reactions towards the conservation movement in general. The President and trustees of WWF-India must take responsibility for allowing the management problems to interfere with the organisation's conservation role to such a drastic degree. It is indeed a shame that so much time and energy expended on "dealing with squabbles" (as one trustee expressed it) is not rather focused towards tigers and saving India's wildlife. We also have yet to see the attention of the media caught by environmental and conservation concerns as much as it is by such internecine conflicts!

Given the wrong perspective presented by several of the newspaper articles on this subject, it should also be noted that the Government's "tiger programme" is completely separate from WWF or any other NGO. Project Tiger is a central government project with a budget this year of approximately Rs 17 crore (about \$ 4 million). Around Rs 80 crore (approximately \$ 19 million) is committed to wildlife conservation annually by the Government of India.

• *Reported leopard numbers*

The leopard has a wide distribution in India and probably comes into conflict with humans more than any other wild cat. Their wide distribution, elusiveness and their reputation for being able to survive even in degraded habitats has meant that leopards, in terms of conservation concerns, have not been given enough management attention. And amazingly, no serious study has been undertaken in India on this beautiful and endangered large feline. Indeed, it is argued that there is currently inadequate information by which to understand even the status of the leopard population in the country. However, scientists from the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and the Centre of Wildlife and Ornithology at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) are now planning to rectify this anomaly.

The AMU study hopes to conduct research in Gir National Park but the modalities have yet to be developed. The field work of WII's study on leopards will commence in 2001. Initially the study site chosen was the Mundanthurai plateau in the Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve but the Tamil Nadu Forest Department refused to give necessary research permissions and the location has now

switched to the forests of Bori Wildlife Sanctuary and the Satpura National Park. Apart from looking at various aspects of leopard ecology, one of the major objectives of the study will be "to validate and test various methods for estimating leopard numbers, densities and indices of abundance and to recommend effective techniques for monitoring their population."

Meanwhile the Forest Department attempts regular censuses of leopards, also by pug mark method, and the following are the **official figures for leopard population** in the country as reported by the States:

State	1984	1989	1993	1997
Andhra Pradesh	—	301	152	138
Arunachal Pradesh	21	121	98	N.R.
Assam	123	123	246	N.R.
Bihar	113	134	203	N.R.
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	—	10	15	15
Goa, Daman & Diu	10	18	31	25
Gujarat	498	702	772	832
Haryana	10	19	25	N.R.
Himachal Pradesh	199	199	821	N.R.
Jammu and Kashmir	4	4	—	N.R.
Karnataka	238	283	455	N.R.
Kerala	—	27	16	N.R.
Madhya Pradesh	1322	2036	1700	1851
Maharashtra	380	580	417	431
Manipur	7	—	—	N.R.
Mizoram	6	38	49	28
Nagaland	72	72	—	N.R.
Orissa	266	279	378	422
Rajasthan	270	461	475	474
Sikkim	—	1	—	N.R.
Tamil Nadu	189	119	138	110
Tripura	27	37	18	N.R.
Uttar Pradesh	880	1095	711	1412
West Bengal	112	108	108	N.R.
TOTAL	4747	6767	6828	5738*

N.R.—not reported by the States.

*Approximately 1,000 of these are reported from the 23 Tiger Reserves that existed in 1997.

Source: MoEF leopard census figures; WII, Dehra Dun; AMU, Aligarh

WASH 2000—Wildlife Art Show 2000

To promote wildlife art and to provide an impetus to wildlife artists of India, the *Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh* is holding a wildlife art show in January 2000 in Hyderabad.

Further information from: Honorary Secretary, BSAP, PO Box 45, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad 500 034. Tel: (040) 3350683 (Aasheesh Pittie); E-mail: aashesh@hd1.vsnl.net.in

FIELD SUPPORT

Global Tiger Patrol has donated:

1 Eicher Canter truck, a Maruti Gypsy, 200 sweaters and hats for staff at Sariska Tiger Reserve.

The **Karnataka Tiger Conservation Project** has provided:

255 field kits to foresters, guards and watchers of Bandipur Tiger Reserve;

60 woollen blankets to the anti-poaching staff of Bhadra Tiger Reserve where 12 new anti-poaching camps have been set up.

The **WWF-Tiger Conservation Programme** has provided funds for:

1 mini-truck, 5 solar panels, additional radio sets and additional cattle inoculation camps to Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, M.P.

Construction of **7 check posts in Katarniaghat Sanctuary, U.P.**

1 diesel jeep to Orang Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam;

Radio sets and intelligence network in Nameri National Park, Assam;

Rs 15,000 each to the widows of three forest personnel killed at Kahitama while on duty in Manas Tiger Reserve (see TL News vol.5 no.2);

Medical aid to injured staff in Dudhwa Tiger Reserve;

7 solar panels to Valmiki Tiger Reserve;

1 diesel jeep and inoculation camps at Bilgiri Rangayyan Sanctuary;

1 mini-truck, 1 diesel jeep and cattle inoculation camps at Tadoba-Andhari T.R.

A second diesel jeep to Satkosia Wildlife Sanctuary;

Radio sets and staff winter jackets to Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve;

A second diesel jeep, 3 motorcycles and radio sets to Mahananda Sanctuary;

3 mini-trucks, 4 motorcycles and 275 winter jackets to Sariska Tiger Reserve;

1 diesel jeep and radio sets to Sunderbans Tiger Reserve.

LifeForce Charitable Trust has donated 2 Maruti Gypsies to Satpura National Park.

Bangladesh

• *Sunderbans tiger poaching*

Although the Bangladesh Wildlife (Preservation) (Amendment) Act, 1974 prohibits the killing and trapping of any wildlife, it is reported that there is a "catastrophic decline" in the number of tigers in the Bangladesh Sunderbans area due to poaching for skins, body parts and other organs. It is suspected that the poachers may have support from high government officials or political leaders.

Between August 1998 and August 1999, at least **five tigers** have been killed in the Sunderbans and these are only those that have been reported—in August 1998 a Major in the Bangladesh Rifles killed a tiger and no punishment was given; in November 1998 two forest officials were caught poaching—they were suspended from the department (*TL News* vol.5 no.1); in June 1999, a tiger was reportedly killed by local poachers supported by a political leader—no punishment; July 1999, tiger killed by villagers—no punishment and in August 1999 three local poachers are reported to have killed a tiger—a case has been filed.

Source: A. H. M. Ali Reza, M.Sc student, J.U.; M. M. Chowdhury, Research Fellow, Tiger Project, IUCN Bangladesh Country Office, House no. 3A, Road no. 15 (New), Dhanmondi, Dhaka

Cambodia

• *Cambodian tiger trade*

Catching, hunting and transporting listed wildlife, including tigers is "absolutely prohibited" in Cambodia. Yet during their visit there in April 1999, the CITES technical team met one trader who said she had last sold a tiger two months previously. The trader informed the team that her sister had "little difficulty in obtaining tigers, live and/or dead, from hunters who operated in the nearby mountain region." She claimed that her sister would trade 8–10 tigers a year.

Source: Report of the Tiger Technical Missions to the Standing Committee of CITES Sept./Oct. 1999

China

• *Chinese Siberian tigers*

The team of specialists from China, Russia and the U.S.A., who completed surveys over a two-year period in northeastern China, concluded that the Siberian (Amur) tiger is "on the verge of extinc-

tion in China" (see *TL News* vol.5 no.2). "At least 4, and as many as 6, tigers may occur in Jilin Province and no more than 7 occur in Heilongjiang Province." Evidence of 4–7 leopards was also found in Jilin Province. The team covered an area of 71,000 km² and found a dramatic shrinking in the big cats' population and a reduction in natural habitats. The majority of the tigers were recorded close to the Russian border and evidence collected suggest that the tigers are transient or dispersing animals and not resident. One exception to this may be in the Wandashan Mountains along the Russian border although even here, an area "once considered the stronghold of tigers in Heilongjiang, there are likely to be no more than 2–3 tigers".

However, members of the team report that "there is still good tiger habitat and a healthy population of tigers across the border in Russia", so that "if the forests can be protected and if the prey populations are allowed to grow, tigers will naturally disperse into China." Creation of international protected areas that span the border and "close collaboration between Russia and China will be critical to ensure that natural corridors exist between the two countries". Primorski Krai is moving forward with such plans and the provincial government in China is reported to be planning to establish nature reserves to protect the remaining tigers and leopards.

The local press reports Siberian tigers killing livestock in the Changbai Mountain area. In May a farmer of Jiaohe City found three of his horses killed by a tiger. In the winter and also in May 1999, farmers in neighbouring Dunhua also reported tigers killing their cattle.

Source: Dale Miquelle, *Wildlife Conservation Society* <dalemiqu@online.marine.su>; Xinhua News Agency, item translated and sent by Wen Bo

• *New newsletter*

A 1–2 paged newsletter is being prepared to share information about Siberian tiger sightings in the Heilongjiang region and to disseminate a conservation message among interested groups. The newsletter, in Chinese, is being edited by Prof. Xiaochen Yu of the Heilongjiang Wildlife Institute, 134 Haping Lu, Harbin 150040, China <xiaochen@public.hr.hl.cn>
Source: Endi Zhang, Director for China Program, Wildlife Conservation Society, c/o East China Normal University, Shanghai 200062 E-mail: ezhang@guomai.sh.cn

• *Farmer killed by South China tiger*

In July 1999, a farmer, Yuan Honghua, of Jiangxi Province was killed by a tiger in Yihuang County. Witnesses saw three cubs near by. Investigators believe the attacker was a wild South China tiger of which perhaps only five remain in the region—2–3 adults and 3 cubs. The Yihuang County government quickly compensated the victim's family and issued an order to increase the protected areas for the tiger in the region of four townships to six (from 6,000 hectares to 8,100 ha). The police authorities have also confiscated guns and other hunting equipment.

Source: *People's Daily* 22 July 1999 translated and sent by Wen Bo <wenbo2@yahoo.com>

• *Animal parts seized*

Police in Fuzhou, capital of east China's Fujian Province, seized a number of skins, antlers and other animal parts from a truck on its way to Guangdong Province. Later the same day more than 1,000 other animal parts were recovered from a smugglers' "hideaway" bringing the total to 1,229. Among the 34 different species represented, 17 were of species listed as under top State protection, including tiger and leopard skins.

Source: *China Daily* 8 July 1999 translated and sent by Wen Bo

• *Wildlife parts by post*

China's crackdown on illegal wildlife trading intensifies. In southwest China's Yunnan Province customs authorities uncovered "the biggest haul since 1949". Routine checks in Yunnan's Ruili Customs uncovered mail bags of snake skins which in turn led to the discovery of a large number of hides and other animal parts in one of the suspects' small house. The haul included 4 tiger skins, numerous leopard hides, bear skins, monkey craniums, ivory and over 500 python skins.

In Yunnan Province and Guanxi Zhuang Autonomous Region alone, smugglers were found to have sent more than 5,000 hides of wild animals. Anti-smuggling inspectors were particularly amazed at the "unconventional way used to smuggle the commodities"—the items were being sent through the mail to escape police and cross-border checking.

Source: *China Daily* 8 July 1999

• *Law no deterrent for poachers*

According to a Beijing-based newspaper, the *Guangming Daily*, poaching in Southwest China's Guanxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has been fuelled by a lack of punishment. In the past year

236 cases of poaching involving over 100 suspects have been investigated. However only 15 were arrested and **only 11 were found guilty** and even these were given light sentences such as two years imprisonment suspended for three years. Thus the majority of poachers are released.

Restaurant owners in the city boast that "you name it and we will get it for you" and fresh pangolin is available at 120 yuan (US\$ 14.5) per 500 gm. The forest rangers lack the legal power to independently investigate poaching, detain suspects and ask prosecutors to approve arrests which makes it easier for the poachers to get away. Besides, the State Forestry Administration is short of funds which prevent it from operating in an efficient manner. The head of the Forestry Department is urging the central government to strengthen the forest rangers and increase funding.

Source: *China Daily* 26 July 1999

• **Tiger breeding**

In August, four tiger cubs were born at the *Xionsen Mountain Farm for Tigers and Bears* in Guilin, bringing the total raised by Zhou Weisen to 171 tigers. The farm, in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous region in south China, is considered one of the world's largest tiger breeding centres. It was started in 1993 under a permit from the Chinese Forestry Ministry and 13 tigers and over 60 black bears were transferred to the centre from around the country. The centre now houses Siberian tigers, south China tigers, the Bengal tiger including white individuals, black bears and leopards. Zhou, who "changed from a wildlife trapper to wildlife protector" says his "life's goal is to give the world a gift by producing more tigers and saving tigers from the brink of extinction."

Source: Xinhua News Agency 5 September 1999

• **Tiger bans and breeding**

The CITES tiger technical missions visited China in early June 1999 and concluded that the Government is "committed to implementing its internal ban on tiger parts and derivatives and to combatting international trade." They also reported that "very substantial efforts have been made ... to raise public consciousness of the need for tiger conservation." However they were concerned that "the demand for use of tiger parts and derivatives remains apparent" and that stockpiling of dead tigers and their parts is taking place. The team visited a "tiger park" near Harbin that is linked to a tiger farm elsewhere in the

Province both open to the public. They learnt that since 1993, 30 tigers had died at the park and farm and the whole carcass of the animals is preserved in a deep freeze. "The park also has 120 kg. of tiger bones in storage, from animals that died prior to 1993."

The team was told that "approximately 200 tigers are born in captive-breeding facilities in China each year" and they were concerned that "such large numbers offer opportunities for the laundering of wild-caught specimens and/or parts and derivatives, if internal controls are ever relaxed." They also note that such captive-breeding requires strict control to prevent items entering the black market.

Source: Report of the Tiger Technical Missions to the Standing Committee of CITES Sept./Oct. 1999

• **Endangered species in Tibetan medicine**

Brochures found in the lobby of the Tsetang Hotel in Tsetang, Tibet's third largest city after Lhasa and Shigatse, advertise **medicines** from the China-Tibet Shanna Lhoka Pharmaceutical Factory. One of the first listed is "Rinchen Manggor" said to **contain** 45 different medicinal herbs and including **rhinoceros horn, bear gall etc.** It is said to be approved by the Drug Administration Department of Tibetan Health Bureau and made at the Lhoka Traditional Tibetan Hospital in Tsetang.

Source: Brian Weirum <Jaibagh@aol.com>

• **Poached chiru skins publicly burnt**

In May 1999, over **370 chiru** (Tibetan antelope) **skins** that had been recovered from poachers, were **burnt to ashes** at a big public event in Xining, capital of Northwest China's Qinghai Province. The event, sponsored jointly by the State Forestry Administration and Qinghai provincial government, was aimed at raising public awareness and to reaffirm China's firm stand on the protection of endangered species. The rich, "blinded by fashion", were strongly condemned for profiting from the hunt of China's endangered animals.

Source: Liang Chao, *China Daily* 27 May 1999

• **Over 1,100 chiru massacred**

In June/July 1999, the Arjin Mountain Nature Reserve Management and the *China Exploration and Research Society* (CERS) mounted an expedition to do **research on the chiru calving sites** in the Arjin Mountain Nature Reserve of Xinjiang Uigher Autonomous Region. At the principle site of the region it was estimated that there were approximately

15,000 females but at the second site, what was once described as "a land full of wildlife", only 4 *chiru* (two male and two female) were seen (as well as one yak and 12 wild ass). The team found that poaching was still rampant. They encountered four groups of poachers in the area and a massive *chiru* massacre. Two poachers were arrested and 47 pieces of *chiru* skin, a jeep and a rifle were confiscated. Sixty piles of *chiru* were found, totalling **909 bodies**. 421 of these were examined and it was found that 33% were yearling females, 28.8% were pregnant and a further 38.2% full-grown females were not pregnant. Later **200 more *chiru* skins** were **confiscated** by the Ruoqiang police.

Meanwhile U.K.'s *Vogue Magazine* was reportedly extolling the virtues of shahtoosh shawls in its June issue, oblivious of the fact that they were illegal and that a species is being almost wiped out in the slaughter!

Source: William Bleisch, CERS, c/o WWF-China Programme Office, Room 701, The Gateway, No. 10 Yabao Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100020 E-mail: bbleisch@iname.com; *South China Morning Post* 12 September 1999

• *International workshop on chiru*

The first ever **international workshop on the Conservation and Control of Trade in Tibetan Antelope** was held in Xining from 12–14 October 1999. The workshop was co-sponsored by CITES and China's Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora Import and Export administrative office. Comprehensive and practical discussions were held during the meeting and the participants agreed on a "*Xining Declaration*" concerning the protection of the *chiru* and the trade in shahtoosh.

Source: "*Xining Declaration*"—Addl. IGF (W/L), MoEF, Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodi Road, New Delhi 110003

Germany

• *New organisation founded*

Save Indian Tigers Association (SITA), a charity association named after the Bandhavgarh tigress, 'Sita', was established in October 1998 in Hamburg (Germany) with the aim of helping conserve tigers by providing financial and other support for tiger reserves in India. The association also wishes to help villagers and their families around the tiger areas who are directly or indirectly involved in tiger protection.

For more information write to: SITAE.V., Postfach 60 23 23, 22297 Hamburg, Germany Tel: 040 27877237.

Indonesia

• *Brief update on the BBS tiger project*

"The *Wildlife Conservation Society*—Indonesia Program has completed the first year of **tiger and prey surveys** in the 3,500 km² **Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park** (BBSNP) in **Southern Sumatra**. BBSNP is a 120 km long park on the western coast, and is surrounded by production forest and agriculture. The park hosts some of Sumatra's most important populations of Asian elephants, Sumatran rhinoceros and the Sumatran tiger. The Sumatran tiger is the smallest and most distinctive of the extant tiger subspecies. The WCS program aims to estimate the density of tigers and tiger prey in the park, monitor changes over time, and to develop park capacity to manage tigers and prey for long term persistence.

A **preliminary density estimate** for the **southern part** of the park is **1.6 tigers/100 km²**. Data from the **northern portion** of the park indicate that tiger densities may be **lower** in that area. Prey populations also appear to be higher in the south, except for Malay tapir. Our calculated density is lower than that reported from the highly disturbed Way Kambas National Park, also in southern Sumatra, and may reflect the lower carrying capacity of primary rainforest for top carnivores.

Tigers and most prey species appear to avoid the park boundaries and areas where they are likely to encounter humans. Only mouse deer and pigs are insensitive to edges. Habitat analysis indicates that habitat quality does not explain the difference in distribution and we suspect that it may reflect higher poaching pressure on the borders of the park.

The main **threats** to tigers in BBSNP include poaching of tigers and their prey, and encroachment by farmers on the borders. The high prices for coffee and pepper, coupled with the economic collapse in Indonesia have led to an increase in illegal agriculture inside the park, as well as an increase in illegal logging. These problems are common on Sumatra; all parks and protected areas have come under severe attack in the past few years. We strongly recommend that the new government of Indonesia act quickly to restore law in the countryside and safeguard the nation's natural heritage."

Timothy G. O'Brien and Margaret F. Kinnaird, *Wildlife Conservation Society*—Indonesia Program, P.O. Box 311, Bogor 16003, Indonesia

• *More dead tigers than live ones?*

A substantial domestic market in exotic pets and an interest in stuffed and mounted specimens and skins exists in Indonesia and in the early 1990s, the Government initiated a registration scheme. By 1993, 68,746 people had registered their possession of 58,657 live specimens and 58,106 dead specimens. Over **1,000 dead tigers** were included in these figures!

Apparently interest in tiger skins and mounted specimens remains high and are openly offered for sale in newspaper advertisements in spite of such sales being illegal.

Source: Report of the Tiger Technical Missions to the Standing Committee of CITES Sept./Oct. 1999

Italy

• *TV tigers fund-raising for Indian NGO*

An Italian organisation called *Fondo per la Terra / Earthfund* is apparently collecting funds for the *Bandhavgarh Tiger Trust* in India using "a caged and enchained tiger during a TV show". The strategy is puzzling other animal and conservation NGOs in Italy who have seen it.

Source: *Animal and Nature Conservation Fund* (ANCF), via E. Lombardini 12, 201143 Milano, Italy Tel: 39(2)8395475 Fax: 39(2)89404093 E-mail ancf@it.net

Japan

• *Tiger farming and wildlife trade*

During its mission to Japan in June 1999, the CITES technical team (see p.39) were informed about the activities of a **tiger farm** that was allegedly established in 1980 with the apparent aim of breeding Siberian tigers in captivity. At one time open to the public, the farm apparently had advertising material that indicated its intention to engage in the production of tiger bones for medicinal use and also advertised tiger fur. The team learnt of the farm's existence too late to visit the premises and it is not clear what commercial activities are presently in operation there. The team recommends that the Japanese authorities investigate the facility bearing in mind that "unregulated captive-breeding of tigers offers an opportunity for the laundering of wild-caught specimens". The CITES secretariat has subsequently been informed by Japan that the Police are conducting enquiries.

The team also found **tiger parts and products available** for sale in some of the pharmacies and virility stores they visited, including genuine tiger penises that "did not appear old". One pharmacy

owner informed them that "when his stocks ran out, he was able to order more from his wholesaler who apparently imported them." (Japan has been a member of CITES since August 1980 so such imports are illegal.)

Japan is the only party in East Asia that allows domestic trade in medicines containing, or claiming to contain, tiger parts and in its report the team clearly **recommends** "that *Japan's legislation be amended and that an internal ban on trade in parts and derivatives of tiger should be put in place as a matter of priority.*" The team "firmly believes that the current controls are open to exploitation." They also believe that there are "reasonable grounds for suspicion that illegal imports of tiger parts and derivatives may be taking place."

Source: Report of the Tiger Technical Missions to the Standing Committee of CITES Sept./Oct. 1999

South Korea

• *Korean tigers?*

The Vladivostok-based *Tiger Protection Society* (TPS) were invited by the Education Broadcast System (EBS) TV company to South Korea. EBS had made four films about the wild Amur tiger in 1997-98 with the help of the TPS. When they showed these films in Korea, many people called to **report** having seen **tigers in South Korea** and TPS went to **investigate** for three months in the winter of 1998. Their main search area was in the military zone not far from Hwanchon town, in the Chiaksan National Park and its vicinity and in the military zone in the area of mount Baegan, Chu Keun, Chinyong. They also met with people who claimed to have seen tracks and even tigers and looked at video footage.

However the group found **no evidence of tigers**. They confirmed the presence of wild pig and roe deer in the forest, with the density higher in the military zone. Chiaksan National Park harboured only 5-7 wild pigs in a total area of 182.09 km². Military personnel maintain that neither tigers nor other similar animals can get through the fence dividing North and South Korea

Source: Galina Salkina, TPS, Nekrasovskaja 1-16, Lazo, Lazo District, Primorsky Region, Russia 692890

<lazovzap@mail.primorye.ru>

Myanmar

• *Tigers disappear from PA*

In June 1999, a *Wildlife Conservation Society* (WCS) team carried out a field survey for tigers in

Alaungdaw Kathapa National Park in Myanmar's Sagaing region. Although AKNP is Myanmar's oldest park with a "real anti-poaching programme in place", the team concluded that it is **unlikely that tigers exist** there now. One or two may survive but "it is clearly a non-viable population".

The *David Shepherd Conservation Foundation* (DSCF) provide some background: "during the early 1980s, regular encounters with tigers in the park were reported. However, during the 1988 crisis when park staff left their posts, intensive hunting occurred and tigers and countless prey species were killed." While other mammal populations have recovered, tigers may never return.

The WCS team conducted an intensive survey in the core area of the park using 30 camera-traps and sign surveys. They also made a rapid assessment of signs, and placed camera-traps along animal trails and roads to the south, west, east and north-west of the park. Furthermore, rangers, trained in tiger assessment methods, surveyed buffer areas outside of the park perimeter. Although signs of leopard, wild dog, elephant, banteng and gaur, as well as smaller species were recorded, **no tigers were detected**. The only available evidence of tiger were two unconfirmed reports from the buffer zone.

From September 1999–August 2000, the Park Warden, U Ye Htut, will lead a team to try to detect any surviving tigers by using camera-traps and conducting sign searches in the buffer zone areas. They will also continue to monitor the park for tigers. Source: Report by Anthony Lynam of WCS in *Wildlife Matters*, DSCF magazine Autumn 1999

Nepal

• *Tiger attack thwarted*

In August, a woman of Vijaynagar village in western Nepal rescued her three-year-old grandson from a tiger that had grabbed him from in front of his house. Seeing the attack, the woman is reported to have dashed after the tiger and managed to drive it off, while snatching her grandson "from its jaws".

Source: Nepal National News Agency (RSS), Kathmandu
3 August 1999

• *Tiger attacks*

Between 1979 and 1996, a total of 22 people were killed by tigers in and around the **Royal Chitwan National Park**. Recently, between April 1998 and April 1999, no fewer than **11 people were killed**, al-

most one victim a month in contrast with 1.3 a year during the earlier period.

A total of five tigers were involved, four females and one male. No action was taken against one of the females who had cubs and who had killed a trespassing villager inside the park. But the park authorities responded rapidly and professionally to deal with the other four problems tigers that killed people outside the park, either destroying them or tranquillising them for removal to Kathmandu zoo.

Three people were killed by a sub-adult male tiger in Bardia District outside the **Royal Bardia National Park**. The authorities killed it the day it killed its last victim.

Source: Charles McDougal, P.O. Box 242, Kathmandu, Nepal in *Cat News* Spring 1999

• *Tourism and protected areas*

Royal Chitwan National Park (RCNP), in Nepal's terai region, is a major international and local tourist destination. In 1997, 75,528 foreigners and 31,518 Nepalis visited the area. In the early 1990s, a study was undertaken in the buffer zone around Sauraha, where many private tourist operations exist outside the park, to "examine the effectiveness of ecotourism in providing sufficient economic incentives for biodiversity conservation in RCNP." The study looked at individual and household incomes and found that only 6% of those surveyed were affected by "ecotourism" and that "less than 1100" of the estimated 87,000 people of working age were employed directly in the tourist industry. Their conclusion therefore was that "as it is currently structured", ecotourism "provides little employment potential ... and offers few benefits for local people" and thus it was unlikely to effect any change in local attitudes towards conservation. However as one of the authors states elsewhere, "conservationists must also be careful not to place too much emphasis on economic incentives that promise to raise the standard of living for individual households. A better approach is to stress improving the quality of life for communities" (Eric Dinerstein in 'Riding the Tiger: Tiger conservation in human-dominated landscapes' p.333).

Seven lodges have leases to operate inside the boundaries of the park and representatives from these maintain that the study gives a misleading impression "because it is selective", omitting the major role played by the 7 privately-owned operations inside the park who contribute over 50% of the income to the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC).

"In an impoverished country like Nepal", they contend, "tourism has been an engine driving conservation." They argue that, taken overall, tourism, in RCNP has been a "potent force for biodiversity conservation and local development." Over 95% of the RCNP's **annual income**, of around **US\$ 708,000**, is reported to be related to tourism (the other 5% is mainly from fines). This is significantly more than **DNPWC's annual budget** for Chitwan which is **US\$ 104,000**. It also exceeds the total budget of **US\$ 590,000** for all the protected areas of Nepal.

All agree that policies should ensure "that well-defined mechanisms for profit sharing with local communities are in place". It is argued that when "considered as a whole", RCNP is a good example of where such measures are being implemented. Recent government legislation in Nepal now provides for the return of 30–50% of a Park's annual income to be returned to local community development schemes in the buffer zone for the purpose of reducing dependency on the protected natural resources (\$ 350–400,000 per annum in the case of RCNP). Village Development Committees (VDCs) will be involved in planning and prioritising these developments. The authors of the study urge conservationists to "press for legislation that permits a percentage of profits to be recycled to local community development."

Source: 'Ecotourism's support of biodiversity conservation' by Marnie P. Bookbinder, Eric Dinerstein et al. in *Conservation Biology* December 1998 <eric.dinerstein@wwfus.org>; letter to the editor of *Conservation Biology* from Lisa Choegyal and other representatives of the 7 Chitwan concessionaires <lisa@tigermountain.com>

Russian Far East

• Operation Amba activities

'Operation Amba' state wildlife inspectors employed by the Primorsky Krai State Committee for Environmental Protection continued their effective activities throughout 1998. Twice as many environmental **violations (379)** were **uncovered** by Department Tiger inspectors in 1998 as there were in 1997. Apart from investigating 15 cases of "close encounters between humans and tigers", thereby confirming the deaths of 5 tigers and helping to stop the attempted smuggling of 5 sets of tiger skeletons. Amba also detained 46 logging trucks for various forest violations and confiscated 469 cu.m. of ash and oak from illegal trade sources. They also confiscated 87 musk glands, nearly 32 kg of wild ginseng root and 748 kg of dried sea cucumber (37,500 or about 120 sacks).

In 1998 nobody was injured through the fault of a tiger. However, "experts indirectly ascertained" that in the same year **20–30 tigers** were **killed by poachers**, most of them destined for sale abroad.

In November 1998 the inspectors from all the teams participated in training to learn the skills of using a video camera. Yuri A. Trough was recognised for best footage of the monitoring and inspection work of his team. He also participated in the making of a film on the work of Department Tiger, a Luchegorsk TV film which will aired on TV-Energy (Luchegorsk). Another film on the department is being produced by National Geographic.

Source: Programmatic report on Department Tiger, a.k.a. "Operation Amba" activities 1998—anon.

• Amur leopard protection

The **Amur leopard team** started its operations in January 1998. It operates in Khasan, a relatively small area between Vladivostok and the Chinese border where most of the surviving Amur leopards live. In February 1998 the team assisted in a leopard count and a total of **40–44 leopards** and **14–18 tigers** were counted. Tracks of a female leopard with three cubs were seen—the first evidence in many years of leopard raising 3 young.

Poachers are particularly aggressive in the Khasan region and the team has been shot at several times. Nevertheless the team has had some success and arrested a number of poachers. In the first 16 months, a total of 56 rifles were confiscated and "poaching has been brought down to a level where it no longer forms a serious threat to the leopards and the ungulate populations on which they feed."

The leopard team rangers are employed by the Primorsky Krai Environmental Committee, the local authority that is in charge of Operation Amba. *Tigris Foundation* has been funding the team and in the first two years transferred around \$150,000 to the field. They are part of the Siberian Tiger Support Coalition (STSC), established and coordinated by Global Survival Network.

Source: Amur leopard conservation: Progress Report June 1999 *Tigris Foundation*, Laagtekadijk 135, 1018 ZD Amsterdam, Holland Tel/fax: 31–20–6206274 E-mail: mhotte@inter.nl.net Internet: <http://www.inter.nl.net/users/tiger>

U.K.

• RGS tiger evening

Valmik Thapar presented an audio visual **lecture** entitled, "Tiger, tiger burning bright" at the *Discovery Initiatives* wildlife evening at the *Royal Geographi-*

cal Society in London on 13 October 1999. Thapar discussed the role of international organisations in terms of finances and expenditure and of how essential it is, at the end of the century, to refocus finance and rethink the kind of interventions that are necessary for the next century. Over 700 people attended. Tickets cost £10 (approx. Rs 700) and all profits will go to the U.K. based NGO, *Global Tiger Patrol*.

- **New U.K. charity needs information**

An "internet based British charity involved with tiger conservation" has been established called the 'Wild Hearts Club'. Their objective is "to ensure long-term survival of tiger and its habitat without adversely affecting the quality of life of communities residing around protected areas." They have decided to initially focus on India and want people "involved with tiger conservation" to provide them data on the current status of the tiger and tiger habitats in India. They have questionnaires they require selected people in India to complete to help them identify areas and the range of projects to support.

Further information from: Nimish Patel, *Wild Hearts Club*, 7 Kenton Court, Kenton Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 8AQ, U.K. E-mail: nimish@wildhearts.org Website: www.wildhearts.org

U.S.A.

- **Tiger bone medicine in the big apple**

Tiger bone products are **still available** in the shops of **New York**. In August 1999, Anthony Marr of the *Western Canada Wilderness Committee* walked into a pharmacy on the Bowery in lower Manhattan and bought a vial of Tiem Ma tiger bone pills made by the Guiyang Chinese factory in China. The pills listed 6.8% ground tiger bones as one of its ingredients. Although illegal (see *TL News* vol.5 no.2), Marr comments that the fines for possessing tiger products are "minuscule compared to the huge worldwide wildlife trade". The Interior Department's *Fish and Wildlife Service* is in charge of enforcing the law and monitoring importation of wildlife products. However the agency argues that it does not have enough resources—neither funds nor manpower are adequate to police the amount of illegal imports.

Source: Manuela Badawy, Reuters News Service 16 August 1999 via *Institute for Global Communications* (IGC) <http://www.igc.org>

- **Optimistic workshop**

In September 1999, the *Wildlife Conservation Society* organised a workshop in New York—'Saving the

tiger: assessing our success'. The meeting included "38 tiger conservation professionals" from a number of NGOs, institutes, groups and agencies involved with tiger conservation and was funded by the *Save the Tiger Fund*, a partnership of the *National Fish and Wildlife Foundation* and Exxon Corporation.

"According to the workshop's participants, a combination of better science, increased public awareness and collaboration among conservation groups and governments has contributed to an upswing in tigers ..." "While there are setbacks and many populations remain imperiled, we are succeeding at saving the tiger," said Dr Joshua Ginsberg, Director for WCS's Asia programs. "We must now move forward, analyse what has worked, what has not and apply these lessons to key tiger populations across Asia."

Reporting of the meeting was very "up-beat"—spokespeople from WCS, WWF and others in the U.S.A. proclaiming an optimism that astonished many other conservationists. (See Open Forum p.43)

Source: 'Hope still burning bright for the tiger' —WCS website: www.wcs.org;

- **New funding organisation**

A new volunteer effort, affiliated with the Sierra Club, has been set up in America by three non-resident Indians, who aim to fund projects "by a user-friendly mechanism which can provide a quick solution to problems without cumbersome application and approval procedures." 'Saving Wild Tigers' primary goal is to work with local governmental and non-governmental agencies in India to save the wild tiger from extinction. They would like to be contacted by appropriate on-site organisations involved in tiger conservation that are able to accept foreign exchange. "Requests can range from resources needed for anti-poaching activities, providing the forest staff with essential equipment, vehicular needs, reducing man-animal conflict, reconciling the development needs of local people with conservation or any other vital need that could help in protecting wild tigers and their habitat."

For further details contact: Nina Rao, Sunil Somalwar or Sumati Prabhu at *Saving Wild Tigers*, 10 Waterside Plaza, #4K, New York, NY 10010-2610, U.S.A. Tel: 1-212-6867411 Fax: (212) 6862366 E-mail: tiger@wildindia.com Web site: <http://sierraactivist.org.tigers/>

- **Shahtoosh owners targeted**

It seems that the message is finally being hammered home. Some of **New York's** wealthiest women have

been served court orders to hand in their shahtoosh shawls and testify before a grand jury to reveal how they got them. At the centre of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service investigation is a Hong Kong based company, 'Cocoon' who auctioned shahtoosh shawls at a charity event for a New York hospital in 1994. Many well-known names from the city's "social and charitable set" are finally being forced to face the fact that their purchase and use of these garments is fuelling the annihilation of the endangered chiru or Tibetan antelope. The magazine *Vanity Fair* reports that the designer Valentino owns "200 shahtooshes to match every sweater, coat and suit".

Source: *Daily Telegraph*, U.K. 5 October 1999

International Funding

• 21st Century Tiger

21st Century Tiger, a partnership of *Global Tiger Patrol* and London Zoo, was set up to raise funds and channel them directly to wild tiger conservation projects. 100% of the funds go to the field as the administrative costs of operating are funded separately.

In 1997, *21st Century Tiger* administered UK£ 103,780 (approx. US\$ 166,000), composed of £50,000 from the U.K. Government, over £ 40,000 from Esso UK plc inc/Cathay Pacific, nearly £ 7,000 from the Zoo Federation and the rest from public donations and fund raising activities. £ 90,000 was distributed to tiger conservation projects in 1997.

In 1998, the UK Government and Esso UK plc inc/Cathay Pacific provided £ 50,000 and £ 15,623 respectively, £ 24,000 came from a 'Year of the Tiger' Esso-sponsored, fund-raising dinner, BA holidays raised and donated £ 19,000, over £ 8,000 was raised in a special forest fire emergency appeal that was run in the U.K. newspaper, *Daily Express*, £ 7,500 was given for the Esso/21st Century Tiger awards and over £ 10,000 came from public donations, U.K. zoos, calendars and a tiger talk. Total received was £ 134,277.

£ 97,820 (approx. US\$ 156,500) has been distributed to projects in the Russian Far East, Sumatra and India in 1998 and 1999. Support was given to the Amur Tiger Protection Programme, The Tiger Conservation Team in Sumatra, to fight the fires in the Sikhote-Alin Biosphere Reserve in the Russian Far East, for vehicles in three protected areas in eastern Madhya Pradesh, India and for a vehicle and equipment to the staff of Sariska Tiger Reserve in India.

Source: *21st Century Tiger 1998 Report* Further details from: 21st CT, c/o London Zoo, Regent's Park, London NW1 4RY Tel: 44-171-449 6444 Fax: 171-586 6177; Sam Knowles, Administrator, 21st Century Tiger

• Wildlife Conservation Society

In FY (fiscal year) 1998 (i.e. 1 July 1997-30 June 1998) the *Wildlife Conservation Society's* (WCS) total expenditure was US\$ 66,083,585. Out of this amount \$ 57,193,749 went towards upkeep of the Bronx Zoo, New York Aquarium, Queens, Central Park and Prospect Zoos and \$ 8,889,836 went towards international programmes. Their international programme includes \$ 649,000 (or 7.3%)—mostly raised from private individuals—spent on tiger-related programmes in China, India, Malaysia, Russia, Thailand and Vietnam. The balance amount funds approximately 300 other projects in 52 countries.

The Society has been running the Bronx Zoo for over 100 years and the other zoos and aquarium for somewhat less time. WCS say that the zoos and field projects "do not compete for business". They contend that it is because they have "developed such a good donor base through the zoos" that they have the ability to be flexible and pursue their field work at the level they do.

"Although we do support field conservation through giving vehicles, equipment etc. in some projects, that is not our primary mandate." WCS's primary mandate is rather to provide "the knowledge base through science and building local capacities for implementing tiger conservation". Even when they initiate "fullscale implementation projects like the Karnataka Tiger Conservation Project" (KTCP), they view these primarily as trying to build models from which to learn.

In FY 1999, WCS funds for their "Asia Program tiger-related expenses" were \$ 1,165,000 of which \$ 325,000 (27.89%) was spent in India, \$ 230,000 in China, \$ 205,000 in Russian Far East, \$ 100,000 in Sumatra, \$ 70,000 on New York based expenses and the balance in Thailand, Malaysia, Burma, Cambodia, North Korea. The projected figure for FY 2000 is \$ 1,055,000.

Source: WCS, 185th Street and Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York NY 10460 Website: www.wcs.org

• WWF

In response to the information carried in the last issue of the newsletter, WWF-International sent a letter of "clarification". They explained that "when WWF uses the term 'budget', it refers to a target for fundraising that reflects the requirements of the conservation programme to be implemented during that fiscal year." The letter goes on to state, "between 1961 and 1997, WWF has funnelled over US\$ 21 mil-

lion into the conservation of the tiger, its habitat and prey species ... WWF continues to commit considerable resources to tiger conservation. In fiscal year 1998, a further US\$ 3.5 million was raised and spent on tigers against a target budget of US\$ 5.4 million. Of that, US\$ 1.2 million was spent in South Asia on the tiger conservation programme, wildlife trade investigation work and other field projects directly benefiting tiger conservation. All the funds we raised for tiger work in South Asia were spent there. This amounted to 34% of the funds globally that we channelled to tiger conservation for FY98. Of the three countries in South Asia for which we were able to provide funds India, Nepal and Bhutan ranked third, fourth and fifth respectively in our global expenditure categories. Russia was second and the work to stamp out illegal trade in tiger products was first. Funding was also provided for direct tiger conservation work in Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia and a small amount for region-wide initiatives." ('FY98' refers to fiscal year 1998 which runs from July to June).

In the last newsletter we had stated (on the basis of information published and given by WWF International) that in 1998, \$ 8.4 million was the tiger budget and noted that this was "only approximately 3% of total expenditure". In fact, with the figure of \$ 3.5 million now being presented, it appears that WWF actually spend approximately 1.25% of their total expenditure (US\$ 278 million) on tiger-related conservation. *TigerLink* has tried to ascertain how or why the published figure became nearly \$ 5 million less and what effect this may have had on planned activities, but WWF are reluctant to provide further explanation.

Source: letter from Dr. C.J. Hails, Programme Director, WWF International 12 July 1999

• Save the Tiger Fund

The *Save the Tiger Fund* (STF) was launched in September 1995 by the *National Fish and Wildlife Foundation* and Exxon, who pledged \$ 5 million for tiger conservation over five years. In 1998, in honour of the Year of the Tiger, Exxon contributed an extra \$ 1 million and the general public have contributed over \$ 1,000,000.

Since 1995, over 93 projects have been supported by STF with a total of \$ 6,417,568—of this \$ 3,068,856 has been spent to support 52 projects since mid 1997 (see *TL News* vol.3 no.1 June 1997). Since 1995, \$ 3,298,084 has been allocated to 46 'tiger

range conservation projects', and thirteen of these are projects in **India and Nepal**. These include 'Biogas energy and forest conservation' and 'Community health care and conservation' projects run by the *Prakratik Society* around the **Ranthambhore National Park** (1999), 'Community conservation at Ranthambhore' undertaken by the *Ranthambhore Foundation* (1998), 'Conservation in **Corbett Tiger Reserve I, II**' by *Operation Eye of the Tiger* (1998 and 1999), 'Camera traps for conservation', a project to monitor tiger populations in **Bandhavgarh National Park**, establish a science-based management plan and run intensive training programmes on camera-trap use, granted to Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford University (1997), 'Karnataka Tiger Conservation I, II', a project of the *Wildlife Conservation Society—India Program* in and around **Dandeli-Bandipur Tiger Conservation Units** (1997 and 1998), '**Ranthambhore** resettlement project' to *Tiger Watch* for voluntary resettlement of nearly 70 Moghiya families living around the national park (1998), 'Tiger conservation in Andhra Pradesh', a project of Harsha Reddy, contractor, to determine and reduce human-tiger conflicts in **Nagarjuna Sagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve** (1998), 'Tigers, prey and humans in **Rajaji-Corbett**', a project of the *Wildlife Institute of India* (1999) and '**Chitwan** habitat restoration I, II, III' a project run by WWF Nepal and the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (1996, 1998, 1999). Funds have also been granted for projects in Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, Sumatra and the Russian Far East. (See website: www.5tigers.org)

STF is now **calling for proposals** for the next cycle of funding the final date is 12 November 1999. After this, subsequent proposals will be considered only in mid 2000. Groups should apply with proposals that include explicitly what the applicant wants to achieve with the project and how they propose to do this. The application should also state clearly why the project is important from a conservation standpoint and the conservation reasons for selecting the proposed project site. Proposals should contain the qualifications of the applicant and demonstrate why the applicant believes they are the right group to run the project.

Grant criteria and further information from: David Phemister, NFWF, 1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20036, USA Fax: 00 202-857-0162

E-mail: phemister@nfwf.org Website: www.nfwf.org

Anti-poaching and Wildlife Trade

• WPSI records of poaching and seizures in brief

8 April 1999: **1 tigress** found dead (believed to have been poisoned) in Gadgadia, U.P.

19 April 1999: **10 fake tiger skins** and other fake parts (claws, whiskers, etc.) seized by U.P. Wildlife Dept. in Noida, U.P. 4 arrests.

9 April 1999: **140 kgs of tiger bones** believed to have crossed Indo-Nepal border at Nautanwa-Bhairahawa, U.P.

19 and 20 April 1999: **6 complete tiger skeletons** weighing nearly 55 kg, **3 tiger skins** (full-size), **6 leopard skins**, 20 chital and sambar antlers weighing more than 50 kg, 15 pieces of chital and sambar hides, 15 crude country-made bombs, 2 M.L. guns and many other accessories to trap animals seized in a joint operation by Forest Department and Police in Balaghat, M.P. 17 arrests.

21 April 1999: **1 tiger skin** seized, Pilibhit Forest Division, U.P., near Indo-Nepal border. 2 arrests.

24 April 1999: **84 kg of tiger bones** allegedly seized in Dharchula, U.P. near Indo-Nepal border. No case registered.

25 April 1999: Adult **tiger** found dead, **electrocuted**, from a power line in Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala.

25 April 1999: **1 leopard skin** seized by police in Jabalpur District, Madhya Pradesh. 1 arrest.

April 1999: **1 tiger skin** seized from Kagaznagar, Adilabad, Andhra Pradesh. 8 arrests.

1st week May 1999: A **tiger** found in a decomposed state in Satkosia Wildlife Sanctuary, Orissa. **Poisoned** through buffalo carcass; various body parts removed.

20 May 1999: female **leopard** shot by teacher in Samlehra village, Hamirpur, H.P. Leopard had come in the way of some school-going children.

20/21 May: **2 tiger skins, 2 kg of tiger bones** and **2 leopard skins** seized at Akola, near Melghat Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra by Forest Department and Police. The traders had also offered to supply 50 kg of tiger and leopard bones. 8 arrests.*

25 May 1999: **1 leopard skin** and 180 gm of bear gall bladder seized by police in Pauri District, U.P. 2 arrests. Information gained during interrogation led to another raid—100 kg of antlers and a quantity of charas seized from Najibabad, U.P.*

27 May 1999: **4 leopard skins** seized by Forest Department and Police in two separate raids in Raigarh, M.P. 2 arrests.

May 1999: A **tigress** found dead (**poisoned**) inside Corbett National Park, U.P.

6 June 1999: Leopard found dead near Tara Devi on Kalka-Shimla national highway, H.P. Believed to be hit by vehicle.

11 June 1999: **Tiger** killed in Hamirpur village, Muzzafarabad block, near Rajaji National Park, U.P. 2 arrests. Apparently the tiger entered a house and the villagers beat it to death with sticks and axes.

June 1999: 1 old **male tiger** found dead in Ramnagar Forest Division, U.P. It is believed that the male died as a result of a fight with another tiger.

2 July 1999: A **male tiger** was located alive with a large head wound. Later, after attacking a villager, the animal was found dead in Chandni block, Ramnagar Forest Division, U.P.

7 July 1999: **2 leopard skins** seized on the GT road at Adarsh Nagar, Delhi during a routine check by police. 2 arrests.

16 July 1999: **1 tiger skin** seized in Tusyana, U.P. 3 arrests.

23 July 1999: **1 leopard skin** seized by police in Garchia, near Pitthoragarh, U.P.

26 July 1999: **25 pieces of tiger skins** along with two heads and jaws (all fake) seized in Mithi Vav area, Gujarat.

7 August 1999: **3 fake tiger skins** seized by police at Uran, Maharashtra. 1 arrest.

9 August 1999: **1 tiger skin** seized by police in Gokavaram, East Godavary District, Andhra Pradesh. The accused is absconding.

30 August 1999: **2 leopard skins** (one adult and one cub) seized at Rishikesh, U.P. 1 arrest.*

8 September 1999: A full grown **male tiger** found **poisoned** in the forest area on the periphery of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra.

13 September 1999: **3 fake tiger skins** seized in Noida, U.P. 4 arrests.

September 1999: A **lion and a lioness electrocuted** on periphery of Gir Sanctuary by electric fencing put up by a villager to protect his crops. The villager is absconding.

28 September 1999: **2 tiger skins** seized in Sarberia village, near Sunderbans Tiger Reserve, West Bengal.

28 September 1999: **1 tiger skin** seized at Dumdum airport, Calcutta.

10 October 1999: A **tiger** found dead near Bhadrawati Village near Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra. A carcass of a cow was **poisoned** using pesticide.

23 October 1999: A **tiger** found dead in Dhela Range, U.P. on the outskirts of Corbett T.R. with a wire noose around its neck. The tiger's body has been sent to Bareilly for examination.

* Cases where WPSI assisted.

Source: Wildlife Protection Society of India, Thapar House, 124 Janpath, New Delhi 110 001 Tel: 6213864

Email: wpsi@gems.vsnl.net.in

• *Sunderbans poaching*

Three tiger skins and 2 deer skins were retrieved in raids conducted by the CID in **Sarberia, Basanti** and by the Office of Wildlife Preservation at **Calcutta** airport. Four people belonging to villages in the Sunderbans have been arrested in these cases.

However Mrinal Chatterjee of the *Institute of Climbers and Nature Lovers* reports that there appears to be a lack of coordination between authorities who have a better intelligence network and the wildlife wing of the State Forest Department. As a result only the carriers are being booked and the actual poachers are moving freely. Source: ICNL, 17 New Santoshpur Main Road, Santoshpur, Calcutta 700075 Tel: (033) 4165994 Fax: 4191101

• *Tiger skins seized*

Two people have been **arrested** near **Pollachi** in Tamil Nadu for allegedly possessing **tiger skins**. The skins were being supplied to film producing units in the area and, by posing as film producers, the forest department were able to catch one of the culprits with a tiger skin. Source: *News Times*, Hyderabad 3 October 1999

• *Trade links unearthed*

A large, **fresh tiger skin** was **seized** from a trader in **Delhi** on 28 March 1999. Police stopped a scooter taxi for a routine check near a bus stand in east Delhi. A tiger skin was found in the possession of Bhagwan Das, a part-time rickshaw puller and resident of Kishanganj in north Delhi. Das confessed that the tiger had been killed seven days before in Madhya Pradesh, near his family home at Rasmohini village in District Shahdol. He said that the tiger had been caught in a trap and speared to death and the bones had been buried near the spot.

Das admitted that he was a regular courier of wildlife parts from Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka. He also gave details of the biggest buyer of wildlife parts in Delhi. On this occasion, Das had been given a fee of Rs 3,000 to carry the skin to Delhi by bus. He was accompanied by his senior accomplice, Chatru, a Bawaria from Haryana. At the bus stop before Delhi, Chatru had got out and told Das to meet him at Kishanganj Railway Station in north Delhi. It was there that Das was arrested. Chatru was arrested at 4.30 a.m. in his house at Samalka in Haryana, along with 7 otter skins and 5 steel traps but the buyer remained untraceable.

The Madhya Pradesh wildlife authorities rushed a party to Shahdol but were unable to recover the tiger bones.

Source: WPSI, Thapar House, 124 Janpath, New Delhi 110 001 Tel: 6213864 Email: wpsi@gems.vsnl.net.in

• *Gang busted in Maharashtra*

A local crime branch of **Thane rural police** are reported to have **bust a gang** involved in tiger poaching and trade in skins. **Five tiger skins** have been **recovered** and five persons arrested—three from Kolhapur in western Maharashtra and two from Mumbai. The culprits revealed that they had hunted tiger in the jungle of Budhergarh taluka in **Kolhapur** district. Two rifles were seized, one without licence. Further investigation is on.

Source: *Free Press Journal*, Mumbai 29 October 1999

• *Ivory/tiger poaching in Orissa*

Between April and July 1999 one tiger, 4 elephants and deer have been poached in Orissa and one elephant injured in an attempted poaching incident. The **tiger** was **poisoned** and was found in the

Labangi forests of Angul Forest Division (see *TL News* vol.5 no.2). The elephant carcasses were all found with their tusks hacked off but no poachers have been apprehended.

Source: Biswajit Mohanty, *Wildlife Society of Orissa*
<biswajit@cal.vsnl.net.in>

• *Tiger product ad in Japan*

A Japanese mail order catalogue offers for sale "**real tiger penis and seal penis**" in a shocking advertisement containing photographs of the items and the animals they come from. The text of the advertisement informs the reader that the "**the tiger was living in deep forest in Laos**" "**you can use it in wine or drink soup as you like.**"

Source: *Japan Wildlife Conservation Society* Tel/fax: 81-3-3595-1171 E-mail: jwcs@blue.ocn.ne.jp

• *Poachers strike in Kaziranga*

Two rhinos were **shot** by poachers in **Kaziranga National Park** in mid-September 1999. The horns have not been recovered.

On 30 September 1999 in the early morning, two poachers were killed in an encounter with the forest patrolling party in the western Bagori Range. One .303 rifle, a hand-made gun, 10 live cartridges and a few empty cartridges were recovered from the spot.

Source: Bibhab Talukdar, *Aaranyak Nature Club*, Samanwoy Path (Survey), PO Beltola, Guwahati 781 028
E-mail: bibhab@gw1.vsnl.net.in

• *Lesser cats poached*

In 1998, there were three poaching reports of lesser cats from the Lakhimpur district, in Assam. In July, two leopard cats, *Prionailurus bengalensis*, were killed—one near Barpatra village and the other near Bhati-Jalbhari. In September, a marbled cat, *Pardofelis marmorata*, was reported to have been killed near Jalbhari village. It is

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believed that FIRs were filed in at least two of the cases and several people questioned and searched but no further action has been reported.

Source: Debojit Phukan, Honorary Wildlife Warden and co-ordinator, Megamix Nature Club, Dhaknakhana, Lakhimpur, Assam

• *Antler movement*

In 1994, **antler dealer**, Shri S. Devoji Rao, proprietor of M/s Y. S. Siddapa Rao, Antler and Hardware Traders of Mysore, was given **permission to collect deer antlers from "all the forests of the state excluding National Parks"** (Karnataka). He was required to collect not less than 2,000 kg per year and pay a royalty of Rs 50 per kilo. According to the preamble of the Government order allowing this, the argument was that "*if this collection is entrusted to private persons, unauthorised sale of deer antlers would be stopped and the department would be getting more income.*" Under the earlier system, deer antlers were being "*collected through the tribals and sold through Lamps and Co-operative Societies*"

It would be interesting to know whether any study was done to establish whether there was actually any positive impact on "*unauthorised sale*" before the same Shri S. Devoji Rao's collection permit was renewed. He was again given **permission to collect antlers of "deer and sambar in forests areas of the state (including sanctuary) but excluding N.P.s" for five years** from 1 May 1999 to 30 April 2004.

It is reported that **since September 1998**, the Chief Wildlife Warden of Karnataka has issued transit permits for **12,250 kg of antlers for transportation to Maharashtra**. A few years ago Maharashtra banned the collection

of antlers in the state but Nagpur, the state capital, remains the major centre for processing. Between 1992 and 1996 Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Goa, Sikkim and Meghalaya also imposed bans on antler collection. However in Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu no ban has been initiated. While legal collection and transportation of antlers is allowed in part of the country, the regulation and prevention of illegal trade is made more difficult. Both M.P. and U.P. have registered large seizures of antlers over the last four years.

Considering the significant decline in herbivore populations within and outside PAs, **export of antlers was banned** in August 1998. As most of the antler trade went for export, little reason is left to continue to allow antler collection from the forests. It is reckoned that the amount required for local trade could be catered for from captive deer within the country. In states that still allow collection, illegal collection and poaching of animals may actually increase.

Source: *Wildlife First!*, 248, 4th Main Road, Chamarajapet, Bangalore 560018; 'Antler Trade—an overview' by Brij Bhushan Sharma in *WII Newsletter* vol.5 no.4; Bittu Sahgal <bittu@giasbm01.vsnl.com>

• *Peacock feather smuggling*

From 1 April 1999, the **export of peacock "tail feathers"** has been **banned**.

On 1 September 1999, Shri G. L. Purohit, Wildlife Inspector of the Western Region office, disallowed the export of 60,000 pieces of bare peacock tail sticks that Aruna Brothers of Jangpura Extension, New Delhi were trying to export to the U.K.

In a joint Western Region Wildlife Regional Office and

Mumbai customs effort on 7 September 1999, an Afghan national was caught on an Air India flight to Dubai with 29,000 peacock tail feathers. Customs confiscated the feathers and he was fined Rs 8,000 for "*attempted smuggling*".

Source: *Enviro News* vol.3 no.9 September 1999

• *Campaign against shahtoosh*

TRAFFIC has launched a '**Say no to shahtoosh**' campaign. In India the launch was held at the WWF secretariat and Ms Menaka Gandhi was chief guest. She pledged to TRAFFIC-India a shahtoosh shawl that had been presented to her on her marriage and strongly endorsed the campaign along with a number of other celebrities. Booklets, posters, stickers, badges and a video film have been produced to spread awareness of the connection between shahtoosh and the endangered *chiru* or Tibetan antelope.

Contact: TRAFFIC-India, 172 B Lodi Estate, New Delhi 110003 Tel: (011) 4698578 Fax: 4691226
E-mail: trfindia@del3.vsnl.net.in
Website: www.traffic.org

• *Shahtoosh shawls seized*

On 31 October 1999 a **trader** was **arrested** in Delhi by the Special Branch of the Delhi Police and ten shawls, believed to be shahtoosh, were seized. The trader, Mukhtar Ahmed Lone is a resident of Srinagar and he was arrested as he entered a hotel to meet a foreign buyer. A credit card machine bearing his company's name was seized along with the shawls. He is believed to be an employee of Shaw Crafts which is reported to be owned by Shaw Brothers—said to be the biggest producer and supplier of shahtoosh shawls in the world. The company's name has earlier appeared in reports

connected with a number of shah-toosh cases in France, Italy and Hong Kong. This is the first time they have been implicated in India.

The *Wildlife Protection Society of India* assisted in the seizure, opposed the trader's bail application in the court and requested the arrest of the owner of the company.

Lone has been taken into judicial custody and the bail application denied.

Source: WPSI, Thapar House, 124 Janpath, New Delhi 110 001 Tel: 6213864

CITES missions

A '**Tiger Missions Technical Team**' was set up by CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora) Standing Committee to visit tiger range and consumer states with the aim of assisting "*in developing strategies for improving control of tiger trade and related activities*". Launched in January 1999, the teams visited nine range states—Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Russian Federation and Vietnam—and five consumer states—Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, U.K. and U.S.A. Their report was presented to the forty-second meeting of the Standing Committee which took place in Lisbon, Portugal in late September 1999 after being sent to the respective governments for comments. During their country visits, the team met CITES management authorities, law enforcement agencies, other relevant government officials and NGO members and in some instances made visits to the field. Only 2–7 days were spent in each country and so inevitably the report contains a few errors and misunderstandings. However, it makes a number of interesting recommendations and lays the groundwork for the political missions.

The recommendations include: (i) the creation of a '*CITES Enforcement Task Force*', consisting of representatives of range and consumer state regions, ICPO-Interpol and the World Customs Organisation; (ii) tiger range states should be encouraged to develop and engage in bi-lateral/multi-lateral enforcement agreements with neighbouring countries "*to assist in targeting shipments and persons engaged in wildlife crimes*"; (iii) "*that Japan's legislation be amended and that an internal ban on trade in parts and derivatives of tiger should be put in place as a matter of priority*"; (iv) that the effort to develop techniques for distinguishing the presence of tiger in traded products be continued; and (v) that research should be conducted into the efficacy or otherwise of tiger as a medicine. The team note the "*lack of specialised wildlife crime units in Asia*" which severely restricts the ability of agencies to tackle the likelihood that organised trade and trade routes are used in the smuggling of particular parts of poached

tigers—"*such research and infiltration is necessary if any significant progress is to be made.*"

The mission also makes a number of country specific (though often common) suggestions. In regard to India, the report suggests that "*specialised enforcement units be created to concentrate efforts on the illicit taking of and trading in CITES-listed specimens and to cooperate with other enforcement agencies.*" These units should have primarily "*an investigative and coordinating role*" and operate both at state and federal levels. It is reported that **financial and technical assistance** could be available from the CITES parties and the Secretariat to help fund such enforcement units, e.g. experienced enforcement officers could be seconded to the units for limited periods, through CITES mechanisms, should a country so desire. The Government of India has initiated creation of specialised enforcement units but states that "*lack of resources is going to be a limiting factor*". If this is the case, then now would seem to be the time to pressure CITES and the international community to live up to their promises and responsibilities regarding conservation of the tiger.

The **political missions**, headed by Rob Hepworth, from the U.K. CITES Management Authority and Chair of Standing Committee, will go to some, but not all, of the countries visited by the technical mission. The first planned destination, in January 2000, is **India**. It is to be hoped that the wildlife authorities will take full advantage of such a high level mission which could be used both to press for international action and assistance as well as to stimulate required political will in India by impressing upon the new Government the need for conservation to be placed appropriately high on the national agenda.

A widespread hope, also is that these missions may finally persuade **Japan** to amend its legislation taking into consideration resolution Conf. 9.6, banning internal trade in all products containing tiger parts (see also p.30).

Source: Report of the Tiger Technical Missions to the Standing Committee of CITES Sept./Oct. 1999 available on website: www.cites.org/CITES/english/e42-10-4.pdf

• *Poachers thwarted*

In a landmark decision, vehicles and weapons which have been confiscated for offences against wildlife, will be treated as Government property and would not be returned to the offenders even after compounding the case. An order to this effect was issued by Mr S. C. Sharma, the Addl. IGF (Wildlife) to all forest and wildlife officials in the light of an August Madhya Pradesh High Court judgement in the case of the State of M.P. v. Sayed Yahya Ali.

Forest and wildlife officials have welcomed this "clear and effective order" asserting that it has given them strength and that it will "help in keeping an effective check on poachers". Suspected poachers have tried all possible ways to pressurise officials into releasing their confiscated vehicles and weapons, so it is hoped that this order will ameliorate the situation in this regard.

Source: S. Raju, *Hindustan Times* 6 August 1999

• *Forest and wildlife legal workshop*

LAW-E (*Legal Action for Wildlife and Environment*), in collaboration with the Ranthambhore Foundation, is organising a **Legal Workshop** at the India International Centre, New Delhi on **15–16 January 2000**. The workshop will review forest and wildlife policies and laws, looking at particular case studies.

Subjects to be covered during the two-day workshop include: the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, its effectiveness and problems in implementation; the Forest Conservation Act, 1980; the Indian Forest Act, 1927; the Environment Protection Act, 1986, its potential and weakness, if any; policies—the National Wildlife Action Plan, National Forest Policy, the need for overall land use and other policies; the possible impact of the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, the rights and concessions to forest dwellers, the impact of World Bank-sponsored India Eco-development Programme; centre-state conflicts and problems encountered in the enforcement of forest and wildlife laws.

Participants will include judges, lawyers, MPs, MLAs, representatives from the centre and state

governments, from the industry and mining sectors, economists and representatives from enforcement agencies, institutions and NGOs concerned with the forests and environment. Participants will be requested to identify specific grey areas in policy and law which are misused, leading to the destruction of the country's natural resources.

Further information and background paper available from: LAW-E, 409 Lawyers' Chamber, Supreme Court of India, Bhagwan Dass Road, New Delhi 110 001 E-mail: lawe@bol.net.in

• *New environmental law firm formed*

A firm that is dedicating itself exclusively to the field of environmental law research, consultancy, education and litigation has been established under the name, **Enviro-Legal Defence Firm (ELDF)**. ELDF's aim is to strengthen the legal support base in India and to provide an institutional framework that can bring "a broader perspective to the development of environmental law and the protection of ecosystems".

ELDF plan to handle cases that have maximum impact in protecting India's environment, resources and ecosystems, provide assistance to sections of the population that have little or no influence in decision making and "lobby for their inclusion and participation in decisions affecting their well-being", "provide research, information and education relating to environmental law and advocacy that can be used by others to protect both urban and rural environments, provide analyses of treaties, laws and regulations and provide assistance drafting them, facilitate negotiation, mediation and arbitration of environmental disputes and develop skills in conflict resolution and environmental problem-solving and provide a forum for encouraging young lawyers to join India's environmental law movement."

ELDF has been founded by four lawyers—Sanjay Upadhyay, R. V. Anuradha, Videh Upadhyay and Anees Ahmed and has a ten-member advisory board of lawyers, scientists, economists and conservationists.

Further information from: Sanjay Upadhyay, ELDF, B-39, Dainik Janyug Apartments, Vasundhara Enclave, New Delhi 110096 Tel/fax: (011) 2477441 / 2477375 E-mail: su@vsnl.com

Wildlife Conservation Society (India Program)—activities update

• *Field Research: April–September 1999*

“The sample surveys of tiger and prey densities were carried out under the direction of WCS Conservation Zoologist, Dr. K. Ullas Karanth in **Bandipur**, **Nagarahole** and **Ranthambhore** National Parks during this reporting period. Research Assistants Siva Sundaresan, V. Srinivas, Devcharan Jathanna and Niren Jain completed camera trap surveys of tigers in Nagarahole between March–April 1999. This season’s trapping effort was the most productive in nine years of camera trapping in Nagarahole, resulting in 53 photos of tigers and 80 photos of leopards, based on a trapping effort of 868 trap nights.

The annual line transect survey training camp for estimating prey densities was conducted in Nagarahole during May by Program Officer N. Samba Kumar with the assistance of Niren Jain and Dileep Venugopal. Several volunteer instructors from *Wildlife First*, including K. M. Chinnappa, G. R. Sanath Kumar, Soorya Rao, Javaji Amarnath and D. V. Girish conducted the training program. Twelve volunteer trainees from all over India, including officials deputed by the Forest Departments, took part in the camp. Line transect surveys were also conducted in Bandipur during May–June by Samba Kumar, Niren Jain and Dilip Venugopal.

During the same period camera trapping work was taken up in **Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve** in collaboration with the Rajasthan Forest Department and with the assistance of the local NGO, *Tiger Watch*, headed by Fateh Singh Rathore. Splendid cooperation from Mr R. K. Tyagi (Field Director), G. V. Reddy (Deputy Director) and their staff enabled the work to proceed smoothly. Research assistants Siva Sundaresan, Niren Jain and *Wildlife First* volunteer Imran Khan under the supervision of Dr Karanth carried out the fieldwork. After expending a trapping effort of 840 trap nights, 73 photos of tigers and 22 photos of leopards were obtained. These data are currently under analysis. In addition, several other interesting species such as striped hyena, ratel and jungle cat were also photographed.

Javaji Amarnath, a volunteer from *Wildlife First*, designed an ingenious metal **protective shell for camera traps**, for use in field surveys. The device is

expected to substantially reduce the risk of theft, animal and weather damage to camera traps in the field. After field testing, the protective shell, called Javaji Metal Secure Camera Trap Shell, is now being used in the field. Those who are seriously involved in camera trapping work can obtain drawings and other details by writing to Dr K. Ullas Karanth.”

• *Publications*

“The following research-related publications resulted from the WCS-India Program activities during the report period:

Karanth, K. U. Counting tigers with confidence. 1999. In *Riding the Tiger: Tiger conservation in human dominated landscapes*, edited by J. Seidensticker, S. Christie and P. Jackson. Cambridge University Press.

Karanth, K. U. and Stith, B. M. Prey depletion as a critical determinant of tiger population viability. 1999. In *Riding the Tiger: Tiger conservation in human dominated landscapes*, edited by J. Seidensticker, S. Christie and P. Jackson. Cambridge University Press.

Karanth, K. U., Sunquist, M. E. and Chinnappa, K. M. Long term monitoring of tigers: Lessons from Nagarahole. 1999. In *Riding the Tiger: Tiger conservation in human dominated landscapes*, edited by J. Seidensticker, S. Christie and P. Jackson. Cambridge University Press.

Sunquist, M. E., Sunquist, F. C. and Karanth, K.U. Ecology, behaviour and resilience of the tiger and its conservation needs. 1999. In *Riding the Tiger: Tiger conservation in human dominated landscapes*, edited by J. Seidensticker, S. Christie and P. Jackson. Cambridge University Press.

Karanth, K. U. 1999. Nagarahole: Shrine or Market in the Global Village? In *Culturally Conflicting Views of Nature*, edited by Kent Redford. Conservation & Development Forum, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.

Karanth, K. U. 1999. Here a deer ... there an elephant! *Wildlife Conservation*, June 1999.”

Dr K. Ullas Karanth, WCS (India Program), 403 Seebo Apartments, 26-2 Aga Abbas Ali Road, Bangalore 560042 Tel: (080) 5591747 Fax: 5591990 E-mail: ukaranth@vsnl.com

Studies from Pench and Panna

Two students of the Wildlife Institute of India undertook tiger-related studies for their dissertations in partial fulfilment of their Master’s degree. Their fellowships

and dissertations were supported by *Save the Tiger Fund*, the special project of the *National Fish and Wildlife Foundation* in partnership with Exxon Corporation.

• Sayantan Biswas, under the supervision of Dr K. Sankar and Dr R. S. Chundawat, submitted his dissertation to Saurashtra University on '**Food habits of tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*) in Pench National Park, Madhya Pradesh**'. "Food habits of the tiger were studied in a dry deciduous forest area in Pench National Park, Madhya Pradesh, over a period of six months, from November 1998 to April 1999. Density estimation of major prey species was done to assess availability to tigers. Line transects were laid in two major vegetation types, teak associated and miscellaneous forests. Each transect was walked sixteen times. A total of 243.2 km and 214.4 km of transects were walked in teak associated and miscellaneous forests respectively, totalling 457.6 km for the whole study.

Pench National Park was found to have very **high wild ungulate density** (89.9 animals/km²). Chital was the most common ungulate species, followed by sambar, whereas common langur was the most abundant primate species in the study area. Seventy-two tiger scats were collected opportunistically from the study area and analysed. Scat analysis revealed that chital constituted the major part of tiger prey in terms of number (52.08%), followed by sambar (20.83%) and wild pig (15.63%). In terms of biomass, both chital and sambar contributed equally (38%) to the tiger's diet. No langur remains were found in the analysed tiger scats.

It was revealed that tigers were preying selectively in the study area on the available prey base. Chital was found to be less preyed upon compared to its availability, while sambar and wild pig were consumed more than their availability in the environment. Gaur and nilgai were killed in proportion to their availability. The results from this study stress the importance of maintaining high density of medium- and large-sized ungulate populations for effective conservation of tigers. The importance of Pench National Park as a potential area for long term tiger conservation was also discussed."

• Manu Verghese Mathai, supervised by Mr Qamar Quereshi and Dr R. S. Chundawat, submitted his dissertation on '**Habitat occupancy by tiger prey species across anthropogenic disturbance regimes in Panna National Park, Madhya Pradesh**'. His study examined "the effect of anthropogenic disturbance on habitat occupancy by tiger prey species" in Panna National Park. "The study was conducted between November 1998 and April 1999. Line transect method and pellet count technique were used to estimate abundance for all ungulates. Abundance es-

timates were used as a measure for intensity of habitat use by all species. The density estimates from line transects are associated with high coefficient of variation, which is largely a function of the small sample size resulting from extremely low densities.

Ordination of habitat parameters grouped the transects based on habitat quality and structure, disturbance and topography. Anthropogenic disturbance was found to be an important factor, influencing habitat quality and differential use of habitat by animals.

Sambar associated strongly with low disturbed hill habitats and poorly with the relocated village sites (open habitat) and disturbed plateau transects. Indications from line transects and pellet count method concur in the case of sambar. Chital were very localised in their distribution, being strongly restricted to secondary successional stages and ecotones between relocated village sites and woodland. Nilgai was a generalist in terms of habitat occupancy. In the case of nilgai, the two methods complement each other with the information they provide. The information from pellet-group count was found to reflect patterns that are not detected by direct sampling methods like line transects.

Chinkara were closely associated with the disturbed areas, largely because of their openness, but they were found also in the undisturbed areas of similar habitat. Wild pig, like nilgai, was a generalist, but showed preference for fringe areas of forest adjoining agricultural fields. Langur showed a marked preference for hill habitats and did not differentiate between disturbed and undisturbed hill habitats. Langur also showed the strongest association with water.

The distribution of preferred prey, sambar and chital is localised. Nilgai, which is distributed throughout the study area, is found in habitats not favourable for tigers. Such a distribution would probably only support dispersing and transient animals. Therefore habitat management should be aimed at maintaining and expanding habitats suitable for cervids. Disturbance in the form of livestock grazing and woodcutting are largely responsible for maintaining poor habitat quality. The cause for these disturbances can not be disconnected from the socio-economic and cultural reality of the people, both near and far, and therefore the conservation of the tiger has to address these aspects rather than restricting only to the biology of the animal."

Summaries of the dissertations from WII, Chandrabani, P.O. Box 18, Dehra Dun 248 001, U.P. E-mail: wii@wii.gov.in

An end of century assessment

On the brink of a new century, is the tiger “roaring back from the brink of extinction” as newspaper headlines proclaimed or is there rather “a grim reality to the future”?

The reporting of the *Wildlife Conservation Society*, STF-funded meeting ‘*Saving the tiger: assessing our success*’ (see ‘International News’ p. 33) presented the discussions with a very optimistic slant. A *Sunday Times*, U.K. story, repeated in the *Times of India*, appeared under the headline, “*Tigers surge back from the brink*” quoting Anita Neville of WWF as claiming “*the battle is partially won and we should be celebrating the successes*”. She further believes that we are “*getting to the point where the animal has a very good foothold*.” Articles appeared in the *New York Times* and through the Environment News Network proclaiming “*a remarkable recovery*” and “*a brighter future*” for the tiger, quoting Dr Joshua Ginsberg, Director of the *Wildlife Conservation Society Asia Program* as saying “*we are succeeding in saving the tiger*”. While warning that “*tigers are still endangered*” and in many areas may be lost if present trends continue, WCS’s press release states that there is an “*upswing in tigers*” and “*success is being realised across the range of the tiger*” with model programmes demonstrating how “*tiger conservationists are winning their battles*”. WCS also report that workshop participants reported a “*significant reduction in the illegal trade of tiger parts for traditional Chinese medicines*”.

For many, the very optimistic expositions were startling and seemed more concerned with appeasing big donors worried that their money may be being wasted on a “*lost cause*” than with a serious analysis of the tiger situation and tiger conservation activities. In the interest of taking the assessment discussion forward, a number of conservationists have reacted to the optimism and given their views on the tiger situation at the end of this century.

Peter Jackson, Chairman, IUCN Cat Specialist Group, who attended the workshop, is not so optimistic. He points out that “*conservation is a political matter*” and “*the situation is alarming*”. “*There is mounting evidence of the way in which tiger and other wildlife habitat is being illegally whittled away in India*”. While agreeing that constant repetition of disaster stories could convince potential donors that tiger conservation is a bad investment and that success stories need to be publicised, he contends that

“tiger conservation will not be served by turning a blind eye to realities. In the end, truth will out.”

In his response to the *New York Times* article, he writes, “*overall, the conservation situation of the tiger is far from satisfactory. Except in the Russian Far East, there is no sound evidence of an increase in tiger populations throughout its range in 14 Asian countries.*” Jackson highlights the fragmented nature of many of the tiger populations and remarks on the difficulty of assessing the clandestine trade in tiger and other wildlife products. Bearing in mind the continuing seizures of skins and bones in India, Nepal and Russia, he states of the trade, “*although there may have been some decline since the mid-1990s, I doubt if it is very marked.*” He points to the widespread poaching of tiger prey species as a serious danger, “*as threatening as poaching of the tiger itself*”.

He also stresses the crucial importance of habitat—“*population pressure on forest resources and land is intense, and as a result, the tiger population is heavily fragmented. Equally alarming is the way in which industry and commerce are encroaching on wild habitat, especially for mining...*” His conclusion is that “*the tiger’s situation is grave. Only strong and dedicated action by governments, with enhanced field staff, will save the tiger, along with strong support from the scientific community, as well as the general public.*”

Bittu Sahgal, editor of *Sanctuary Magazine*, agrees that there is a “*need to spur donors of all colours to continue to put money into tiger protection in range countries*”, but adds “*one dark thought*” which is: “*the single most devastating impact on the long-term future of the tiger—the renewed, frenzied drive to commercialise its habitat.*”

He draws attention to the fact that “*virtually all tiger habitats on the Indian subcontinent are now being uniformly squeezed for commercial gains (timber, minerals, tourism, dams, power lines, chemical contamination, tea and coffee plantations, roads and mega-projects of all descriptions)*”, and writes that “*so long as this erosion continues apace, we cannot rest easy in the belief that we are succeeding in saving the tiger across its range.*”

Sahgal argues for the idea of ‘Tiger (Habitat) Defence Units’ (TDUs). “*A lot of good for tigers would be done if something in the order of 30 to 40 tight (4/5 member) teams were chosen progressively over the next couple of years, right next to key tiger*

areas. A central team could coordinate their work and liaise with donors, government, the media and NGOs. Each team would need annual amounts varying between \$ 15,000 and \$ 25,000 to finance small localised lobbying, watchdog actions, legal initiatives, monitoring of tiger habitats, poaching incidents and whistle-blowing operations geared to keep all of us informed in time for us to act to prevent harm to the tiger instead of post-mortem assessments.”

Source: 'Hope still burning bright for the tiger' -WCS website: www.wcs.org; Tom Robbins, *Sunday Times* 24 October 1999; *NY Times* article by Natalie Angier; ENN's 'Future looks brighter for the tiger' by Margot Higgins; letter to *NY Times* from Peter Jackson <pjackson@iprolink.ch>; Bittu Sahgal <bittusahgal@vsnl.com>

A final word...

“This is the last TigerLink News of the twentieth century. It was in 1992 that some of us scared the world about the possible extinction of the tiger in 1999. It had to be done to shake the complacency of those times even though most of us knew that not every tiger would be wiped out before the 21st Century. Luckily we enter the next century with at least 2000–2500 tigers. I shudder to think what the state of the tiger would have been without the 'scare' of extinction we created in 1992. Would any scientific research projects have been started or cleared? Would any NGO interventions have commenced? Would the government have acted?

Today at least two major tiger research projects are ongoing and at least 20 new NGOs are registered and running, some better than others. Project Tiger finances have been doubled and we have 10 more tiger reserves. There is a special emphasis on anti-poaching and from zero at least US\$ 1.4–2 million is spent by international organisations on tiger conservation in India each year. That's better than nothing—it is some form of success—but not enough to warrant donors waving their flags as if to prove that their interventions saved the Indian tiger from extinction. To keep the tiger alive requires a life-long battle and each major donor across the world must realise this—it could even get into the next generation. We all have to engage in this battle, immerse ourselves fully in it and keep humility in our intent and articulations. It is because of some people in and out of government who have done this in the last 8 years that we have some quiet achievements to be proud of. But let's not blow our trumpets—never forget that from 1992 till today, India has lost at least 25,000 km² of tiger habitat under enormous pressure from

the mining industry, river valley projects, timber mafias and the pressures of an ever increasing population. The challenges for the next century will be enormous. Some of the figures below give an idea of today's pressures.

Land of the Tiger—India

Land area: **328 million ha.** (2.5% of the world)

Forest land: **67 million ha** (1.8% of the world)

Protected areas: **15 million ha.** (4.57% of land area)

Degraded forest: **31 million ha** (nearly 50% of forest area)

Human population: **1 billion** (17% of the world)

Livestock population: **600–700 million** (18% of the world) 50% graze in forests

Annual firewood demand: **210 million tonnes** (55% from forests)

Annual timber demand: **73 million cu.m.**

Annual fodder demand: **600 million tonnes green,**
500 million tonnes dry

Total forest guardians: **160,600—104,000** forest guards, 39,000 foresters, 11,000 rangers, 2,700 + 3,900 forest service officers (7–8% for Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks)

Annual budget for forest area: **US \$ 400 million**
(Rs. 1,680 crores)

Annual budget for PAs (534): **\$ 50 million**
(Rs 200 crores)

Estimated amount raised internationally for tigers:
\$ 100–150 million

Estimated annual amount spent in the range states on tigers by international NGOs: **\$9–11 million**

Amount spent by governments in tiger range states:
\$ 40–50 million / year

Amount spent in India on tigers by international NGOs: **\$1–2 million / year**

Amount spent on tigers by Indian Government (Central and State): **\$ 8 million / year**

Source: Valmik Thapar

There is a grim reality to the future. A severity to the crisis of the tiger because of vanishing habitat. To counter and minimise these pressures, we must create new interventions and join hands to force political will in order to reform and restructure the very basic mechanisms of wildlife governance if they are to be effective in the new millennium.”

Valmik Thapar, member, Project Tiger Steering Committee; founder, TigerLink network <tiger@vsnl.com>

We are very sorry for the obituary of Shri Sanjoy Deb Roy. His field work and performance in Manas National Park took him across the country. He was one of the best conservationists in our country. We pray to the almighty, may his soul rest in peace.

Dhritiman Das, College Road, Barpeta 781301, Assam

A light went out on the planet with the death of Sanjoy Deb Roy. I am one of many who grieve over the loss of a wonderful, gentle man and defender of wildlife.

I met Deb Roy only a few times in 1995 while I was in Delhi meeting conservationists and visiting some of your wildlife sanctuaries and parks but I will never forget him and the philosophical and profound talks we had over the plight of India's natural resources. I feel privileged to have met him and listened to some of his thoughts.

Barbara Tufty, Audubon Naturalist Society, Maryland, USA

I fully agree with the observations which you have made regarding **Sanjay National Park (SNP)** (TL News vol.5 no.2)

I have visited the park twice, first in February 1993 and then again in March 1998...

On both visits I observed that the density of wild ungulates was surprisingly low and perhaps that is the main reason for such a low tiger population for such a huge area (1,938 km²).

Perhaps if a serious relocation programme for the villages inside is undertaken then the farmlands inside the park area will turn into very good grass lands. This in turn will attract more wild ungulates

and their population will certainly increase, which again in turn will lead to a healthy tiger and leopard population.

On my last visit in March 1998, I was surrounded by hundreds of agitated villagers near the Bhadora FRH, in Kusmi Range, on the day of holi (13/3/98) who thought I was DFO of the area as I was travelling in a Gypsy. But after I disclosed my identity they became relaxed and my conversation with them revealed that most of them wanted to shift outside the park area, provided they were given a fair deal.

The forest staff is very poorly equipped and needs better equipment and some motivation for protecting such a vast area.

Amitabh Singh, 1/A Surya Bagh, Mahmooorganj, Varanasi 221010

In the otherwise gloomy and overcast monsoon surroundings of **Palamau Tiger Reserve** I had a refreshing experience of hearing the news that those four DFOs (including the Dy. Director of PTR) who were served with warrants of arrest issued in vengeance by the local police have ultimately secured a stay of execution through their petitions to the Honourable High Court of Patna. These four gallant officers had earlier caught the Officer-in-Charge of Daltonganj police station in the act of smuggling several crudely sawed teak planks from Betla Range of the Tiger Reserve. A prison van stacked with this stolen timber and accompanied by the O.C. was apprehended on 28 February of this year which was a cause for addition of bad blood in the already strained relation between the two arms of administration

responsible for protection of our natural heritage. Subsequent to the detention and production of the police officer and his team before Latehar Court, a counter complaint was recorded against the forest officials who were forced to spend these months in fear of the overhanging guillotine—reward for their fearless acts!

That is the good part of all that happened within a week in this so-called protection area of Bihar. Among the worst are:

3 spotted deer killed by stray dogs of Betla,

1 spotted deer killed in a village snare,

4 police constables shot dead near the satellite core,

1 officer-in-charge of a police station in the buffer zone shot dead,

56 teak trees felled and carried away (0.5 km away from Betla Range Office),

250 kg of kattha (extract from A. catechu) seized from a "specially designed" vehicle and:

the Tiger Reserve is still a headless entity without a Director, the permanent staff are spending days without their salaries for last 8 months,

daily wages to village labourers appointed for forest works remain unpaid for 11 months,

depredation on cornfields by hungry elephants have taken a serious turn in absence of crop protection efforts hindered by lack of funds and

funds are not forthcoming because the palms of people responsible in the state for their release are not being greased by any (the going rate is said to be 3%).

Kisor Chaudhuri, Naihar, Village: Betla, District Palamau, Bihar 822111

Like every year, flood time is fast approaching in the **Dudhwa Tiger Reserve** and National Park which will cause a huge loss of wildlife. Most of the deer species, wild boar and other tiger prey species are forced to migrate in a panicky and terrified state to take shelter in highland areas towards adjoining agriculture farms and unprotected buffer zones, where they are captured and killed for the kitchen and skin during high floods. Tigers do follow and are poached.

Due to construction of Suheli River barrage, heavy flood and blockage of flood water has become an annual feature in Dudhwa. Due to shortage of staff and other means, forest department is not in a position to pay any special attention to check such a high prey animal loss occurring every year.

Conservationists are most caring for the tiger, but not the least for this so far unestimated huge loss of natural food for the tiger—the prey animals due to floods in Dudhwa.

My humble suggestions are that:

1. More temporary extra manpower to be provided only for this work from 15 July to 30 September to work with the existing staff.
2. Recurring meetings to be arranged in villages bordering the floods areas to educate and warn people on loudspeakers that exemplary punishment will be awarded to one who captures any animal for killing. Pamphlets of this message to be freely distributed.
3. Infrastructure to procure information of capture and killing along with the entire forest border.
4. Under leadership of some high rank officer, forest vehicles,

elephants, boats, guards and armed forest guards, along with proposed staff, should be mobilised to protect the wildlife like emergency police squad in the non-protected areas during high floods.

It is an appeal on behalf of wildlife animals that for effective and quick implementation of protective measures, conservationists, NGOs as well as the Forest Department should mobilise their resources and efforts jointly before the floods come.

Sunil Jaiswal, P. Box 22, Palia Kalan (Kheri), U.P. 262902 (7 July 1999)

Recently, I visited the **Sunderbans** of India. I spent there from 3–5 September 1999 for exploring its birdlife. I entered up to the Moyadip (near sea) of the Sunderbans. I was so depressed to see the present condition of our largest mangrove forest, also the famous habitat of the Sunderbans tiger (*Panthera tigris*). In most places, there is no protection—even forest and tiger reserve guards and personnel were not available. I was also shocked to see a huge amount of illegal fishing—both permitted and non-permitted (I talked to a few fishermen) in core and buffer areas. Even fishing trawlers from outside the country (Thailand, China and Bangladesh) are coming for fishing (?). I do not know how they entered in our territory. Local human settlements are gulping the mangrove forest. Apart from this, soil erosion and embankment cutting of tigerland are regular happenings.

I want to bring this issue to TigerLink readers, that the Sunderbans are under great threat of extinction. Every forest is a people's forest. The funds govern-

ment is paying for protecting our wildlife and paying for forest staff are coming from our pocket because we are paying taxes. So, we have the same equal right to ask the government, how they are utilising the people's money?

The day after the trip, it was reported by A. K. Raha (CCF) of West Bengal that a foreign trawler was seized from Sunderbans carrying a tiger skin. The trawler was marked as 'fishing' trawler. Is not the whole business of saving the tiger, a fishy business!

Arunayan Sharma, Green People's India, N.S. Road, In front of T.O.P., Malda 732101, West Bengal

In spite of crores of rupees spent to protect our national animal, the numbers of this animal and dwindling throughout the country.

It was shocking that a tiger was killed in February 1999 in a Kerala Sanctuary (Kollam District). Another tiger was electrocuted in the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala (April 1999) where the tigers are already facing the threat of forest clearance in **Sabarimala development**, in spite of MoEF objecting to the so-called 'development' in the Project Tiger area.

It was really surprising to note that a male tiger was again visible in the paddy fields of Arapatta Meppadi-Wayanad District in Kerala this summer after a very long period. All precautions by the locals and by our organisation was taken for the safety of this animal in the area.

We would request the interference by the TigerLink against the repeated acts of the Kerala State Department of Temples to see the forests made out of the Project Tiger's area for the aim of clearance in the so-called development. While even the Lok Sabha

speaker during his visit to the temple had assured that he would see that the forest land is allotted for cutting—instead he should have done the necessary to see that the previous forests should have been protected at any costs.

Vinod Kumar Damodhar, Friends of Elephants Forum, 'Breeze', Cherootty Nagar, Calicut 673006

Due to large scale deforestation, the amount of wildlife—tigers, bears, deer—is decreasing day by day. Tigers and bears etc. are hunted by people easily when coming to human settlement for food. Within the last 5 years, 15 different tigers have died.

Within the last six months, out of five tigers and some cubs of Baipaguda forest that came down to Patraputa and Ramagiri villages in search of food and fell into a well and holes, only two could be saved. By the second week of August, a cub had fallen into a well but was saved by forest department employees.

The skin, nail, teeth and bones of different hunted animals such as bears, tigers etc. are sold openly in local fairs.

One decade before, survey work was carried out in Kolab forest in Koraput district for tiger reserve but no primary work was started. There are 185 leopards and 51 tigers counted in the government census in Koraput district.

Niladri Bihari Mishra, Central Hospital Colony, Banikala 758038, Keonjhar, Orissa

I would like to address the following ideas to the officials/individuals engaged in the management of Parks and their monitoring and control.

Wildlife tourism has seen much gains in the past few years and most of the Project Tiger Parks

support flourishing tourism in the peripheral areas. While wildlife tourism has come to stay, the fact remains that tourist activity entails high social/ecological costs. Nevertheless, the income that it generates and the employment opportunities that it creates in a society carrying a large workforce cannot be overlooked. More importantly, from the parks' point of view, it mops up workforce from inside the parks thereby reducing pressure on land inside the parks.

In this context, I indicate below two proposals—

1. **Wildlife tourism products** carry high social/environmental costs and hence they should be priced accordingly. Tourist economy will have to be looked at in terms of cash flow and NOT in terms of tourist arrivals.

2. If the wilderness/protected areas provide the support/potential for tourist economies, should not some of these earnings be ploughed back to the budgets of the parks for supporting their protection and management?

It is true that returns to the state from tourist activity cannot be measured directly. But, it should be possible to work out a formula for forging a link between the quantum of funds to be allocated to a particular park and the cash income generated by tourist activity in the area of that park and/or the collection made directly by the department/corporation.

N. Sunil Kumar, Hyderabad, c/o Arindom Datta <adatta@satyam.net.in>

I received the June 1999 issue of TigerLink for the first time. Tigers are integral and important part of our ecosystem and it is a matter of deep concern that in spite of several tiger protection

projects, tigers are still decreasing in numbers. The reason is that the common man is still unaware of the need of protection of tigers. After going through your magazine, I heartily feel that it will help in making people aware. Thanks for sending me such a knowledgeable magazine. I will like to remain in contact with you.

Poornendu Prakash, s/o Shri Lakshmanjee Choubey, Upper Storey, Behind Old Water Tower, PMCH Campus, Patna 800004, Bihar

I have gone through the June '99 issue of the TigerLink newsletter and am very much impressed by the collection of information in a concise capsule form, which I feel is very much helpful to those who want to get the present status of tiger and its conservation programmes in the world. The TigerLink network has done a commendable job in bringing together people who care for the big cats and the other flora and fauna in a wider sense.

Sadashib Nath Sen, c/o Adhikary Motor Works, P.O. Dhaligaon 783385 Bongaigaon, Assam

New NGOs

...Should we leave a legacy of destruction to posterity? That's the question. Extinction of many precious species of wildlife, many a species on the verge of destruction, vanishing forest land and pollution of air and water are matters of great concern for most thinkers of the world today. It is this grave concern which triggered the minds of a group of young enthusiastic persons who felt in their heart of hearts the need to do something to preserve, protect and enrich the flora and fauna in an at-

tempt to restore the past glory of nature in this region of human interest.

With that purpose this group of young people under the presidentship of Shri G. K. Das, I.F.S. Retd. Chief Conservator of Forests, Orissa, formed an organisation (a regd. body), Organisation for Preservation of Environment and Nature (OPEN) in Sambalpur to contribute, however humbly, to the cause of nature, wildlife and environment and has been striving determinedly to educate the people, to arouse a consciousness among them as to how these things sustain human life in this planet. Plantation, organising debate, seminars and group discussions in various schools and colleges of both urban and rural areas, interaction with the rural population are some of our programmes we have been performing.

K.P. Mishra, OPEN, Brooks Hill, Sambalpur - I <dkpadhi@ete.vsnl.net.in>

We have pleasure in informing you about the founding of Vana Vikasa. We are a group of people interested in wildlife conservation who founded 'Care for Nature's Creatures' (registered with WWF as a nature club) some ten years ago. With the intention of doing some full time work we founded Vana Vikasa.

Aims and Objectives of Vana Vikasa: 1. to help promote nature conservation, environmental protection and all other related aspects; 2. to promote sustainable agricultural practices like organic farming, natural farming, permaculture etc.; 3. to undertake constructive activities aimed to help poor for the progress of cultural, moral, social,

educational and economic standard of living.

K. Ramana Kumar, Vana Vikasa, D.NO. 10-3-142, Panja Street, MG Road, Bapatla 522101, Andhra Pradesh

Help wanted/offered

Namaskar. I received TigerLink today, and was pleased to obtain such useful information, and also saddened to hear the news. After all that is being done to save the tiger, we are still unsuccessful. In my view, everyone should have the inclination and the means to help. Money, men and weapons may not be able to save the tiger but if we all work together we can do it.

In the coming days we will have to do everything we can. We at Khoj have been working for the Melghat tiger. Along with the jungle and the tribals, Khoj has been watching, protecting and progressing in a regular fashion. We would now like you to guide us in our work through various workshops and meetings. We would also welcome support and information. We want to help!

Purnima Upadhyay and friends, Khoj, "Shivkrupa" Near Govind Lodge, Gujar Bazaar, Paratwada, District Amravati, Maharashtra (translated from Hindi)

Our organisation, Gram Vikas Manch, Umred, working in the field of environmental education, aims to make people aware about nature and the effect of environmental degradation on human life and to promote awareness about environmental issues.

We are also working in the field of protection of wildlife, animals and birds—counting how many birds are located in Umred Taluka. There are 200 water bodies in this taluka including many big lakes. Our organisation

is also planning to work on lakes and water bodies.

To run all these projects and study, our organisation needs your guidance and help. Kindly let us know how to go ahead. I shall be very grateful if you kindly consider this matter.

Rural Development Forum, Umred, Office R/o Dr. Gawali, Nr. Ram Mandir, Mangalwari Peth, Umred 441203, District Nagpur. Tel: (017116) 43042 Secretary: Nishikant Choudhari

I am a wildlife enthusiast, and love to devote my time for conservation and wildlife management. I am unaware of the source from which I can start my voluntary work. I am very curious to know about activities from which I can take part in conservation projects and wildlife management.

Vishal G. Brahamabhatt, 12, Lilawati Park, Near Uttam Nagar Bus Stop, Maninagar Valva Road, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

This is to inform you that I am very interested in wildlife and especially in tigers. I would like to provide assistance in any way possible in the conservation of these magnificent cats. Being a student of Class X it will be difficult for me to participate in very hectic activities this year, but I promise that I will participate in any activity next year. Please give a response to this earnest request.

Subhro Bhattacharya, 4 Mullen Street, Calcutta 700 020

I would like to help you save the Tigers. I am in A.C.F. and they want to help you too so I would like information on the tigers and some poster as well, please. Thank you.

Fiona Burt, age 13, 6 Waterston Road, By Brechin, DD9 6RS, Scotland

- *A Tiger's Story* by **Arjan Singh**. HarperCollins Publishers India, 1999. 257 pp. Rs 295. This is Tara's story, a touching account of the tigress that was brought from Twycross Zoo to Tiger Haven, the author's farm in Uttar Pradesh and reared by him in the hope of returning her to the wild. This is an intimate account of her life in Tiger Haven and 'her relationship with the author, of the cubs she bore to a wild mate and her gradual acclimatization to her natural habitat. The volume concludes with an inspiring chapter on tiger conservation'.
- *Wild Tigers of Ranthambhore* by **Valmik Thapar**, photographs by **Fateh Singh Rathore**. OUP 1999. 160 pp. 130 colour photographs. This book covers twenty-five years of the author's and photographer's experiences with tigers in the Ranthambhore National Park. The previously unpublished pictures portray many aspects of the tiger's life, including many interactions with other creatures in its environment.
— Esso India is sponsoring copies of this book for all TigerLink participants and as a special gesture each participant will be receiving a copy soon.
- *Khairi: The beloved tigress* by late **Saroj Raj Choudhury**. Natraj Publishers, Dehra Dun, 1999. 192 pp. This book by late S. R. Choudhury, the first Field Director of Simlipal National Park has been published 17 years after the author's death and speaks of the complex man-tiger relation between him and his tigress Khairi. It presents a detailed study of the tiger's behaviour. The author maintained log entries of each action of the tigress 24 hours a day and had three forest guards put on round the clock duty for six years for this task. From the author's diary: *It is a type of intimate study which has never been attempted before in history and may not be repeated. No opportunity (to study her behaviour) has been allowed to slip through my hands.*
- *The Tiger is a Gentleman* by **Vivek R. Sinha**. 'Wildlife', Bangalore 1999. 160 pp. 102 colour photographs. Rs 395. "A pictorial safari through the jungles of India" with "evocative anecdotes and unforgettable incidents" that play back the author's "adventurous career". "Besides vivid pictures, the book gives Sinha's off-beat insights into the behaviour of animals" and "captures the captivating moods of tiger, charging elephants and the breath-catching horrible beauty of a python regurgitating a deer."
- *The Oxford Anthology of Indian Wildlife (Volume I—Hunting and Shooting)* edited by **Mahesh Rangarajan**. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999. 439 pp. Rs 545. This volume brings together a wide-ranging selection of writings about the hunt in its myriad forms, mainly from the period of the British Raj. The volume gives an insight into the different techniques of tribal or peasant hunters and trappers, and of princes and sahibs; the methods range from falconry and cheetah coursing to beating and elephant round-ups. These "accounts left behind by hunters offer insight into the behaviour and ecology of species which now exist only in isolated pockets or have vanished entirely from the region. Celebrations of hunting exploits have become a record of vanishing ecosystems."
- *The Oxford Anthology of Indian Wildlife (Volume II—Watching and Conserving)* edited by **Mahesh Rangarajan**. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999. 303 pp. Rs 450. The second volume in a set which brings together wildlife writing from the days of the Raj to the present times, celebrates the transformation from conquest or slaughter to conservation. There are vivid descriptions by pioneering animal watchers such as Corbett and Salim Ali. The transition from gun to camera emerges clearly through the experiences of two great conservationists, Kailash Sankhala and Arjan Singh. The volume also documents new trends in the study of animal behaviour and life, in the accounts of Valmik Thapar and R. Sukumar which detail the family life of tigers and elephants. "The dilemmas of conservation come alive in this book, and alert us to the need for efforts to keep nature a haven for wildlife as well as a home for man."
- *Environment: A will to fail?* by **Ranjit Bhargava**. Gyanodaya Prakashan, Nainital. 1999. The author, an environmentalist and former member of the Uttar Pradesh State Wildlife Advisory Board, highlights "the urban confusion and a dwindling wilderness that is compounded by lack of awareness, inadequate research and a total absence of political will".
- *The Tiger Hunters* by **Anatoly Builov**. Raduga Publishers, Moscow, Russia (English translation

1998). 293 pp. "This book is fiction, based on the adventures of known tiger hunters who endured immense privations in the bitter, snowy winters of the Russian Far East to catch tigers, usually cubs for zoos."

- **The Amur Tiger in Russia: An annotated bibliography** by E. N. Matyushkin. WWF Russia, Moscow, Russia. 412 pp. "The first bibliography on the Amur tiger in Russia. Annotations in English. There are maps and diagrams, as well as black and white photos of tigers, prey and habitat."

- **Born Black: The melanistic tiger in India** by L. A. K. Singh. WWF-India, New Delhi, 1999, 66 pp. This publication presents a study, supported by WWF-India, on "the melanistic tiger as an evolutionary aberrant". The author believes that there is a greater number of aberrantly coloured tigers and that this is due to inbreeding depression. He fears this has conservation implications by making it less appealing to "the conservation-supporting public" and "ill-fit" for "a natural mode of life."

- **Alternatives to Pesticides in Tropical Countries: Sustainable agriculture, food security with food safety** by Dr A. T. Dudani. Vigyan Prasar, 1999, Rs 250 (hardback) Rs 150 (paperback). The book covers a number of issues relating to pesticides, including health hazards and the poisoning of the environment, loss of habitats and biological diversity, a review of pesticides in India and elsewhere and why there is opposition to pesticides. The author was responsible for the first ever status report on pesticides and related problems in India, which came out in 1987.

Available from: Vigyan Prasar, C-24 Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi 110016 Tel: (011) 6967532 / 6864022 Fax: 6965986 / 6965980 E-mail: vigyan@hub.nic.in

- **The Greater Common Good** by Arundhati Roy. Indian Book Distributors (Bombay) Ltd, 1999. 76 pp. Rs 65. The article that first appeared in *Outlook* and *Frontline* is now available in book form with a map, photos, references and an index. "Not only is this the finest essay I've read on the subject of dams, it's probably the finest I've read on the politics of 'development' in general and I've read more than my fair share of articles and books on dams and development"—Patrick McCully

IBD, 1007/1008, Arcadia, 195 Nariman Point, Mumbai 400020

- **Large Dams and their alternatives**—dossier from SANDRP (South Asian Network on Dams, Rivers and People). Collection of papers from the South

Asia Consultation organised by the World Commission on dams and held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in December 1998. The meet was an unprecedented event that brought together pro-dam proponents, the Asian Development Bank, NGOs etc. 165 pp. Rs 100 (postage and packing extra).

Available from SANDRP, 53B, AD Block, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi 110052 Tel/fax: 7479916 E-mail: cwaterp@del3.vsnl.net.in

- **The Florida Panther: Life and death of a vanishing carnivore** by David S. Maehr. Island Press. 261 pp. A book on the plight of the Florida panther, *Puma concolor coryi*, which suffers from continuing human pressure on its habitat. The author feels that the survival of this animal in the wild "will have everything to do with the way their landscapes are managed." "This is a must for those involved in conservation of large cats"—Peter Jackson.

- **Linkages in the Landscape: The role of corridors and connectivity in wildlife conservation** by Andrew F. Bennett. IUCN-The World Conservation Union. 254 pp. The author provides an overview of the issue of fragmentation of forest and other wildlife habitats and of the resulting genetic deterioration and suggests practical ways of designing and managing corridors, with working examples.

- **The Vanishing Stripes**—a report by *Crusade for Revival of Environment and Wildlife* (CREW) on the tiger crisis in Madhya Pradesh. This report focuses on the threats faced by the tiger in Madhya Pradesh due to increased poaching, loss of habitat, encroachments, development projects, illegal mining, fishing, and increased human pressure on the forest for timber and fuel, grazing etc. The issues are well illustrated with a number of case studies.

Available from: CREW, P.O. Box 592, Bhopal 462 016 Tel: (0755) 271041 Fax: 552888

- **Trade of Tiger Parts and Medicines in Japan (June 1999)**—a report written by Masayuki Sakamoto and Kumi Togawa and published by the *Japan Wildlife Conservation Society*. Looks at the repercussions of the lack of interest shown by the Japanese Government in trying to control tiger trade. The report provides "some insight into the current situation of marketing of tiger parts and derivatives in Japan, analyses the domestic demand for such products and based on the above findings, considers the necessity of extended legislation to control the domestic trade in tiger parts and derivatives."

Japan Wildlife Conservation Society, Suehiro Bld.7F, 2-5-4, Toranomon Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0001, Japan; Tel/fax: +81-3-3595-1171; Email: jwcs@blue.ocn.ne.jp

- **GTF News**—*Global Tiger Forum's* second newsletter, June, 1999 edited by S. C. Dey comes after the fifth ratification from the tiger range states making the Forum fully operational as per requirements of the statutes.

- **Wildlife Conservation**—the June 1999 edition of the newsletter of the *Wildlife Conservation Society* carries articles by Michael Nichols, Ullas Karanth, Antony J. Lynam, Alan Rabinowitz and U Saw Tun Khaing focusing on the tiger and the efforts to save it from imminent extinction.

Wildlife Conservation magazine, Bronx Zoo, Bronx, NY 10460; Tel: 718-220-6876; Email: magazine@ecs.org

- **Regional Symposium on the Conservation of the Royal Bengal Tiger** compiled and edited by WWF Nepal Program. 1999. Proceedings of the meeting jointly organized by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation, WWF-Nepal Program and Visit Nepal Year 98 Secretariat in December 1998 in Chitwan, Nepal.

WWF-Nepal Program, PO Box 7660, Lal Durbar, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: (-977-1-) 434820 /434970 Fax: 434537 E-mail: mns@wwf.mos.com.np

- **Ecodevelopment in Practice: Buxa Tiger Reserve and forest people** by B. G. Karlsson in *Economic and Political Weekly*, pp. 2087-92, 24 July 1999. A discussion of the World Bank and GOI ecodevelopment plan from 1992 to 1997 in relation to the Rabha community situated in the buffer zone of the BTR. "...in the Rabha villages ecodevelopment has had more or less no impact and other than the minor attempts just mentioned, there is little visible trace of it." Karlsson records the lack of involvement the Rabhas have had in the planning process and his article illustrates the pitfalls of such top-down schemes, "of talk and meetings but no action". The situation he describes and arguments presented have a wider application.

- **Twilight**—a newsletter published by 'Pugmarks'. The June 1999 edition focuses on the Sunderbans.

Smaran Ghosal, Pugmarks Nature Resort Pvt. Ltd., 10 Meherali Road, Calcutta 700 017. Tel/fax: (033) 2407737, Tel: 2808917, E-mail: pugmarks@cal2.vsnl.net.in / pugmarks@usa.net

- **Wanted Alive: Bears in the wild**—1999 WWF Species Report written by Elizabeth Kemf, Alison Wilson, and Christopher Servheen, giving the distribution and status of all bear species.

WWF International, Avenue du Mont-Blanc, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland Fax: +41 22 3645829 E-mail: infobox@wwfnet.org

Websites

www.westbengal.com/wildlife—website of the Government of West Bengal, displaying information on the sanctuaries, national parks and tiger reserves of the state, on the ecosystems and species found there and on conservation initiatives.

www.savetigers.org—site of *Internet Tiger Activist*, a group of people "dedicated to the cause of saving the tiger from extinction, using the power of the Internet to campaign"—started in early 1999 by Chris de Carteret to collect signatures on a petition to the Prime Minister of India. He has run other campaigns on the coal mining threat to Bihar and M.P. and on Japan's trade in tiger parts.

www.cites.org—site of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

www.iucn.org—site of IUCN—the World Conservation Union. **www.iucn.org/themes/ssc**—covers the Species Survival Commission activities and has a complete list of specialist groups, their chairs and contact persons.

www.felidae.org—site of the *Cat Action Treasury* which raises funds for projects approved by the Cat Specialist Group; includes comprehensive information on all cat species.

www.uidaho.edu/rsrch/hwi—Hornocker Wildlife Institute site, covers research on the Amur tiger and mountain lions.

UNEP International Photographic Competition on the Environment 1999-2000

Theme : Focus on Your World

Entrants are invited to show, through photographs, how they view the world at the dawn of a new millennium. The photographs should reflect our planet and environment in all its diversity and should attempt to convey the photographer's vision or dream, anger or despair, hopes or fears towards our "only one earth".

The competition closes 30 April 2000—photos must have been taken between 1 January 1999 and 30 April 2000.

For details contact: Senior Advisor, ENVIS, MoEF, Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodi Road, New Delhi 100003 Fax: (011) 4361147 E-mail: harjit@envis.ernet.in / envis@enfor.delhi.nic.in Website: www.unep-photo.com

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TigerLink News is for private circulation, only to *TigerLink* participants. It records worldwide tiger news and information, some of which has come from participants and therefore represents their views. For any further details please write to the participants directly. We regret if any errors have been committed in the compilation of this document.

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