

## **Minutes of the meeting on Status of Wild Cattle in South Asia (28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011)**

The status of wild cattle in South Asia meeting was held at Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun on 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011. The main objective of the meeting was to update the status of the wild cattle in South Asia. In total, 22 experts from various organizations across the Indian Subcontinent attended the meeting. The program schedule and participant names and addresses are attached in the annexure I and II.

### **Day one – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

The first session was started at 9.30 am on 28<sup>th</sup> and the inaugural address was given by Dr. P. K. Mathur, Dean, Faculty of Wildlife science. During the afternoon session, on day one Mr. Sanjay Molur explained about the IUCN guidelines for data gathering on wild cattle status. Subsequently, the landscape wise groups were formed to update distribution maps and fill in the data sheet on wild cattle status.

The landscape wise groups were:-

**South India (Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu)** - Rangunath, Athul Joshi and T. Ramesh

**Central India (Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh Andhra Pradesh) –**

G. Areendran, R. K. Mishra, Ravi Goevirkerv, Ajay Gaur and B. Navaneethan

**North India (Bihar/Jharkhand), N.E. India – (West Bengal, Assam & NE Hill states)**

- Rahul Kaul, Anupam Sharma and Dipankar Gosh

**Nepal and Bhutan** - Kaka Tship and Jhamak Karki

### **Day two – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

After the oral presentations on day two in the forenoon, the session was continued with landscape wise data gathering and feedback in plenary on the priority areas for each region and threats were identified.

## **Group I Western Ghats**

Ragunath, Athul Joshi and T. Ramesh

### **Gaur conservation in the Western Ghats**

The study showed varied trend in population; so conservation action plan needs to be site specific. Overall plan of action would address -

1. **Connectivity:** Gaur – landscape species with high food requirement and wide home range. Therefore, maintaining the connectivity among the forests is very important for the gaur conservation. It is also important to identify critical corridors and strengthen the connectivity.
2. **Livelihood based threats** – Livelihood based threats – biomass extraction – restrictions through efficient field staff but also needs to give livelihood alternatives to local communities. A policy level issue.
3. **Developmental and commercial threats** - there is a law for protection of wildlife but needs to be enforced. Many instances permissions are given for mining and windmills without proper assessment of the area.
4. **Disease through domestic livestock** – vaccination of the livestock and regulation of the livestock grazing in gaur habitat.
5. Variable trends in distribution – decline, persistence and colonization – conservation action plan should be site specific
6. Threats
7. Conflict
8. Niligiri Mysore – gaur population prone to domestic cattle transmitted disease, regular vaccination programme needs to be conducted
9. Poaching – increase forest protection by patrolling, increase set up anti poaching camps
10. Ganja (*Cannabis sp* cultivation - major problem
11. Eradication of Invasive plant species such as *Opuntia dillenii*, *Lantana camara*, *Prosopis juliflora*
12. Speed breakers
13. Fencing should be removed

14. Developmental and commercial threats - there is a law for protection of wildlife but needs be enforced. Many instances permissions are given for mining and windmills without proper assessment of the area.
15. Livestock grazing should be regulated
16. Maintaining the connectivity
17. Human-gaur conflict
18. Temples inside sanctuaries --- lot of pressure from pilgrims
19. Settlements should be removed

### **Group II central India**

G. Areendran, R. K. Mishra, Ravi Goevirkerv, Ajay Gaur and B. Navaneethan

### **Suggestion for conservation of Wild buffalo in Central India**

1. Inter-state co-ordination between CG, MH and AP
2. Ecological monitoring produce information to feed into management of wild buffalo – availability of suitable habitat and food plants.
3. Restoration of habitats specially in Udanti WLS
4. Removal of domestic buffalo from Wild buffalo home range
5. Ensure for proper health management of wild buffalo through appropriate prophylactic majors of livestock.
6. To provide full protection to the animals specially in Udanti WLS
7. To augment population of wild buffalo specially in Udanti WLS
8. To undertake comprehensive survey to monitor wild buffalo in western part of Indravati (Tenkamarka) and adjoining Maharashtra forest.
9. With the people living in wild buffalo range areas so that people become partners in wildlife conservation, especially with regard to preservation of the wild buffalo, which is the state animal.
10. Minimize dependence of local people from the wild buffalo area through eco-development majors.
11. Orienting and training to local field forest as well as villagers to conservation and monitoring of Wild buffalo

12. Translocation of additional female buffalos for Udanti from neighboring populations to infuse fresh blood in the population.
13. Initiating a conservation breeding programme in Udanti WLS
14. Assisted reproduction: Artificial insemination and embryo transfer techniques as well as Cryo preservation of germ plasm of wild buffalo in Udanti WLS
15. Develop alternate sites for human re-settlement specially in Udanti
16. Regulation of forestry operations from Sironcha area
17. Socio-economic surveys in Wild buffalo area

### **Comments and suggestion for conservation of Gaur in Central India**

1. Ecological monitoring of gaur in selected PAs.
2. Orienting and training of local field forest officials as well as villagers
3. Monitoring of population outside PA is required.
4. Information on local migration needs to be collected.
5. Hunting /poaching information

### **Group III North East**

Rahul Kaul, Anupam Sharma and Dipankar Gosh

### **Group IV Nepal and Bhutan**

Kaka Tship and Jhamak Karki

### **Conservation significance of Gaur**

1. Reintroduction of Gaur into Babai Valley National Park, BNP
2. Population survey, Habitat management in Manas National Park.

### **Conservation significance of Wild Water Buffalo**

1. Reintroduction of Wild Water Buffalo from KTWR to Chitwan and Bardia NPs and Suklaphanta WR, study the level of hybridization, reducing the conflict
2. Habitat management, Population survey and Management planning.

### **Conservation significance of Yak**

1. Small and isolated population (110-120 individuals).
2. Ecological monitoring.
3. Inbreeding.
4. Genetic contamination with domestic yak.
5. The status of Indian wild yak may be listed as Highly Endangered in IUCN Red List.

It was agreed that the compiled information on gaur status, distribution, population and conservation treats etc., will be sent to Dr. G. Areendran, WWF, New Delhi, required for preparing the distribution map of gaur in different landscapes of India, Nepal and Bhutan. A draft action plan for gaur will be prepared by Dr. Christy Williams, Area Co-ordinator, WWF, Nepal and Dr. Bivash Pandav, WII by mid July 2011 and the same will be send to Dr. K. Sankar and Mr. Sanjay Molur for final vetting. The final action plan will be prepared by the end of July 2011 and sent to Dr. Christy Williams.

# Annexure-I

## Meeting on

### Status of Wild Cattle in South Asia

#### PROGRAMME

#### DAY ONE: Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011

- 0930 - 0940 hrs** Inaugural Address by Dr. P. K. Mathur, Dean, Faculty of Wildlife Sciences, WII
- 0940 - 1000 hrs** WII's involvement in wild cattle research with special reference to wild buffalo in Kaziranga.  
*P.K. Mathur, Dean Faculty of Wildlife Science, WII, Dehra Dun*
- 1000 - 1020 hrs** Status, distribution and conservation of gaur in India.  
*K. Sankar, WII, Dehra Dun*
- 1020 - 1040 hrs** Distribution and Status of Gaur in the Western Ghats.  
*R. Raghunath & Atul Joshi, NCF, Mysore*
- 1040 - 1100 hrs** Status, distribution and conservation of wild buffalo in Central India.  
*Rajendra Mishra, WTI, NOIDA*
- 1100 - 1120 hrs** Conservation genetics of wild buffalo in Central India.  
*Ajay Gaur, CCMB, Hyderabad*
- 1120 - 1150 h** **Group Photograph & Tea**
- 1150 - 1210 hrs** Habitat Suitability modeling of gaur in Pench Tiger Reserve using remote sensing and GIS techniques.  
*G. Areendran, WWF-India, New Delhi*
- 1210 - 1230 hrs** Re-introduction of gaur in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh.  
*Parag Nigam, WII, Dehra Dun*
- 1230 - 1250 hrs** Status, distribution and conservation of gaur and wild buffalo in Nepal.  
*Jhamak Karki, DNPWC, Nepal*

- 1250 - 1310 hrs** Status, distribution and monitoring of wild buffalo and gaur in Maharashtra.  
*Ravikiran Goevikar, Forest Dept., Maharashtra*
- 1310 - 1320 hrs** Status of Wild Yak in Ladakh, J&K.  
*K. Sankar, WII, Dehra Dun*
- 1320 - 1430 hrs** **Lunch**
- 1430 - 1630 hrs** Region wise breakout groups - Update distribution maps for each state.  
Polygon (Management unit – Wildlife Sanctuaries, National Parks, Reserved Forests, Community Forests etc.).  
  
**Regions** – Nepal, Bhutan, North India (Bihar/Jharkhand), N.E. India – (West Bengal, Assam & NE Hill states), Central India (MP, Maharashtra, Chattisgarh), South India (Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu)
- 1630 - 1650 hrs** **Tea**
- 1650 - 1800 hrs** **Continued...** Region wise breakout groups.
- DAY TWO: Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011**
- 0930 - 0950 hrs** Conservation perspective of wild buffalo in Central India.  
*K. Sivakumar, WII, Dehra Dun*
- 0950 - 1010 hrs** Translocation of wild buffalo in Assam, India.  
*Rahul kaul, WTI, NOIDA*
- 1010 - 1130 hrs** Breakout groups (contd.) - identification of priority conservation areas & Evaluation of threats to wild cattle and buffaloes in those polygons (management units) for each States/regions identified and datasheet filled in
- 1130 - 1150 hrs** **Tea**
- 1150 - 1330 hrs** **Continued....** identification of priority conservation areas.
- 1330 - 1430 hrs** **Lunch**
- 1430 - 1530 hrs** Feedback in Plenary on the priority areas for each region and threats identified.

- 1530 - 1630 hrs** Discussion of next steps including plans for the larger IUCN AsWCSG meeting for development of an Action Plan.
- 1630 - 1645 hrs** **Tea.**
- 1645 - 1700 hrs** Concluding Session.

## Annexure-II

### Meeting on Status of Wild Cattle in South Asia 28th & 29th June 2011, held at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun

S.No.	Name of the participant	Designation	Contact Address	Phone/Fax	E-mail
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9	Sh.Atul Joshi	Research affilicate	Nature conservation foundation #3076/5, 4th cross, Gokulam park,Mysore- 570002 (India)	9916138287, 9421108241	atul@ncf-india.org
10	Dr. Prabal Sarkar	coordinator	Wildlife Trust of India, F-13,Sector-8 Noida-201301	9654001331	prabal@wti.org.in; prabal_india2sify.com
11	Dr. Rajendra Mishra	Manager	Wildlife Trust of India, F-13,Sector-8 Noida-201301	Tel-0120-4143900; Fax-4143933; Mob-9424241900;	rajendra@wti.org.in; mpmishra12rediffmail.com
12	Sh.Rahul kaul	Sr.Director	Wildlife Trust of India, F-13,Sector-8 Noida-201301	Tel-0120-4143900; Fax-4143933; Mob-9891068400;	<a href="mailto:rahul@wti.org.in">rahul@wti.org.in</a>
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