



Human Leopard Conflict in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve: The Emerging Drift and Community Perspective

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Abstract: A study was conducted on the status and management of human leopard conflict in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve of Madhya Pradesh, India with special reference to people perception and community based conservation. The Tiger Reserve with an area of 1161.471 km² is situated in Uamria, Madhya Pradesh. There were 13 villages in the Core Zone of the Reserve and 152 revenue villages within 5 km radius of the Reserve with 97,556 human populations and 1,14,533 cattle population. A total of 345 livestock depredation cases were recorded during this period, out of which 84.64% were of cow/ox followed by goat and buffalo. Maximum (77) cases were recorded during 2010 and minimum (5) in 2001. The result shows a gradual rise in the cases from 2001 to 2011. The mean loss of livestock by leopard attack was 48.66, 3.16 and 5.67 deaths per range for cow/ox, buffalo and goat between 2001 to 2011, respectively. A total of 6 human mauling cases were reported from 2001 to 2011. The questionnaire survey revealed that livestock depredation by Leopards created a psychological impact on local residents, and they started treating the animals like a threat resulting sometimes in retaliation killing. To balance such losses and create compassion for wild animals the Forest Department of Madhya Pradesh had provision for *ex-gratia* compensation. However, 56.11% were not satisfied with the compensation system. They were unhappy over lengthy process involved, less compensation and delay in the payment. Conservation and development of habitat and water holes, development of grassland and rangeland, capture and translocation of problematic animals, bio fencing, livestock insurance, easygoing compensation process, proper housing of livestock and community based conservation could be some solution to reduce the manage the human Leopard conflict in the area.

Keywords: Human Leopard conflict, Bandhavgarh Tiger reserve, Livestock depredation, Human mauling
