

## ***Chapter 4. Conclusions***

### **I. An Action Plan**

1. To achieve the ambitious goal of protecting tigers urgent and workable solutions are needed that translate the virtuous principles of conservation into sustainable outcomes. The most immediate short-term threat is the poaching crisis driven by the illegal trade in tiger parts, and it requires an emergency response through strengthened protection and a greater investment in controlling the illegal trade across the market chain. The history of conservation demonstrates that this must be complemented by approaches that tackle the root causes of the problem — the overwhelming economic incentives to convert and fragment habitats and poach tigers for the urban consumers of East Asia.

2. To create a more sustainable and effective model of conservation, priorities fall into four broad areas that address poaching and habitat challenges:

- a. ***Create and implement a conservation paradigm that enlists incentives.*** A conservation paradigm that resists development and growth will be overwhelmed and undermined by the forces it opposes. It is those who live with the tiger who will ultimately determine its fate. Effective wildlife management must aim to make landscapes *with* tigers valued more than habitats without them. This report has outlined the core elements that might be included in such a framework. In general, knowledge of how this could be achieved is limited. The approaches would need to be tailored to specific local conditions and would vary across countries and even within countries. The initial steps in creating this paradigm are to:

- Identify the key threats and their drivers and create a consensus for a new approach in partnership with NGOs, governments, and the scientific community in the countries to develop appropriate country or regional strategies to influence public policy, gain community support, and promote the stewardship of tigers and other endangered biodiversity in tiger habitats;
- Identify focal areas to pilot these approaches in partnership with leading scientists, NGOs, multilateral agencies, governments, and the private sector to promote tiger conservation; and
- Shift conservation from being a special interest to occupying the mainstream of development and policy discourse. The Web and other avenues should be used to promote global awareness and seek innovative solutions.<sup>30</sup>
- Use standardized, scientific means to monitor tiger and prey population distribution, numbers, and habitat integrity, and devise meaningful indicators of tiger conservation actions to allow for adaptive management approaches.

- b. ***Financial resources.*** Funding for tiger conservation is inadequate. Conservation of biodiversity is a global public good and hence calls for international support and cooperation to finance the costs of protecting endangered species. Greater funding through the existing overseas development aid channels would be desirable but may not be forthcoming, given the many competing demands on these resources. Alternative and

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<sup>30</sup> One such tool being considered by conservation NGOs is crowd-sourcing, a Web-based instrument to engender awareness.

- novel avenues for generating resources for biodiversity should be sought. Promising alternatives include (i) the establishment of a dedicated tiger conservation *Multi-donor Trust Funds*, in which potential donors can pool resources that would be disbursed under strict and verifiable criteria to assure economic and effective use of funds; (ii) the introduction of *Green (Tiger) Bonds* as a way of tapping into the nascent ethical investment resource pool; (iii) *biodiversity auctions*, a new instrument being used to generate private funds for particular conservation initiatives; and (iv) *green lotteries*, a variant of the biodiversity auction which has been used successfully to raise funds for public causes.
- c. ***Biodiversity-friendly infrastructure.*** The countries where tigers range have vast infrastructure needs that continue to overlap with tiger habitats. Consequently, biodiversity-sensitive development and infrastructure must be part of the solution. Strategies need to be developed to ensure that the final balance is not always one of environmental loss. There are numerous examples of good infrastructure projects that minimize the negative footprint through sound design and improve environmental outcomes by providing resources for conservation. These projects recognize that sustainable economic growth requires adequately addressing negative externalities. A *biodiversity filter* developed to guide infrastructure development in the Tiger Conservation Landscapes can help achieve these outcomes.
- d. ***Tackling illegal trade to control poaching.*** The trade in tiger parts transcends countries and cannot be resolved by unilateral national actions. Finding ways to address the poaching crisis is the most pressing and urgent need. Despite the immense scale of the illegal trade, there is only scant understanding of either the complex and underground web of suppliers or the factors driving the demand for wild tiger products. To gain a deeper traction in bringing the trade under control there is a need to:
- Develop strategies in partnership with other organizations to address the root cause of the problem — the demand for tiger products. This will require a major global and country effort to raise awareness and alter consumer preferences. The challenge of this task should not be underestimated. Awareness must be raised regarding the negative impacts of the trade and the unfounded justifications for consumption of tiger parts, while sensitively handling beliefs often deeply rooted in cultural history and mythologies.
  - Tackle the trade throughout the entire supply chain simultaneously, and strengthen the role of global and regional enforcement agencies, including SAARC and ASEAN.

## II. The Role of the World Bank

3. The World Bank has a mandate to improve the stewardship of global public goods and an important role to play in preventing species extinction and promoting global environmental governance. This growing engagement in environmental protection is consistent with the World Bank's wider historical evolution.

4. At its foundation, the World Bank had no explicit environmental policy, and its concerns were rooted in developing infrastructure in the aftermath of the Second World War. The 1980s ushered in the first wave of environmental policies — termed the safeguard policies — that seek to mitigate the footprint of infrastructure projects (Box 4.1). This was followed by more proactive interventions in the form of technical assistance to help countries develop environmental policies, implement environmental strategies, and build institutional capacity. In the 1990s an Environment Strategy was developed and implemented. More recently, environmental Development Policy Loans (DPLs) have aimed at promoting sound environmental governance. Other members of the World Bank group, IFC and MIGA, have developed environmental standards that have established the environmental benchmark for guiding responsible investments in the private sector. The World Bank has pioneered environmental concerns in its lending, and its new engagement in species protection is a natural extension of this trend.

#### Box 4.1. The World Bank's Natural Habitats Policy

The Operation Policy of Natural Habitats (OP4.04) was issued in 2001 after over a year of consultation. It still represents the most comprehensive policy of its type of any development bank or similar situation.

Its activity has not essentially modified the area's "primary ecological functions"; it determines that "the Bank does not support projects involving the significant conversion of natural habitats unless there are no feasible alternatives for the project and its siting, and comprehensive analysis demonstrates that overall benefits from the project outweigh the environmental costs."

Certain natural habitats are defined as being "critical" if they are existing protected areas and areas officially proposed by government as protected areas, areas initially recognized as protected by traditional local communities, sites that maintain conditions vital for the viability of these protected areas, "or sites identified on supplemental lists prepared by the Bank or an authoritative source determined by the regional environment divisions." In this regard "the Bank does not support projects that, in the Bank's opinion, involve the significant conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats."

Institutional capacity of the implementing organization should be taken into account in deciding whether to support a project with potential adverse impacts and capacity-building activities should be included where needed.

In projects with natural habitat components, project preparation, appraisal, and supervision arrangements include appropriate environmental expertise to ensure adequate design and implementation of mitigation measures. The Bank supports, and expects borrowers to apply, a precautionary approach to natural resource management to ensure opportunities for environmentally sustainable development. The Bank expects the borrower to take into account the views, roles, and rights of groups, including local NGOs and communities, affected by Bank-financed projects involving natural habitats and to involve such people in planning, designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating such projects.

A considerable number of projects — and associated habitats and species — have benefited from the application of this policy. No major infrastructure project adjacent to tiger habitat has seen as comprehensive or beneficial use of OP4.04 as has the Nam Theun 2 Hydroelectric project (see Box 3.5),, a good example of how an infrastructure project can leverage habitat protection.

5. The World Bank has funded about 595 projects with biodiversity components in 122 countries (including 49 multi-country projects). Of these, nine have been in tiger-range countries. As with most other initiatives dealing with tiger conservation, the outcomes have been mixed. The documented successes have been in the Russian Far East. But as with other tiger conservation efforts, success has often been elusive. Conservation strategies have been undermined by the new and unprecedented challenge of poaching as well as the unrelenting erosion of habitats driven by economic pressures. The World Bank is therefore well placed to help learn lessons from its own development experience and from its conservation projects. With its global reach, the World Bank is among the few organizations that can respond at the scale needed to address the illegal trade in tiger parts. Its presence in most tiger-range countries allows it to facilitate partnerships with international NGOs, governments, and the scientific community to address the illegal trade and help develop sustainable conservation solutions. To implement this vision, the Bank proposes to facilitate a consensus building partnership. This would include actions such as a review of projects in tiger habitats to learn lessons from the past and share these with tiger-range countries; facilitating country workshops and other platforms of partnership with NGOs, governments, and the scientific community in countries to develop new models of conservation; assisting in strategies to address the illegal trade and the demand for tiger products, and explore alternative and new funding mechanisms for tiger conservation.