

This report will be made public. If it contains confidential or sensitive information, please also provide a revised report for sharing with the public.

Section I. Project Information					
Project Title: Promoting human-tiger coexistence to secure the future of Bengal tigers					
Grantee Organisation: Zoological Society of London					
Location of project: Northern buffer zone of Parsa National Park (PNP), Nepal, in the community					
managed forest corridors and Churia forests					
Size of project area (if appropriate): Approx.	No of tigers and / or Amur leopards in project				
300 sq.km	area, giving evidence & source: 41 tigers as per				
	national tiger census 2022				

**Partners:** (Please give details of partners, including communities, academic institutions etc. for this project.

### Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC)

The DNPWC is the main government authority providing oversight for conservation and management of wildlife in Nepal. It is responsible for the overall management of Nepal's Protected Areas (PAs) including the buffer zones. ZSL has a very good professional relationship with the DNPWC and since 2014 has had a working MoU with the authority. Through the DNPWC we have a close working relationship with the PA managers at PNP. The DNPWC, through the Programme Coordination Committee (PCC) facilitates implementation of the project activities and is responsible for the overall monitoring and evaluation of the project (as set out in the project proposal). The project has been formulated under the guidance of DNPWC and the required permission has been obtained.

#### Parsa National Park (PNP)

In 1984 PNP was known as a wildlife reserve, primarily aiming to preserve the wild Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) and its remaining habitat, along with other varieties of fauna. In 2015, the reserve area was extended from 499sq.km to 627.39 sq.km and in 2017 the status was upgraded from a wildlife reserve to a National Park (NP). PNP plays a vital role in achieving the goals and objectives of PA management regimes in Nepal as it provides critical habitat for endangered species including tigers, and also provides transboundary connectivity with Chitwan NP and Valmiki Tiger Reserve in India. It is also part of the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL), which is a globally important landscape for tiger conservation. The previously established Project Management Unit (PMU) at PNP, chaired by the Chief Conservation Officer of PNP with the members of ZSL, facilitate and implement the project activities. The members of the PMU are responsible for coordination, facilitating activities, monitoring progress, and reporting to the PCC.

#### Mithila Wildlife Trust (MWT)

MWT is non-profit non-governmental organisation (NGO) established in 2069 BS (2013 AD) by a group of committed professional nature lovers. MWT has been organizing and strengthening capacities of



local volunteers for planning, implementing, and monitoring social development programs thereby facilitating their own and community's welfare through sustainable use of natural resources.

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Actual start date of project: 1 February 2022

Reporting period: 1 February 2022 – 31 July 2022

#### **Section II. Project Progress**

**Summary of progress for the first 6 months:** (please provide a summary for use in our communication materials)

The project aims to reduce human tiger conflict (HTC) by protecting livestock of the most vulnerable households and providing alternate options to reduce human and wildlife interactions in the forests. Similarly, it is also working to increase community awareness and support for tiger dispersal in community-managed corridor forests by disseminating the knowledge base created through wildlife hotspot and dispersal monitoring. In the first six months, the project has started to create a knowledge base on tiger dispersal using camera traps and regularly sharing data received with PNP, the Nepali Army and local communities during the Project Management Unit (PMU) meetings. To ensure continuous and regular monitoring, 27 frontline staff from different posts were trained over 2 days in hotspot and dispersal monitoring. The project is currently preparing to create HTC awareness by supporting digital display media (TV) and designing information boards on HTC. Similarly, households which are most vulnerable to tigers and other predators are being selected and will be supported by the provision of predator proof corals and fodder sapling, to reduce encounters with tigers and other predators within the forest.

**Details of activities and results to date:** (Please give details of progress made towards the objectives & outputs of your Logframe, and activities included in your Workplan. Please add any relevant charts, maps and images.

The project was initiated smoothly with approval, guidance, and support from the PCC at the DNPWC. A project sharing meeting was conducted with the PNP authorities, communities, and stakeholders at a PMU meeting where they were informed about the project's objective and detailed activities. Such sharing is important for ownership and support from respective teams. In this reporting period, four out of six interventions have been initiated and preparation for the remaining two are in progress. The detail of activities completed are detailed below:

#### Activity 1.1: Dispersal and hotspot monitoring

### 1.1.1 Hotspot and dispersal monitoring at priority location of PNP including Churia forests.

Hotspot and dispersal monitoring started on 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2022, with the help of camera traps (Panthera V6) at three priority location of PNP namely Halkhoriya, Pashakhola and Bagh Pokhari. These priority



locations were selected by PNP, based on the direct and indirect wildlife information observed and recorded during real time patrolling conducted by PNP and Nepali army staff. Over a four-and-a-half-month period (22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 22 to 5<sup>th</sup> July 22), the deployed cameras captured 1,056 photographs of wildlife movement and human activity (mainly PA staff patrolling) as well as some false triggers. The photographs of mammals included Bengal tiger, sloth bear, wild Asian elephant, common leopard, Indian civet, Indian bison wild boar, honey badger and others. PNP will expand this monitoring in the northern buffer zone community managed corridors and Churia forest in the upcoming period. The data obtained will be analysed by PNP to understand the dispersal of tigers and their prey. Figure 1 shows photographs of some mammal species captured by the deployed camera traps.



Large Indian Civet

Bengal Tiger 1





Bengal Tiger 2

Sloth Bear





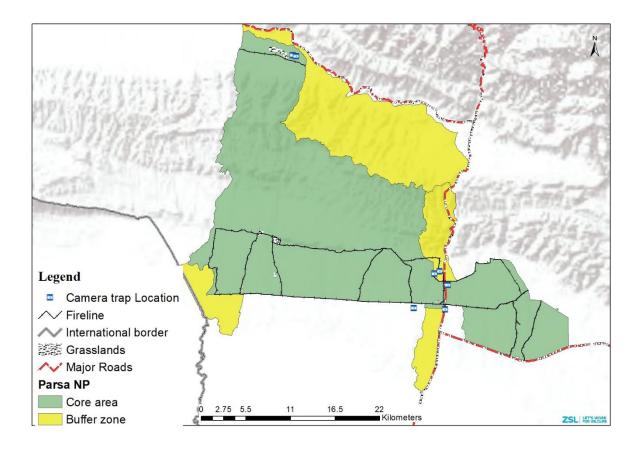
**Figure 1**: Wildlife captured through camera traps in the priority locations in Parsa National Park, Nepal

Wild Boar

Honey Badger



In July 2022, we deployed 7 more cameras in the Churiya forest area. The sites of the camera were selected based on the consultation with local communities and PNP authorities. The aim of deploying cameras in community managed forests is to monitor tiger and prey population in these areas. A map showing camera deployment sites are presented below:



**Figure 2:** Map showing camera deployment sites, in the Churia forest areas, Parsa National Park, Nepal

### 1.1.2 Capacity building of PA staff on regular hotspot and dispersal monitoring.

Through this project 27 front line staff (19 game scouts and 8 Nepali Army) deployed in all 16 posts around the PNP, have been trained in hotspot and dispersal monitoring. The two-day training course was held on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022 at the PNP headquarters in the presence of Chief Conservation Officer and Commander of Shree Sidhhabox Battalion, deployed for protection of PNP. This practical training helped frontliners learn about the identification of critical hotspots, the use and handling of cameras and GPS, camera set up, camera deployment techniques and systematic data processing as guided by "Tiger and Prey Base Monitoring Protocol 2017-DNPWC". The trained staff in different guard posts of PNP are now able to deploy cameras at strategic locations when needed. Figure 3 shows images from the dispersal monitoring and hot spot training.





Opening remarks by CCO, PNP at training



ZSL staff presenting trainees on camera traps



Jointly setting up cameras in the field after class



Trainees applying classroom knowledge in the field



Trainees attempting to install cameras in the field



Camera traps training final day group photo

**Figure 3**: Wildlife hotspot and dispersal monitoring training for frontline staffs in Parsa National Park (PNP), Nepal. ZSL = Zoological Society of London

#### 1.1.3 Data sharing meeting with PNP authority

The camera trap data collected from 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022 to 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022 were shared among PNP, Nepali Army, MWT and ZSL staff in the PMU meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022, in the presence of the Chief Conservation Officer and Commander of Shree Sidhhabox Battalion. These data are expected to



support the PNP authorities to conduct effective conservation management interventions in the park and community managed forest corridor, and Churia forests. The detailed analysis of the data will be conducted and shared by PNP officials in coming reporting period.

### **Activity 1.2: Raise awareness**

# **1.2.1** Provide training to the PA staff and local communities on tiger conservation and HTC and its mitigation.

We conducted 3 training workshops for 102 local community members (NP staff, Nepali army and representatives from local government) covering tiger conservation needs, the importance of community managed forest corridors and tiger dispersal in Churia forests, HTC mitigation, and the role of tiger conservation to secure a healthy ecosystem (Table 1). The training workshops were conducted by Mr. Sitaram Aryal, Chairman of Manahari User's Committee and Bufferzone Council Committees of PNP, Chandra Bahadur Moktan, Chairman of Lokhit User's Committee, and Manoj Kumar Sah, Chief Conservation Officer, PNP respectively (Figure 4). The participants were trained to use audio visual techniques, and discussed tiger and other wildlife behaviour, and how to avoid wildlife encounters to enhance conservation efforts through communities. Representatives from the committee, user groups, buffer zone community forests, leasehold forests, youths from the community based antipoaching unit (CBAPU), local government, and authorities from PNP participated in the training/workshop. Please see supplementary documents mentioned below for detail information about the training workshops and participants.

S.N.	Trainings/Workshops	Participants	Male	Female	Date (2022)
					(2022)
1	Manahari User's Committee	34	23	11	23 July
2	Lokhit User's Committee	24	19	5	27 July
3	Aadhavar, Park Headquarter	44	36	8	29 July

Total: 102 participants

**Table 1:** The breakdown of participants in three training workshops





ZSL staff discussing with participants from local communities (Manahari User's Committee)



ZSL staff providing a training through audio visual in the training (Manahari User's Committee)



One of the pictures from the training, ZSL staff discussing about the Bengal tiger distribution (Manahari User's Committee)



ZSL staff presenting about the behaviours of wild tiger in the training (Manhari User's Committee)



Lokhit CF 1



Lokhit CF 2





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Lokhit CF 3

Lokhit CF 4



Aadhavar, PNP 1



Aadhavar, PNP 2



Aadhavar, PNP 3



Aadhavar, PNP 4

Figure 4: Photographs from the three training workshops

### 1.2.2 Raise mass awareness through visitor information centre and hoarding boards installation.

The PNP headquarters is responsible for raising public awareness and conducting outreach. Over 500 visitors including local community members visit monthly for recreational purposes. This project has supported PNP to upgrade its visitor information centre and install a digital display board that will be



used to display messages about the needs of tigers and their habitat conservation, along with their conservation benefits (Figure 5). In the coming months, 10 information boards will be installed with similar messages in different locations to reach the wider community. Currently, the project team is collaborating with PNP and MWT to design the information boards.



**Figure 5:** Handing over of the digital display board to the Chief Conservation Officer of Parsa National Park, Nepal in presence of Lt. Colonel of Siddhi Box Gan. This will be used for visitor engagement and to raise awareness on tiger conservation.

#### **Activity 1.3: HTC mitigation and management measures**

# 1.3.1 Support BZUC with predator proof corrals and fodder plants as a pre-emptive HTC mitigation measure.

The project team, jointly with PNP and MWT, are currently identifying the households that are most vulnerable from tiger and other predators at the project site. The selected 30 most vulnerable households will be supported with predator proof corals and 100 vulnerable households will be supported with 1,000 fodder saplings to promote stall feeding and therefore to minimize livestock killing inside the forest.

Give details of any obstacles to success that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. (Please provide detailed examples, explain what impact these will have on the project results and the changes to the budget and timetable of project activities)

The local elections in Nepal were held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022, which caused local disruption and affected activity implementation. The election campaigns, community engagement and the government's code of conduct during the pre-election period limited our ability to implement community consultation, awareness and training events as planned in the workplan. To mitigate this disruption, the activity implementation plan was readjusted accordingly in later months.

Budget: Is the spend on target? If not, please give details and provide an updated budget sheet.



### **Budget sheet is provided**

**Media:** Please provide a list of recent publications and media both local and national which mentions the work funded by this project and/or mentions WildCats Conservation Alliance

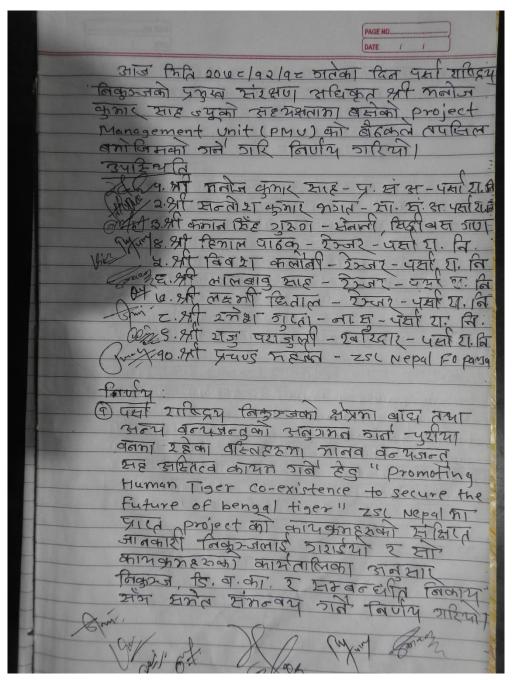
A Press Release by ZSL was published on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2022 detailing the results of the Government of Nepal's national tiger survey in which WildCats Conservation Alliance was acknowledged:

Nepal's tiger population more than doubles | Zoological Society of London (ZSL)

WildCats Conservation Alliance asks for at least 5 relevant high-resolution jpeg files of images of the project activities during this time period.

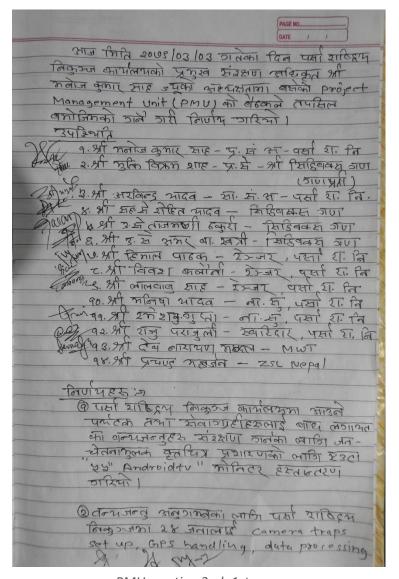


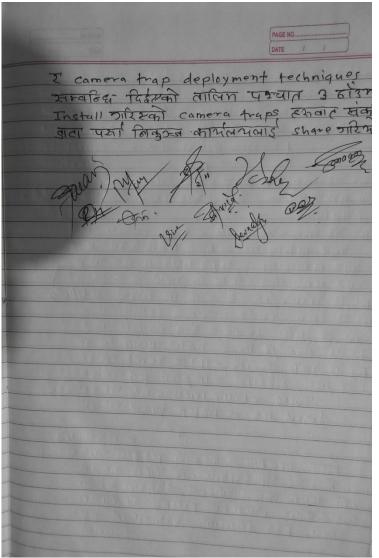
Please find the supplementary documents attached.



PMU Meeting 1st



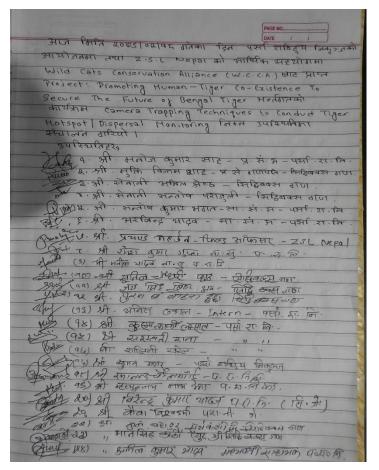


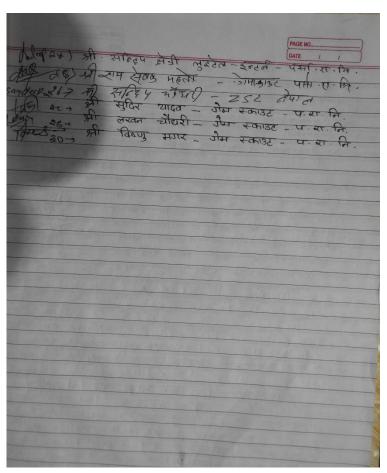


PMU meeting 2nd- 1st page

PMU meeting 2nd - 2nd page

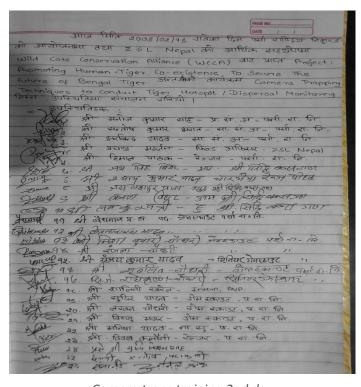






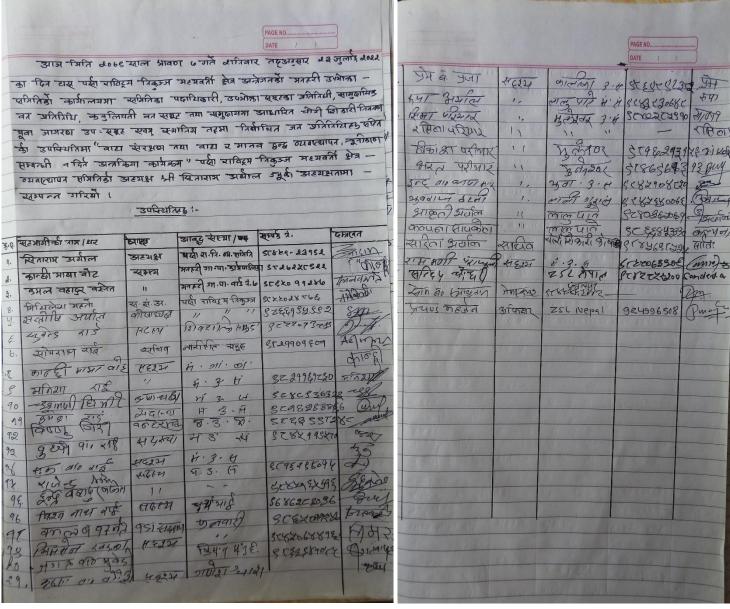
Camera traps training 1st day - 1st page

Camera traps training 1st day - 2nd page



Camera traps training 2nd day

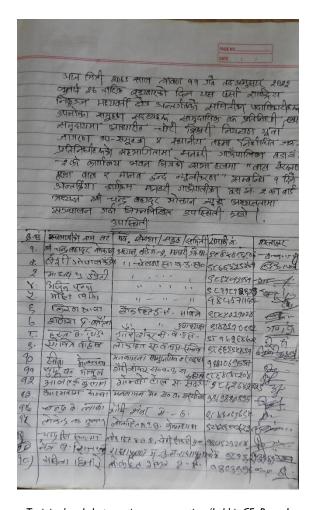


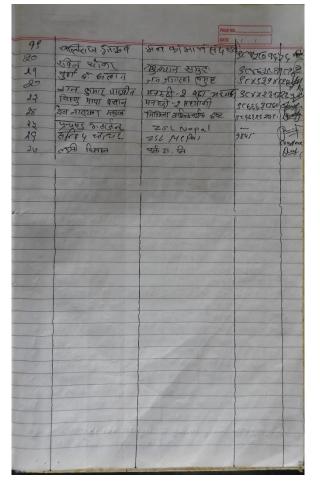


Training/Workshop on Tiger Conservation (Manahari CF) Page 1

Training/Workshop on Tiger Conservation (Manahari CF) Page 2



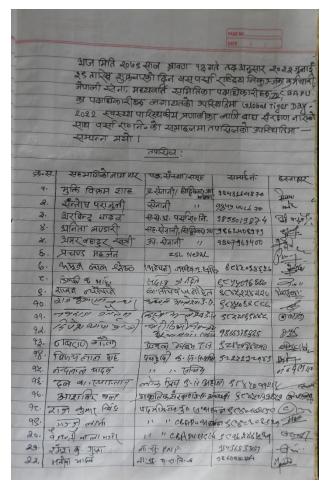




Training/workshop on tiger conservation (Lokhit CF, Page 1

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