

Project Update: February 2007

Using RSG funding, we have captured and sampled 48 domestic dogs from the vicinity of 3 villages surrounding the GIB sanctuary, Nannaj. As I had mentioned in my last update, we found significantly high incidence of disease in the dogs that we had sampled. I reported this incidence of disease to the Maharashtra State forest department, who have taken cognisance of my report and are developing a programme to vaccinate dogs in the vicinity of the sanctuary against rabies and Canine distemper virus.

Going beyond the scope of my current project, I have also started to conduct preliminary tests for disease in Indian foxes, which are susceptible to many of the microparasites that infect dogs. So far we have found 4 cases of CDV among foxes, and more importantly, there was 100% mortality among the infected foxes. Compare this to the dog case, where no disease related deaths were found even a month after initial capture. This suggests that the disease (CDV) is enzootic in dogs, and that foxes respond to it differentially than dogs do. We need to corroborate these findings with further sampling and follow it up with the vaccination program. Hopefully this will be the subject of an RSG additional grant.

