

Project Update: February 2007

The manual created as part of this project is attached with this note.

The official endorsement

Although it was initially envisaged that the endorsement of the Ministry of Environment and Affairs will be obtained for the manual, I also realized that the power of my work was due to the sustained interaction with the Maharashtra Forest Department over the last four years. It had exposed me to the ground problems faced by the Forest Department when dealing with leopard emergencies in human dominated landscapes. Therefore, I worked in close consultation with officers of the Maharashtra Forest Department and the final version of the manual has the formal approval of the Chief Wildlife Warden of the state – the senior most Forest Department official dealing with wildlife issues.

His endorsement (which is inserted as a foreword in the manual) makes for an easier acceptance of the manual by other state forest departments.

Number of copies printed

Furthermore, because it was recommended by a reviewer that the book be made in black and white to facilitate photocopying, it led to a reduction in printing cost. Therefore, a much larger number of copies were printed (300 English as opposed to 50 that were planned) widening the reach of the manual.

Number of copies distributed

The manual was displayed at a national level human-leopard conflict workshop organized in Delhi by the Wildlife Trust of India, New Delhi on the 23rd and 24th of January 2007 where Forest Department officials from other states were present. Sixty copies were distributed among national and international participants. Requests for 60 more copies were obtained from the Forest Department officials in eastern and central Assam, Jammu, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat and Kerala – states facing serious conflict.

The web pages where the manual is present

<http://www.peopleandwildlife.org.uk/crmanuals/index.shtml#predation>

http://www.carnivoreconservation.org/files/issues/leopard_conflict_management.pdf

Changes in budget

I have saved a lot of money because

1. Most of the correspondence was via email reducing cost of travel

2. I obtained all the records from the central office of the Chief Wildlife Warden and therefore saved on travel to field offices
3. I obtained the endorsement from the state and therefore saved on travel to Delhi to liason with the central Ministry

Changes in project

Because I saved on the printing costs, I was able to make 300 English copies instead of the 50 that were planned. Similarly, a much larger number of copies will be printed in the Indian languages (Hindi and Marathi).

I will be using the travel that was meant for field office visits in Maharashtra later to meet all the field level staff and explain the manual (in the form of a presentation and interactive session).

Budget

The following budget does not include the printing costs incurred so far (the English ones have just been printed and the local language editions are in the process of being made) nor the travel costs to field offices.

SUMMARY ACCOUNTS		
SPENT		
Head	Amount	(a) 77.75 GBP¹
travel	59,470.00	764.89
food and per diem	4,722.00	60.73
postage and courier services	-	-
consumables	13,657.00	175.65
telephone	9,534.00	122.62
office supplies	615.00	7.91
misc	60.00	0.77
professional fees	73,828.00	949.56

¹ This was the exchange rate applicable on the day the funds were transferred to India.

local labour	-	-
Accounted expenses	161,886.00	2,082.14
Grant Amount	327,059.00	4,206.55
Difference	165,173.00	2,124.41

Therefore, please may I request an extension of about 6 months (from March 1st – August 31st, 2007) to complete.....

1. translation and printing of the Indian language versions – this process has been particularly time consuming as I am not able to do these myself because of my poor command of both the languages (written Hindi and Marathi) and have to rely on other people
2. visits to the field offices to advise them on the rational behind, and how to use the manual

No additional budget is required.

I would like to thank the Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation for its support – this and the past project have helped tremendously in better understanding of the human leopard conflict and also to disseminate this understanding to the Forest Department which until now had no scientific input on managing conflict.